

Manhunt For Ex-Police Officer Continues

BIG BEAR LAKE, Calif. (AP) — All that was left were footprints leading away from Christopher Dörner’s burned-out pickup truck, and an enormous, snow-covered mountain where he could be hiding among the skiers, cabins and dense woods.

More than 100 officers in glass-enclosed snow machines and armored personnel carriers sought the former Los Angeles police officer suspected of going on a deadly rampage and vowing to go after those on the force who wronged him.

With bloodhounds in tow, officers went door to door as snow fell, aware to the reality that they could be walking into a trap set by the well-trained former Navy reservist who knows their tactics and strategies as well as they do.

“The bad guy is out there, he has a certain time on you, and a distance. How do you close that?” asked T. Gregory Hall, a retired tactical supervisor for a special emergency response team for the Pennsylvania State Police.

“The bottom line is, when he decides that he is going to make a stand, the operators are in great jeopardy,” Hall said.

Former Officer’s Ex Calls Him ‘Disturbed’

ORANGE, Calif. (AP) — Court documents show an ex-girlfriend of a former Los Angeles police officer suspected of three murders called him “severely emotionally and mentally disturbed” after the two split in 2006.

Documents obtained by The Associated Press on Friday show ex-officer Christopher Dörner unsuccessfully requested a restraining order against his ex-girlfriend after she posted his badge number on a website called Dontdatehimgirl.com.

In the posting, Ariana Williams calls Dörner “twisted” and “super paranoid” and warns other women on the website not to date him.

Dörner is suspected of killing a former LAPD captain’s daughter, her fiancé and a Riverside police officer. He’s also suspected of wounding two other officers.

Dörner posted a 14-page manifesto online vowing revenge for his 2008 firing from the LAPD.

Protesters Clash With Police Across Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptian security forces backed by water cannons fired tear gas at rock-throwing protesters outside the presidential palace in Cairo on Friday while demonstrators clashed with riot police in cities across the country in marches against Islamist President Mohammed Morsi.

The protests are part of a wave of opposition-led demonstrations over the past two weeks that have frequently devolved into street clashes. The violence has left more than 70 people dead and hundreds wounded, and plunged the country into a fresh cycle of bloodshed and political turmoil.

Egypt’s opposition is demanding Morsi form a new coalition government, open an investigation into the killings of protesters over the past months and give guarantees that upcoming parliamentary elections will be fair and free. They also want him to form a commission to amend the country’s newly adopted constitution, which was drafted by an Islamist-led panel and approved last December in a contentious referendum.

Rebel Push Into Damascus Heightens Fears

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian rebels brought their fight within a mile of the heart of Damascus on Friday, seizing army checkpoints and cutting a key highway with a row of burning tires as they pressed their campaign for the heavily guarded capital, considered the likely endgame in the nearly 2-year-old civil war.

The clashes raised fears that Damascus, a major cultural center and one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited cities, could fall victim to a protracted battle that would bring the destruction seen in other major cities and trigger a mass refugee exodus into neighboring countries.

“Any attempt by the rebels to advance into central Damascus would mean the beginning of a very long fight,” said Syrian activist Rami Jarrah. “I imagine Aