



Tea party wins big



PAT SULLIVAN / ASSOCIATED PRESS



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SMILEY N. POOL / ASSOCIATED PRESS

State Sen. Dan Patrick, at top, ended the political career of David Dewhurst, who has been lieutenant governor since 2003, in Tuesday's Republican primary runoff. Dewhurst, above right, said before the contest that this would be his final campaign.

Patrick unseats Dewhurst in lieutenant governor runoff

JIM VERTUNO
Associated Press

Republican voters appeared ready to push Texas even further to the right Tuesday by backing tea party favorites over establishment candidates, casting out Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst in favor of a state senator who sharpened his policy and debating skills as a firebrand radio talk show host.

Dan Patrick, who emerged as the front-runner from the first round of voting, easily beat Dewhurst in the primary runoff, ending the political career of a multimillionaire energy businessman who has been lieutenant governor since 2003. Dewhurst had said this would be his final campaign.

With Texas Democrats again the underdogs in November, many tea party-aligned candidates who won Tuesday are

poised to pursue an aggressively conservative agenda that would likely include further spending cuts, expanded gun rights and more restrictions on abortion and illegal immigration.

Tuesday's Republican runoffs settled nominations for four major offices and nearly a dozen state-house seats.

In the GOP campaign for attorney general between two state legislators, tea party-backed Ken Paxton beat Dan Branch, who is a member of the House leadership team.

Sid Miller won the nod for agriculture commissioner over his colleague in the Legislature, Tommy Merritt, whom he accused of being too moderate.

Tea party-backed candidates have also admonished the Republican-controlled

"David Dewhurst hasn't taken control. He wouldn't get in the middle of anything. ... I think we need some changes."

ROBERT WILKERSON

CEOs earn 257 times more than employees

KEN SWEET
Associated Press

NEW YORK — They're the \$10 million men and women.

Propelled by a soaring stock market, the median pay package for a CEO rose to more than eight figures for the first time last year. The head of a typical large public company earned a record \$10.5 million, up from \$9.6 million in 2012, according to an Associated Press/Equilar pay study.

Last year was the fourth straight year that CEO compensation in-

creased, following a decline during the Great Recession. The median CEO pay package climbed more than 50 percent over that stretch. A chief executive now makes about 257 times the average worker's salary, up sharply from 181 times in 2009.

The best-paid CEO last year led an oilfield-services company. The highest-paid female CEO was Carol Meyrowitz of discount retail giant TJX, owner of T.J. Maxx and

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Troops to exit Afghanistan by end of 2016 under US plan

JULIE PACE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Charting an end to America's longest war, President Barack Obama announced plans Tuesday for keeping nearly 10,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan after this year, then withdrawing virtually all by the close of 2016 and the conclusion of his presidency.

The drawdown would allow Obama to bring America's military engagement in Afghanistan to an end while seeking to protect the gains made in a war in which he significantly intensified U.S. involvement.

"We have to recognize that Afghanistan will not be a perfect place, and it is not America's responsibility to make it one," Obama declared during an appearance in the White House Rose Garden.

President Obama credited American forces, which were first deployed by President George W. Bush within a month of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, with striking significant blows against al-Qaeda's leadership, eliminating Osama bin Laden and preventing Afghanistan from being used as a base for strikes against the U.S. "Now we're finishing the job we've started," he said.

The withdrawal blueprint is contingent on Afghanistan's government signing a stalled bilateral security agreement. While current Afghan President Hamid Karzai has refused to sign the accord, U.S. officials say they're confident that either of the candidates running to replace him will finalize the deal.

The size and scope of the residual U.S. force largely mirrors what Pentagon officials had sought, which appeared to give Obama cover with some Republicans, including House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio. But some of the president's harshest critics on foreign policy — Sens. John McCain of Arizona, Lindsey Gra-

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States must use more than IQ in death-row eligibility cases

MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Twelve years after barring execution of the mentally disabled, the Supreme Court on Tuesday prohibited states in borderline cases from relying only on intelligence test scores to determine whether a death row inmate is eligible to be executed.

In a 5-4 decision, the court said that states must look beyond IQ scores when inmates test in the range of 70 to 75. IQ tests have a margin of error, and those inmates whose scores fall within the margin must be allowed to present other evidence of mental disability, Justice Anthony Kennedy said in his majority opinion.

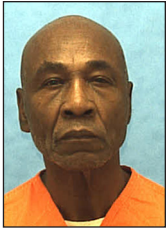
A score of 70 is widely accepted as a marker of mental disability, but medical professionals say people who score as high as 75 can be considered intellectually disabled because of the test's margin of error.

Until Tuesday, the justices left the determination of who is mentally disabled to the states.

Kennedy said the finality of capital punishment requires giving inmates the chance to present evidence of mental disability in borderline cases.

"The states are laboratories for experimentation, but those experiments may not deny the basic dignity the Constitution protects," Kennedy said in his opinion.

At most, nine states employ a similar cutoff of 70, Kennedy said.



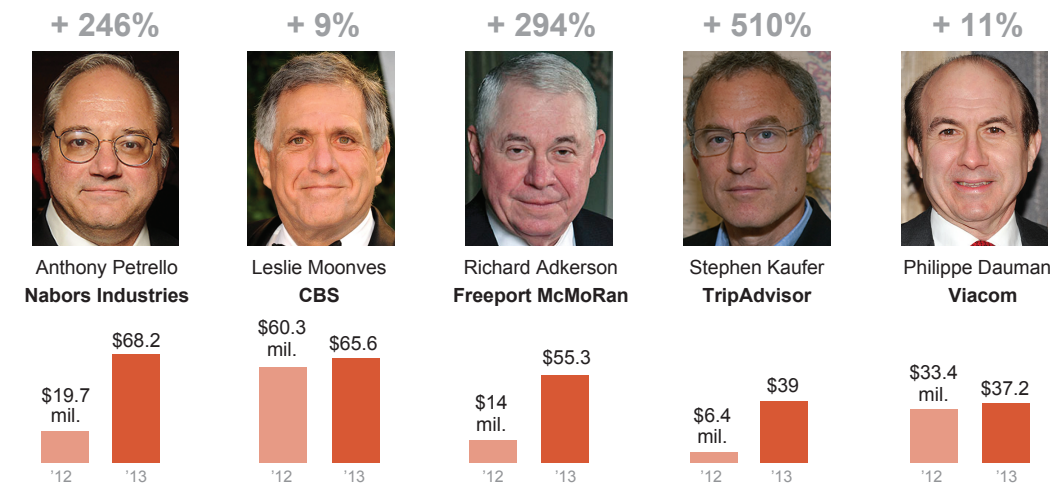
Hall

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Please see COURT, Page 2

Highest-Paid CEOs

Anthony Petrello of Nabors Industries was the highest-paid of 337 CEOs at S&P 500 companies in 2013, according to data compiled by the AP and Equilar, an executive research firm.



NOTE: To calculate CEO pay, Equilar adds salary, bonus, perks, stock awards, stock option awards and other pay components.

SOURCES: TripAdvisor; Anthony Petrello image: Dave Rossman/For the Chronicle



SMILEY N. POOL / ASSOCIATED PRESS

State Sen. Dan Patrick greets voters outside a polling place at Cypress Top Park as he campaigns in the Republican primary runoff election for lieutenant governor on Tuesday in Cypress. Patrick faces incumbent Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst in their runoff campaign to claim the Republican spot on the ballot in November against Democratic state Sen. Leticia Van de Putte.

ELECTION: New faces in statewide offices

—Continued from Page 1

general election against Democrat Leticia Van de Putte, a state senator from San Antonio. Patrick's victory Tuesday also means that a new face will occupy every major statewide office in Texas next year when Gov. Rick Perry steps aside. The Dewhurst-Patrick battle for lieutenant governor was a lightning rod of a campaign as both candidates exchanged bitter personal attacks. The campaign took

a nasty turn in the final weeks as the debate veered away from policy and into Patrick's personal history after records released by a Dewhurst ally, Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, revealed Patrick had been treated for depression and an apparent suicide attempt in the 1980s. "David Dewhurst hasn't taken control," Robert Wilkerson, a 65-year-old handyman in Aledo said just after the polls opened. "He wouldn't get in the middle of anything. He would just kind of

go along with the status quo, and I think we need some changes." The runoff was less lively for Democrats, who nominated former major Republican donor David Alameel over Keshia Rogers for U.S. Senate. The Democratic Party implored voters not to support Rogers, who wants to impeach President Barack Obama. Alameel will now face Republican Sen. John Cornyn, who is favored to win his third term in November.

COURT: Death row inmates must have chance to prove mental illness

—Continued from Page 1

In dissent, Justice Samuel Alito said the court has no evidence that relying on test scores just above 70 is unreasonable and so should not be held unconstitutional. Tuesday's decision came in the case of 68-year-old Freddie Lee Hall. Lawyers for Hall said there is ample evidence to show that he is mentally disabled, even though most of his multiple IQ tests have yielded scores topping 70. Hall has been on death row for more than 35 years since being convicted of murdering a pregnant 21-year-old woman in 1978. In nine tests administered between 1968 and 2008, Hall scored

as low as 60 and as high as 80, with his most recent scores between 69 and 74, according to the state. A judge in an earlier phase of the case concluded Hall "had been mentally retarded his entire life." Psychiatrists and other medical professionals who examined him said he is mentally disabled. As far back as the 1950s, Hall was considered "mentally retarded" — then the commonly accepted term for mental disability — according to school records submitted to the Supreme Court. Kennedy relied on legal briefs filed by psychiatrists and psychologists who supported Hall to undergird his opinion. Beyond the test score, the groups said there's

a consensus among the mental health professions that an accurate diagnosis also must include evaluating an individual's ability to function in society, along with finding that the mental disability began in childhood. Alito called Kennedy's reliance misplaced. In earlier death penalty cases, Alito noted that the court took account of changing standards in American society to bolster decisions limiting executions. "Now, however, the court strikes down a state law based on the evolving standards of professional societies," Alito said. The case is Hall v. Florida, 12-10882.

Science fares well for kids at Capitol

JIM KUHNHENN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama confessed to feeling a little bit unaccomplished. There was the catapult-armed mannequin that shot three-point baskets, the 18-year-old cancer researcher and the Brownies from Tulsa, Oklahoma, with their Lego "flood-proof" bridge design. "I'm such an underachiever," Obama said after chatting with Eric Chen at Tuesday's annual White House Science Fair. Chen, a Harvard-bound San Diego, California, high school senior, won grand prizes at the 2013 Google Science Fair and the Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology for identifying new drug candidates for the treatment of influenza. It's an annual self-deprecating routine for the Harvard-trained lawyer and 44th president of the United States, who happily recounts his personal challenges in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

"One year I accidentally killed some plants that were part of my experiment," he told Tuesday's White House Science Fair audience. "Another time a bunch of mice escaped in my grandmother's apartment. These experiments did not take me straight to the White House." This year, Obama drew special attention to the science and engineering achievements of girls and young women, noting that men outnumber women studying and working in engineering and computer science. "Half our team we're not even putting on the field," he said. "We've got to change those numbers." Obama announced a new \$35 million Education Department competition to train the best math and science teachers. He also announced an expansion of AmeriCorps to help teach science and math to 18,000 low-income students this summer, and national science and math mentoring projects around the country.



SUSAN WALSH / ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Barack Obama looks over the "flood-proof" bridge design by a group of Brownies from Tulsa, Oklahoma, as he tours the science fair exhibits on display in the State Dining Room of the White House on Tuesday. Obama was celebrating the student winners of a broad range of science, technology, engineering and math competitions from across the country.

CEO: Executives still seeing biggest raises

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Marshalls. And the head of Monster Beverage Corporation got a monster of a raise. Over the last several years, companies' boards of directors have tweaked executive compensation to answer critics' calls for CEO pay to be more attuned to performance. Boards of directors have placed more emphasis on paying CEOs in stock instead of cash and stock options. The change became a boon for CEOs last year because of a surge in stocks that drove the Standard & Poor's 500 index up 30 percent. The stock component of pay packages rose 17 percent to \$4.5 million. More than two-thirds of CEOs at S&P 500 companies received a raise last year, according to the AP/Equilar study, because of the bigger profits and higher stock prices. CEO pay remains a divisive issue in the U.S. Large investors and boards of directors argue that they need to offer big pay packages to attract talented men and women who can run multibillion-dollar businesses. "If you have a good CEO at a company, the wealth he might generate for shareholders could be in the billions," said Dan Mitchell, a senior fellow at the Cato In-

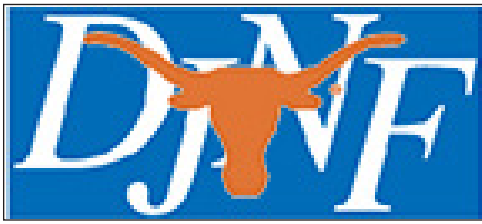
stitute, a libertarian think tank. "It might be worth paying these guys millions for doing this type of work." CEOs are still getting much bigger raises than the average U.S. worker. The Bureau of Labor Statistics said average weekly wages for U.S. workers rose 1.3 percent in 2013. At that rate, an employee would have to work 257 years to make what a typical S&P 500 CEO makes in a year. "There's this unbalanced approach, where there's all this energy put into how to reward executives, but little energy being put into ensuring the rest of the workforce is engaged, productive and paid appropriately," said Richard Clayton, research director at Change to Win Investment Group, which works with labor union-affiliated pension funds. Investors have become increasingly vocal about executive pay since the recession, which has led to an increasing number of public spat between boards of directors, who propose pay packages, and shareholders, who own the company. These fights become public during "say on pay" votes, in which shareholders have an opportunity to show they approve or do not approve of pay packages.

AFGHANISTAN: Republicans say setting date to exit is mistake

—Continued from Page 1

ham of South Carolina, and Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire — called the decision short-sighted and warned that the decision would embolden America's enemies. "The president's decision to set an arbitrary date for the full withdrawal of U.S. troops in Afghanistan is a monumental mistake and a triumph of politics over strategy," the three Republicans said in a joint statement. There are currently about 32,000 U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan. Under Obama's plan, that number would be reduced to 9,800 by the start of 2015. Over the course of the next year, the number would be cut in half and consolidated in the capital of Kabul and at Bagram Air Field, the main U.S. base in Afghanistan. Remaining forces would largely be withdrawn by the end of 2016, with fewer than 1,000 remaining to train security forces and launch counterterrorism missions. The American forces would probably be bolstered by a few thousand NATO troops.

Noting the complexity of his drawdown plan, Obama said, "It's harder to end wars than to begin them." During a commencement address Wednesday at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Obama is expected to make the case for an approach to global problems that relies on international consensus. The president is seeking to avoid a similar scenario in Afghanistan, for both security and political purposes. While Obama long opposed the Iraq war, he oversaw a surge of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, giving him greater responsibility for the mission's success or failure. Obama struck an optimistic tone during a surprise visit to Afghanistan on Sunday, telling military commanders that the process of turning over security responsibilities has gone "better than I might have expected just a year ago." Associated Press writers Lolita C. Baldor, Ken Dilanian and Donna Cassata in Washington and Amir Shah in Kabul, Afghanistan, contributed to this report.



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INTERNATIONAL

Smoke from South Korean hospital fire kills 21

SEOUL, South Korea – South Korean officials say 20 patients and a nurse have died in a fire at a hospital in the southwestern city of Jangseong.

An officer with the Jangseong Fire Department says that most of the victims were elderly patients and that the victims died after suffocating on poisonous gas.

The officer says there were 33 patients and a nurse on duty when the fire broke out on the second floor of an annex of Hyosarang Hospital early Wednesday morning. Seven people were injured.

The fire was put out after about seven minutes. The cause was not immediately known.

After long wait, Malaysia releases jet's satellite data

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia – Nearly three months after the Malaysian jetliner disappeared, the government on Tuesday released reams of raw satellite data that determined that the flight ended in the southern Indian Ocean.

But experts say it's unlikely to solve the mystery.

The release of the information came as the underwater hunt for the jet is poised to pause until later in the summer while new, powerful sonar equipment is obtained, a sign of just how difficult it will be to locate the jet and finally get some answers on how it went missing with 239 people on board.

An international investigation team led by Malaysia has concluded that the jet flew south after it was last spotted on Malaysian military radar to the west of peninsular Malaysia and ended up in the southern Indian Ocean off western Australia. The conclusion is based on complex calculations derived largely from brief hourly transmissions or "handshakes" between the plane and a communications satellite operated by Britain's Inmarsat company.

Egypt election extended because of low turnout

CAIRO – Egypt extended its presidential election on Tuesday to a third day in a drive to raise voter turnout and avoid an embarrassingly meager show of support for former Army Chief Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi.

The head of the election commission told the MBC-Misr TV station that early estimates put turnout at 35 percent of the nearly 54 million voters in the first two days of voting.

The election commission portrayed its decision as a response to demands by would-be voters after receiving complaints about the extreme heat and about migrant workers prevented from voting because of rules that make it difficult to cast ballots away from one's hometown.

Opponents of el-Sissi said the turnout showed the depth of discontent with el-Sissi.

El-Sissi's opponent, leftist politician Hamdeen Sabahi's campaign protested the extension, saying it raised questions about the election's integrity and seemed aimed at "interfering in numbers and participation rates."

EU summit hopes for apathy cure after voters stay home

BRUSSELS, Belgium – British Prime Minister David Cameron's recurring complaint that the European Union is "too big, too bossy, too interfering" gained traction at an EU summit on Tuesday after election results that underscored voter apathy and hostility forced government leaders across the bloc to consider profound change.

Protest voters turned out in droves while more than half the 28-nation bloc's electorate failed to muster enough interest to go to their polling stations for European Parliament elections, giving a massive thumbs-down to how the EU functions. The anti-EU UK Independence Party topped the polls in Britain, and in France the extreme-right National Front overwhelmed all its rivals.

Perhaps the tipping point turning the electorate against the EU came last year, when it was unable to address record unemployment crippling some member nations hit by the financial crisis while at the same time trying to ban refillable olive oil jugs from restaurant tables. The olive oil measure was quickly pulled back, yet it became emblematic to many for how the EU meddles in minor issues while losing sight of the big picture.

– ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tensions amplified after Ukraine assault

PETER LEONARD
Associated Press

DONETSK, Ukraine — Following a day and night of the heaviest and most sustained assault by Ukrainian government forces to date, the pro-Russia separatist movement finds itself facing an emboldened and resolute national leadership.

The fight for eastern Ukraine seems to have taken a ferocious turn, as both sides step up their attacks after the rebellious regions mostly boycotted a presidential election that delivered a decisive winner. Donetsk Mayor Alexander Lukyanchenko said 40 people, including two civilians, were killed in fighting. Baranov said up to 100 rebels were probably killed in combat.

The Ukrainian government's anti-insurgent operation has kicked into a higher gear, with the military unleashing fighter jets,

helicopter gunships and heavy artillery. Government opponents insist they have taken up arms to defend eastern Ukraine's Russian-speaking population and have appealed to Moscow for assistance. Kiev condemns the insurgents as "terrorists" bent on tearing the country apart.

With Sunday's election of billionaire Petro Poroshenko to the presidency, Kiev has received grudging and tentatively positive diplomatic overtures from Russia.

After Poroshenko claimed victory in the election, hopes were raised of a peaceful end to the insurgency and unification in the deeply divided nation. But he also compared the separatists to lawless "Somali pirates" and promised he would stop them from sowing more chaos.

Russia has kept pushing for Ukraine to decentralize its government, which would allow Mos-



ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hundreds are dead after a Ukrainian anti-insurgent operation, including this man who was killed by shrapnel following a shelling on Monday.

cow to keep eastern Ukraine in its sphere of influence.

Laura Mills and Nataliya

Vasilyeva in Kiev, Ukraine, and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed to this report.

Troops detain ex-Cabinet official

Former minister emerged from hiding to voice opposition to Thai coup

TODD PITMAN
Associated Press

BANGKOK — Armed troops detained a Thai Cabinet minister who defiantly emerged from hiding Tuesday to condemn last week's military coup and urge a return to civilian rule, in the first public appearance by any member of the ousted government.

About half a dozen soldiers took former Education Minister Chaturon Chaisang into custody in a chaotic scene at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand, where he had just finished giving a surprise news conference.

The junta, which seized power last Thursday, already had detained most top members of the Southeast Asian country's ousted elected government and ordered the rest to surrender.

Chaturon called for elections and warned that resistance to the army's power grab could grow, which could lead to "a disaster for this country."

When his news conference was finished and Chaturon was being interviewed by a group of Thai journalists, soldiers entered the room, surrounded him and escorted him out through a crowd of reporters. He was calm and smiled as he was taken away.

"I'm not afraid. If I was afraid, I wouldn't be here," Chaturon said, before being hustled into an elevator.

The military coup, Thailand's second in eight years, deposed an elected government that had insisted for months that the nation's fragile democracy was under attack from protesters, the courts and finally the army.

"Coup d'etat is not a solution to the problems or conflicts in Thai society, but will make the conflicts even worse," Chaturon said.

Army Chief Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha, who was endorsed Monday



WASON WANICHAKORN / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Holding roses that people brought to greet them, Thai soldiers guard the area near Victory Monument in Bangkok on Tuesday. Armed troops detained a Thai Cabinet minister who emerged from hiding on Tuesday to urge a return to civilian rule in the first public appearance by a member of the ousted government.

by the king as the nation's new head of government, has warned opponents not to criticize or protest, saying Thailand could revert to the "old days" of turmoil and street violence if they did.

Still, several hundred people gathered Tuesday around Bangkok's Victory Monument to protest the coup.

Despite the political upheaval that has left the nation's elected leadership in tatters, life has continued largely as normal in most of the country, with tourists still relaxing at beach resorts and strolling through Buddhist temples. However, a curfew remains in effect, hotel bookings are being canceled and American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift on Tuesday canceled a sold-out concert that had been scheduled for June 9.

I'm not afraid. If I was afraid, I wouldn't be here.

CHATURON CHAISANG

The junta has ordered more than 260 people to report to the authorities so far.

It is unclear how many are still in custody, but some have been released, including former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who had already been forced from power by a court ruling before the coup.

Others are being detained daily. Human rights groups describe a chilling atmosphere with some people in hiding, others fleeing and soldiers visiting the homes of perceived critics and taking them away in the night.

On Tuesday, the military summoned two Thai journalists who had asked "inappropriate" questions to Prayuth during a news conference a day earlier.

The reporters, from the Thai-rath and Bangkok Post dailies, had queried the junta leader about when and whether he would appoint a prime minister and organize elections. Prayuth gave no definitive answers, and abruptly walked away from the podium. The reporters were not detained and left freely.

Chaturon earlier called the detentions "absurd" and said "they are taking people who have done nothing wrong just because they might resist the coup."

"The problem is, we don't know how long they are going to be detained," he said. "We don't know what happened to them. We don't really know."

He warned that "from now on there will be more and more resistance. ... It will be a disaster for this country."

Associated Press writers Kay Johnson and Grant Peck contributed to this report.

China tactics aim to silence

DIDI TANG
Associated Press

BEIJING — In prosecuting the country's political and social activists, an image-conscious Beijing is shifting its tactics.

Beijing is increasingly using public disorder charges to lock up those it considers nuisances or threats to its rule, rather than filing charges of inciting state subversion that amount to political prosecution and draw international condemnations.

"The scheme is craftier and crueler," said dissident Hu Jia. He spent three and a half years in prison after a 2008 conviction of inciting state subversion.

In June 2013, a directive by China's national prosecutor's office asked local prosecutors to pursue activists harboring political intentions by using charges of disrupting public order.

"You must deftly combine political wisdom with criminal policies in striving to achieve legal, political and social purposes in unison," the directive said.

A U.S.-based prison research group, the Dui Hua Foundation, said its analysis of official data showed 830 Chinese people were indicted in 2013 on charges such as subversion, separatism and incitement in China, the smallest number since 2007. At the same time, the number of people indicted with impairing social order has been rising, from barely 160,000 in 2005 to more than 355,000 last year, the organization reported.

John Kamm, executive director



ALEXANDER F. YUAN / ASSOCIATED PRESS

A paramilitary policeman patrols on Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China on Tuesday. In prosecuting the country's political and social activists, an image-conscious Beijing is shifting its tactics.

of Dui Hua, said the public disorder category includes computer-related offenses that are becoming increasingly common.

"The decrease in indictments (for charges of endangering state security) may signal a change in tactics: Political dissidents appear to be increasingly charged with non-ESS crimes, thereby obscuring the political nature of their contested acts," a Dui Hua statement said.

Most notably, Beijing authorities have jailed members of the New Citizens movement on the charge of gathering crowds to disrupt public order, which stemmed mainly from holding rallies in front of a government building and unfurling banners calling for

disclosure of government officials' assets.

The use of the tactic is not entirely new, but the national directive signaled a centralized decision, and the use of public disorder charges may also have gotten a boost after China closed its labor camps last year, eliminating a tool that allowed police to detain people for up to four years without going to court.

Critics also say Communist authorities are seeking to discredit and obscure human rights and other activists by prosecuting them on charges that lump them in with bar brawlers, hecklers, petty gangsters and other common criminals.

Father, family stone daughter to death to maintain 'honor'

K.M. CHAUDHRY
Associated Press

LAHORE, Pakistan — A pregnant woman was stoned to death Tuesday by her own family outside a courthouse in the Pakistani city of Lahore for marrying the man she loved.

Farzana Parveen, 25, was killed while on her way to court to contest an abduction case her family had filed against her husband, Mohammad Iqbal, 45. Her father was promptly arrested on murder charges, police investigator Rana Mujahid said. "I killed my daughter as she had insulted all of our family by marrying a man without our consent, and I have no regret over it," Mujahid, the police investigator, quoted the father, Mohammad Azeem as saying.

Arranged marriages are the norm among conservative Pakistanis. Stonings in public settings, however, are extremely rare. Tuesday's attack took place in front of a crowd of onlookers in broad daylight.

Nearly 20 members of Parveen's extended family, including her father and brothers, had waited outside the Lahore courthouse. As the couple approached, the relatives fired shots and tried to snatch her from Iqbal.

When she resisted, her father, brothers and other relatives attacked, eventually pelting her with bricks, according to Iqbal, the slain woman's husband.

"We were in love," he told the Associated Press.

Force to assist veteran needs

Legislators propose group to monitor treatment delays

ALEXA URA
The Texas Tribune

Amid recent allegations of excessive wait times for veterans at several Department of Veterans Affairs clinics across the nation, the quality of care at VA medical centers in Texas is getting extra attention.

And while the state is limited in what it can do at the federal facilities, legislators are still seeking ways to help curb wait times.

“While our reality is that this is a federally run and funded agency that serves Texas residents, that does not mean that Texas cannot ensure that our veterans are taken care of in the honorable way they deserve and have earned,” said state Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, who chairs the Texas Senate Veteran Affairs and Military Installations Committee. “It should not take a whistleblower and numerous deaths to raise the flag on issues like these.”

It should not take a whistleblower and numerous deaths to raise the flag on issues like these.

SEN. LETICIA VAN DE PUTTE

The strike force team was created in 2012 as part of the Texas Veterans Commission in response to a massive backlog in the federal system of disability claims for Texas veterans and the proposal would expand the mission and staffing of the strike force team to gather veterans’ complaints.

The state’s oversight group could provide local, independent oversight of the VA’s medical facilities in the state while serving as an advocate for Texas veterans by pointing out problematic facilities to the VA and holding the department accountable, Menéndez said.

The lawmakers intend to hold hearings on the issue, including a Senate hearing on June 12 in Houston, to obtain information

NATIONAL

Fed hacker gets no more time in prison

NEW YORK — A computer hacker who helped the government disrupt hundreds of cyber-attacks on Congress, NASA and other sensitive targets and cripple the hacktivist crew known as Anonymous got a hero’s welcome Tuesday at his sentencing in federal court.

A federal judge cited Hector Xavier Monsegur’s “extraordinary cooperation” before saying he will not serve more than the seven months he spent in prison two years ago. Federal guidelines had called for more than 20 years in prison.

Prosecutors said he cooperated with the FBI, helping disrupt or prevent hacks against divisions of the U.S. government, international intergovernmental organizations and several private companies, including a television network, a security firm, a video game maker and an electronics conglomerate.

Starting in early 2011 and using the alias Sabu, Monsegur led an Anonymous splinter group called Lulz Security, or LulzSec, which hacked the computer systems of Fox television, Nintendo, PayPal and other businesses, stole private information and bragged about its exploits online.



Monsegur

Pa. power plant to clean up its act

DINA CAPIELLO
Associated Press

HOMER CITY, Pa. — Three years ago, the operators of one of the nation’s dirtiest coal-fired power plants warned of “immediate and devastating” consequences from the Obama administration’s push to clean up coal pollution.

Now, the massive western Pennsylvania power plant is expected to turn from one of the worst polluters in the country to a model for how coal-fired power plants can slash pollution.

The Homer City plant reflects the precarious position of older coal-fired plants, squeezed between cheap, plentiful natural gas and environmental rules the Obama administration has targeted at coal.

Homer City also shows how political and economic rhetoric sometimes don’t match reality. Despite claims by Republicans and industry critics that the Obama administration’s regulations will shut down coal-fired power plants, Homer City survived.

“If there is a war on coal, that plant won,” said Eric Schaeffer, the executive director of the Environmental Integrity Project.

The owners of the massive western Pennsylvania power plant have committed to install \$750 million worth of pollution control equipment by 2016.

Last month, the Supreme Court

upheld the EPA’s rule in the case initiated by Homer City Generating Station.

GE Energy Financial Services, the plant’s majority owner, now says it can do it without electricity bills increasing for the two million households it serves.

“We believe in the plant’s long-term value, and that installing equipment will enable it to comply with environmental regulations,” said Andy Katell, a GE spokesman.

Last year, the facility released 114,245 tons of sulfur dioxide, more than all of the power plants in neighboring New York combined.

“It is an emblem, a poster child of the challenge of interstate air pollution,” said Lem Srolovic, the head of the environmental protection bureau for the New York Attorney General’s office.

New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the EPA sued Homer City in 2011, arguing it was operating in violation of the Clean Air Act by not installing pollution control technology in the 1990s.

A federal judge dismissed the case, arguing it fell outside the statute of limitations.

But U.S. District Judge Terrence McVerry in his opinion said he appreciated the frustration “that society at large continues to bear the brunt of significant sulfur dioxide emissions from that grand-



KEITH SRAKOCIC / ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Homer City Generating Station in Homer City, Pennsylvania, shown in this May 5 photo, is expected to reverse its reputation as one of the worst plants in the country to a model plant as it works to install \$750 million of pollution control equipment by 2016.

fathered facility.”

A class-action lawsuit filed by local citizens to get the plant to clean up its pollution also failed.

The Sierra Club appealed the plant’s plans to control sulfur dioxide, securing a settlement in 2012 that requires the plant to show that it will not exceed sulfur dioxide limits.

“It should be the new standard for coal plant permits in the country,” said Tom Schuster, who heads the Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign in Pennsylvania. “When coal-fired power plants are held responsible, the health and quality of life benefits far outweigh any cost.”

The EPA estimates that about 30 percent of the coal-fired units in the U.S. are operating without scrubbers, pollution control equipment that controls for sulfur dioxide and mercury.

All must install them soon, or be retired, to meet new EPA rules. Homer City received a year-long extension on the deadline from Pennsylvania’s Department of Environmental Protection.

For Homer City’s 1,687 residents, many are relieved that the plant’s 255 jobs are staying for now. The plant in the future will likely have to reduce smog-forming nitrogen oxides further to comply with the rule the Supreme Court revived last month.

“I’m all in favor of saving the environment,” said Rob Nymick, the borough manager. “But it’s also important to have jobs in this area.”

“We lose the power plant, we’re in trouble.”

— ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER KEVIN BEGOS CONTRIBUTED REPORTING FROM HOMER CITY. CAPIELLO REPORTED FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

‘Squushy’ spellers socialize

JOSEPH WHITE
Associated Press

OXON HILL, Md. — Under the shady trees near the barbecue line at the annual spellers’ picnic, one contestant in this year’s Scripps National Spelling Bee was inducted into The Order of the Squushy Carrots.

Kate Miller and Katharine Wang asked Sriram Hathwar a couple of nonsensical questions, then Kate held her thumbs and forefingers up to Sriram’s forehead and said, “Ding!”

Kate and Katherine sang, in two-part harmony, the group’s theme song: “The Order of the Squushy Carrots; at least we don’t have hair like parrots. Every day we walk the earth forever alone; no one in the Order plays the sousaphone.”

The Order came into being several years ago — it even has its own logo — and has become one of the more popular social media groups that helps spellers stay in touch during the 51 weeks of the year when they aren’t at the bee.

Kate and Katharine, both at the nationals for the third time, have become best buds even though Kate, 14, lives in Abilene, Texas, and Katharine, 12, now lives in Morristown, New Jersey, after representing China the last two years.

They are among 281 contestants ages 8 to 15 vying this week for the title of top speller in the English language.

The bee began Tuesday morning with a computerized spelling and vocabulary test, with onstage rounds starting Wednesday on the way to Thursday’s prime-time fi-



CLIFF OWEN / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sriram Hathwar, 13, of Painted Post, N.Y., spells “flâneur” during the semifinal round of the 2013 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Oxon Hill, Md.

nales.

The competition is a social experience, and groups like the Squushy Carrots help make those relationships last.

“This is a place where we can really connect and stay in touch, and rejoice through happy times and help each other in the hard times,” Kate said.

Another group is the “Ghetto-pens” — whose name is “something only spelling geeks would get,” said member Jae Canetti of Reston, Virginia. It’s actually a play on “guetapens” (pronounced GEHT’-uh-pahns), the winning word from the 2012 national bee. About seven people are in the group, and they keep in touch about school, friends, family — and sometimes about spelling.

Vanya Shivashankar, 12, of Olathe, Kansas, is both a Ghetto-pen and a Squushy Carrot.

“It’s just really fun meeting all the people who are there,” Vanya said, “and just having fun with your friends.”

Pope’s visit aimed at eliminating abuse

NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

Pope Francis said his plan to meet with a group of sex abuse victims is part of an effort to move forward with “zero tolerance” in confronting and preventing clergy abuse, but the head of a U.S. victims’ group has dismissed the upcoming session as a meaningless gesture.

Cardinal Sean O’Malley, the archbishop of Boston, is organizing the meeting with a half-dozen victims. It will mark the first such encounter for the pope, who has been criticized by victims for not expressing personal solidarity with them when he has reached out to other people who suffer.

“On this issue we must go forward, forward. Zero tolerance,” Francis said, calling abuse of children an ugly crime that betrays God.

He said the meeting and a Mass at the Vatican hotel where he lives would take place early next month.

The Archdiocese of Boston said in a statement that the details of the meeting haven’t been finalized yet, and that O’Malley “looks forward to supporting this effort by Pope Francis in whatever manner will be most helpful.”

The archdiocese said the meeting was expected to take place “in the coming months.”

O’Malley was instrumental in setting up a meeting six years ago between clergy sex-abuse victims and Francis’ predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI.

In April 2008, Benedict and O’Malley met for about 25 minutes with about a half-dozen victims, all adults from O’Malley’s archdiocese who had been molested when they were minors.

David Clohessy, executive director of the main U.S. victims’ group, Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, or SNAP, said Pope Francis has shown himself to be capable of making real change in other areas such as church governance and finance but has not done so in dealing with sexual abuse by Catholic clergy.

“The simple truth is this is another gesture, another public relations coup, another nice bit of symbolism that will leave no child better off and bring no real reform to a continuing, scandal-ridden church hierarchy,” he said.

Clohessy said the meeting “is just utterly, utterly meaningless.”

A lawyer who represents clergy abuse victims said he hoped the meeting would be “substantive and meaningful” rather than for cosmetic purposes.

Boston attorney Mitchell Garabedian said “meeting directly with victims is the most powerful tool that the pope can use in understanding the ugliness and horror of clergy sexual abuse and why it must be stopped or prevented.”

He added that there should be more than one such meeting.

The pope also revealed that three bishops are currently under investigation by the Vatican for abuse-related reasons. It was not clear if they were accused of committing abuse itself or of having covered it up.

“There are no privileges,” Francis told reporters en route back to Rome from Jerusalem.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER DEEPTI HAJELA REPORTED FROM NEW YORK. ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER JOSH CORNFIELD IN PHILADELPHIA CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT.

Californians seeking money stashed by ‘Hidden Cash’

SAN FRANCISCO — Someone’s dropping envelopes full of cash across San Francisco, causing a social media frenzy.

The mysterious person with the Twitter handle @HiddenCash has been hiding money throughout the city since Friday. His Twitter following has exploded from a few hundred on Friday to more than 75,000 and counting by Tuesday.

Hidden Cash’s creator said his giveaways are a “social experiment for good.” He claims to make his money off San Francisco’s real estate market and hopes that winners also pay it forward.

Adam Wenger, a 27-year-old web producer, said he won \$200, finding two envelopes Friday in the city’s South of Market District.

First lady responds to schools meal critics

WASHINGTON — First lady Michelle Obama is striking back at House Republicans who are trying to weaken new school meal standards, saying any effort to roll back the guidelines is “unacceptable.”

The rules set by Congress and the administration over the last several years require more fruits, vegetables and whole grains in the lunch line and set limits on sodium, sugar and fat. The first lady met Tuesday with school nutrition officials who said the guidelines are working in their schools.

The first lady suggested that the conversation should be focused on helping schools rather than rolling back some of the standards completely.

The Agriculture Department has tweaked rules to try to help schools that have concerns. The department scrapped limits on the amount of proteins and grains that kids could eat after students complained they were hungry.

A spending bill approved by a House subcommittee last week would allow schools to waive the standards if they have a net loss on school food programs for a six-month period.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEXAS/SOUTHWEST

3-car wreck
near Refugio
kills 4 people

CORPUS CHRISTI — Officials say four people have died in a three-vehicle wreck after an SUV hydroplaned near Refugio.

Department of Public Safety spokesman Cpl. Charlie Ramirez said a Chevrolet Suburban traveling south on U.S. 77 lost control Monday evening on the wet highway, going into the northbound lane, where it struck a Ford Mustang. A Nissan Altima then struck the Mustang.

Ramirez told the Corpus Christi Caller-Times two people in the Suburban and two people in the Mustang died.

He said 12 people total were in the three vehicles. Other passengers suffered injuries that were not considered life threatening.

Ramirez said the Suburban was traveling to the Rio Grande Valley. The other cars were headed to the Houston area.

George W. Bush has surgery
for partial knee replacement

DALLAS — Former President George W. Bush has successfully had a partial knee replacement in Chicago.

Bush spokesman Freddy Ford said Bush had the procedure Saturday and returned home to Dallas Monday. Ford said in an email Tuesday that Bush was “doing great” and was able to “get up, walk around and go up and down stairs just a couple hours after the procedure.”

Ford said he wouldn’t release further details.

Bush is known as a fitness buff. Since leaving the White House, the 67-year-old has hosted an annual 100-kilometer mountain bike ride in which he rides along with those injured in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He participated in the ride earlier this month at his Crawford ranch.

He had a heart procedure to ease a blocked artery in August.

Woman eats 2 72-ounce steaks
in fewer than 15 minutes

AMARILLO — A competitive eater from Nebraska has set a record by quickly devouring a 72-ounce steak at an Amarillo steakhouse, and then chasing it down with another 72 ounces.

The Amarillo Globe-News and the Twitter page for the Big Texan Steak Ranch said on Monday Molly Schuyler downed the 4 1/2-pound slab of beef in 4 minutes, 58 seconds.

She then took a more pedestrian time of 9:59 to finish the second.

The restaurant rewards anyone with a free meal if they eat not just the 72-ounce steak, but also a baked potato, shrimp, a salad and bread roll in less than an hour.

The previous record was 8:52.

In February, Schuyler, a 5-foot-7, 125-pound mother from Bellevue, Nebraska, ate 363 chicken wings in 30 minutes to set a record.

Jimmy Dean Museum plans
to break ground in June

PLAINVIEW — A museum dedicated to the country singer and sausage mogul Jimmy Dean plans to break ground next month.

Wayland Baptist University and the Museum of the Llano Estacado will break ground June 24 on the Jimmy Dean Museum addition to the museum on the Wayland campus in Plainview, Dean’s hometown.

The Dean family contributed \$1 million to the university in 2008 in what is the largest cash gift in school history. The museum will cost about \$5 million to complete and will house memorabilia from Jimmy Dean’s personal collection. It will depict Dean’s life from its beginnings in northeastern Plainview to his career in music, television and business.

A bronze statue of Dean will be delivered this week and will be moved to the museum entrance.

Work from Islamic collection
on view in Dallas museum

DALLAS — The Dallas Museum of Art is displaying the first item from a rarely-shown Islamic art collection that it recently got on long-term loan.

The carved crystal pitcher went on display Tuesday at the museum. The ewer from late 10th- to 11th-century Egypt was cut from a single piece of rock crystal.

It is part of the Keir Collection, which is one of the largest private holdings of Islamic art. The museum announced earlier this year that the collection of almost 2,000 works was coming to Dallas as part of a 15-year renewable loan.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS



Congressman Ralph Hall leaves a Rockwall polling station Tuesday after voting. In his bid for an 18th term, the oldest-ever congressman, lost to a Republican challenger half his age. The 91-year-old Hall lost to 48-year-old John Ratcliffe in Tuesday’s primary runoff.

Representative loses 18th bid

91-year-old
lost to man
half his age

WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press

A 91-year-old Texas congressman who first won his seat when Jimmy Carter was president faced the toughest test of his political career Tuesday from a Republican primary challenger half his age.

Ralph Hall, who first ran for political office in 1950 and is the oldest-ever member of the U.S. House, has promised that should he win an 18th term, it’ll be his last. But his opponent, John Ratcliffe, 48, was seeking to oust him in a primary runoff — claiming he’s the stronger conservative.

And in Tuesday’s primary, Hall lost to Ratcliffe.

With no Democratic candidate, Ratcliffe will run unopposed in November.

Hall’s district stretches from

suburban Dallas to the Louisiana and Oklahoma borders and features an airport, expressway and man-made lake project named after him.

In the March primary, Hall won 45 percent of the vote compared to Ratcliffe’s nearly 29 percent, but since no one won a majority in a six-way race, Hall was forced into the first runoff of his congressional career. Second rounds of voting often feature low turnout — especially following a holiday weekend.

A former U.S. attorney, Ratcliffe has used modern analytics to better target would-be voters. He also has won the support of powerful national conservative groups with strong tea party ties, including the Club for Growth and Senate Conservatives Fund.

Hall has relied on more-traditional campaign tactics, using direct mailings and walking the district, interacting with voters and

handing out pennies fitted with bands bearing his name. Since 2010 alone, campaign finance records show Hall spent more than \$34,000 on hams from Honey-Baked Hams — which aides said were gifts for constituents.

As an indication of how seriously Hall is taking Ratcliffe, the congressman recently loaned his campaign \$100,000, the first such loan in at least a decade.

Hall, though, bristles at the notion that he’s not conservative enough. He’s been endorsed by tea party favorite Rep. Michele Bachmann of Minnesota and leading Christian conservative voice and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee.

Last week, U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas praised Hall’s courage while presenting him with an award for his military service. Hall is the only World War II veteran left in Congress seeking re-election.

“He’s running against my birth

certificate,” Hall said of Ratcliffe.

Shortly after leaving a polling site Tuesday in the Dallas suburb of Celina, Joe Stalling said that Hall’s World War II service is a primary reason the 59-year-old attorney voted to re-elect Hall.

“He’s never voted in any way I’ve disagreed with,” Stalling said.

But Stalling also said he didn’t notice much in their campaign platforms that separates the two candidates.

“There’s not a dime’s worth of difference between those two, it’s just one is older than the other,” Stalling said.

Ratcliffe has said repeatedly he hasn’t made age an issue, arguing instead that Hall has become too cozy with the GOP establishment after 34 years in office. He conceded though, that in addition to Hall’s record or wanting to send an anti-incumbency message, some voters “specifically cite his age.”

“I think it’s fair to consider that,” Ratcliffe said. “They’re raising it as a reason.”

New rules follow pipeline defects

IOAN LOWY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Safety regulators have placed two extra conditions on construction of TransCanada Corp.’s Keystone XL oil pipeline after learning of potentially dangerous construction defects involving the southern leg of the Canada-to-Texas project.

The defects — high rates of bad welds, dented pipe and damaged pipeline coating — have been fixed. But the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration wants to make sure similar problems don’t occur during construction of the pipeline’s controversial northern segment, which is on hold pending the Obama administration’s decision.

One condition requires TransCanada to hire a third-party contractor chosen by the pipeline safety agency to monitor construction and report to the U.S. government on whether the work is sound.

The second requires TransCanada to adopt a quality management program to ensure “this pipeline is — from the beginning — built to the highest standards by both Keystone personnel and its many contractors.”

The conditions are buried near the end of the 26 appendices in a voluminous environmental impact statement on Keystone XL released by the State Department on Jan. 31.

Most of Appendix Z is devoted to 57 “special conditions” that TransCanada agreed to three years ago. But conditions 58 and 59 are listed on an additional page.

The new conditions were added four months after the pipeline safety agency sent TransCanada two warning letters last year about defects and other construction problems on the Keystone Gulf Coast Pipeline, which extends from Oklahoma to the Texas Gulf Coast.

“From the start of welding, TransCanada experienced a high weld rejection rate,” said one let-



TONY GUTIERREZ / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Federal authorities have ordered new construction requirements for the Keystone XL oil pipeline after regulators learned of potentially dangerous defects in its southern leg. Large sections of pipe are shown in the northeast Texas town of Sumner near the Oklahoma border.

ter dated Sept. 26. More than 72 percent of welds required repairs during one week.

The safety agency found TransCanada wasn’t using approved welding procedures to connect

Another letter, dated Sept. 10, said a government inspector witnessed TransCanada officials investigating dents in pipeline that had been laid without first sufficiently clearing rock from trenches or from soil used as backfill. The same letter said coating that protects pipeline from corrosion was damaged by weld splatter because a contractor hadn’t followed welding procedures.

Dents and damaged coatings are serious defects because they can weaken pipes and lead to failures, Bea said.

Damon Hill, a spokesman for the pipeline safety agency, said the additional conditions were the result of observations in the field during projects from pipeline operators over the past few years, as well as the agency’s general knowledge and experience.

The level of defects is indeed cause for alarm and indicative of something that is going on in the Keystone organization that isn’t satisfactory.

ROBERT BEA

Biofuel
plant
ablaze

The area was briefly
evacuated, fire put out

IUAN CARLOS LLORCA
Associated Press

ANTHONY, N.M. — A New Mexico biofuel facility caught fire Tuesday, sending a giant column of black smoke into the air and prompting authorities to briefly evacuate an area that includes about 350 homes.

A series of small explosions was reported at the Rio Valley Biofuels plant near the town of Anthony, but there was no immediate word of any injuries, Dona Ana County spokesman Jess Williams said. Operations manager Jed Smith said he believed all five employees who work at the plant were OK.

County officials activated their emergency operations center and declared a hazardous materials emergency, Williams said. The immediate area was evacuated, but residents were allowed back in to their homes by early afternoon.

Anthony is on the New Mexico-Texas border between Las Cruces, New Mexico, and El Paso, Texas.

Witnesses described hearing loud explosions and seeing large flames as fire trucks and emergency responders rushed to the scene.

The fire was first reported shortly after 9 a.m. Crews were still dousing the site with water several hours after the accident.

Williams and Smith both said the cause was not yet known.

County hazardous-materials specialists plan to inspect the site further to determine what chemicals may have been affected or released in the fire.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER PAUL DAVENPORT CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT FROM PHOENIX.



GERALD HERBERT / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Visitors line up to tour the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's 'Hurricane Hunter' in New Orleans, May 21, as part of a five-day Gulf Coast tour. The plane also earlier visited Corpus Christi and Houston, and later Tallahassee, Fla. and Tampa, Fla.

Drones in forecast for research

Federally funded project to allow scientists to gather data about hurricane intensity using unmanned aircraft

JENNIFER KAY
Associated Press

The point where the roiling ocean meets the fury of a hurricane's winds may hold the key to improving storm intensity forecasts, but it's nearly impossible for scientists to see.

That may change this summer, thanks to post-Hurricane Sandy federal funding and winged drones that can spend hours spiraling in a hurricane's dark places, transmitting data that could help forecasters understand what makes some storms fizzle while others strengthen into monsters. Knowing that information while a storm is still far offshore could help emergency managers better plan for evacuations or storm surge risks.

A hurricane is like an engine, and warm ocean water is its fuel. One secret, scientists say, is getting a better understanding of how the warm water transfers energy to tropical storms.

"We really need to get a better idea of what's going on down there before we even look to improve our intensity forecast," said Joe Cione, who studies how storms interact with the ocean at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Hurricane Research Division in Miami.

Hurricane hunter aircraft typically don't fly below 5,000 feet and can't descend below 1,500 feet, and real-time radar doesn't provide information about the thermodynamics at work inside a storm's cloudy core. Canisters stuffed with electronics dropped from the planes transmit data about a storm's pressure, temperature, winds and moisture as they fall to the ocean, but they remain airborne for only a few minutes.

The kind of drone that Cione plans to launch from the hurricane hunters will spend hours descending slowly, cruising on the air currents spinning through a storm, possibly even orbiting a hurricane's eyewall. The amount of data the 3-foot, 7-pound drone — the Coyote, shaped like a thin missile with retractable wings — could collect



J PAT CARTER / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Joe Cione displays a research drone he hopes to use this hurricane season. Researchers plan to test five or six drones that will transmit data that could help forecasters understand what makes some storms fizzle while others strengthen into monsters.

in the lowest parts of a hurricane would give researchers a movie compared to the snapshots sent back by the canisters, Cione said.

The drones have propellers and are controlled by someone in the hurricane hunter aircraft, but they are designed to float on air currents, not fly against strong winds. The small drones are disposable — once they hit the water, they won't be recovered.

Hurricane forecasters have gotten good at predicting where a storm will hit, and the so-called cone of uncertainty that shows a storm's likely path will shrink again this year. Improvements in predicting changes in the intensity of storms, though, have lagged.

Several factors can alter a storm's intensity, such as cold water from the ocean's depths mixing with warm water at the surface, wind shear, the cyclical rebuilding of the wall of clouds that ring a hurricane's eye or a change in the energy a storm is pulling from the ocean. That last variable is what Cione calls a data void region, and it's where the drones will aim.

"There's a reason you don't have hurricanes over land — they need the water, they need that evaporation and condensation, which is the source of their energy. So, how does that happen?" Cione said. "If we can't sample this region very well, very accurately, all the time, we could have the potential to miss how much energy is coming out of the ocean by a third or a half."

Cione plans to test five or six drones in the peak of hurricane season, and possibly next year, to see how well they communicate data in real time. The \$1.25 million project is among other National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration hurricane research funded by last year's Sandy supplemental appropriations bill that authorized \$50.7 billion for disaster relief agencies.

The potential for the data collected by the drones is priceless, Cione said.

"A lot of people talk about first responders, and I have the utmost respect for that, but we're sort of like pre-first-responders," Cione said. "Imagine these type of things out there 12 hours before landfall, and it's a category higher than we think. Maybe that's the difference between evacuating people and not evacuating people."

It's the kind of information forecasters would have liked to have had when Hurricane Charley suddenly strengthened to Category 4 as it sped into southwest Florida in 2004.

Forecasters knew where it was going, and they warned coastal residents to prepare for a possibly major hurricane. But they couldn't see that it would intensify into a monster even as it approached land — forecasters still can't explain what's behind that rapid intensification process.

"At the 11th hour, having the intensity information is good, yes. It helps me to tell people, 'Stay where you are, don't go outside because you're now putting yourself at far greater risk of injury from flying debris,'" said Wayne Sallade, Charlotte County Emergency Management director, who is still chief almost a decade after Charley's landfall.

However, it would be even more helpful to know more about whether a hurricane might continue strengthening when it's 36 hours or more from landfall, Sallade said. That would help determine the risk of storm surge, the dangerous water rise created by tropical storms.

Intensity forecasts may just need a little tweaking, not a complete overhaul, to improve dramatically, said Florida International University hurricane expert Hugh Willoughby, who led National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Hurricane Research Division from 1995 until 2002.

"I think the problem is we're not getting enough of the details right," Willoughby said. "It's not something where there's going to be a huge breakthrough."

DEADLIEST TEXAS HURRICANES SINCE 2000



PHOTO COURTESY NASA

Ike was a Category 4 hurricane, but it made Texas landfall as a Category 3 on Sept. 13, 2008, resulting in **84** Texas deaths and \$29.5 billion in total damages.



PHOTO COURTESY NASA

Rita was a Category 5 hurricane, but it made Texas landfall as a Category 3 on Sept. 24, 2005, resulting in **59** Texas deaths and \$12 billion in total damages.

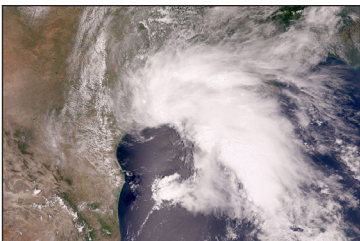


PHOTO COURTESY NASA

Tropical storm Allison made Texas landfall on June 7, 2001, resulting in **23** Texas deaths and \$9 billion in total damages.

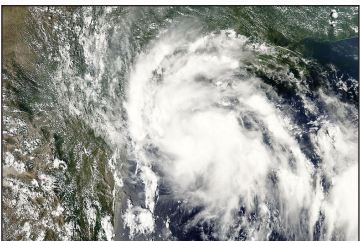


PHOTO COURTESY NASA

Tropical storm Erin made Texas landfall on Aug. 16, 2007, resulting in **9** Texas deaths and \$66.8 million in total damages.



PHOTO COURTESY NASA

Tropical storm Hermine made Texas landfall Sept. 7, 2010, resulting in **5** Texas deaths and \$740 million in total damages.

SOURCE: NOAA

N.D. TORNADO



JILL HELMUTH / ASSOCIATED PRESS

A tornado touches down on a ranch before heading towards Watford City, N.D. on Monday. Authorities say the twister injured several oil workers and damaged more than a dozen trailers when it tore through a workers' camp.

Freak tornado injures 9; topples N.D. trailer park

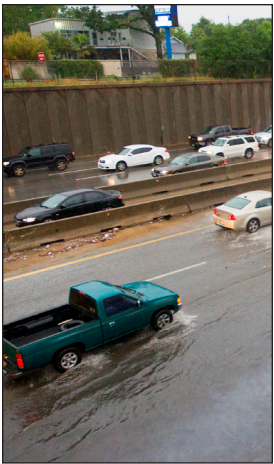
JOSH WOOD
Associated Press

WATFORD CITY, N.D. — A rare North Dakota tornado that critically injured a 15-year-old girl and hurt eight other people at a workers' camp in the heart of the state's booming oil fields measured winds that peaked at 120 mph, the National Weather Service said Tuesday.

The twister touched down Monday night at 7:50 p.m. at a camp just south of Watford City, about 50 miles southeast of Williston, and damaged or destroyed 15 trailers. The 15-year-old, who was from out of state and visiting an aunt and uncle, was flown to a hospital in Minot. She was in an intensive-care unit with a head injury but expected to survive, McKenzie County Emergency Manager Jerry Samuelson said Tuesday.

Samuelson did not release the girl's name. Eight other people were treated at a Watford City hospital for less serious injuries. The American Red Cross said eight residents spent the night at a shelter in Watford and that several families were among the dispossessed.

TEXAS FLOOD



CODY DUTY / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vehicles make their way through high water on the North Freeway Tuesday, May 13 in Houston. CenterPoint Energy had about 2,800 power outages Tuesday afternoon as crews worked to restore power following rain that slowed Houston-area traffic.

Severe thunderstorms kill 1, hospitalize 12

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — A woman was killed and 12 construction workers were injured Tuesday in two separate incidents related to the thunderstorms that swept across Texas.

Fire crews responded to an emergency in northeast Houston and found a dead woman lying in a puddle next to fallen branches and power lines, Houston fire department spokesman Kenyatta Parker said. They could not immediately determine her cause of death.

In an email, a contractor said 12 construction workers were hospitalized after a tent collapsed on them while they took shelter from the weather in La Porte, southeast of Houston.

National Weather Service forecaster Brian Kyle said the storms produced winds from 35 to 50 mph and up to an inch of rain over the Houston metro area.

Mark Wiley, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Dallas, said the area between Austin and Houston received about eight inches of rain.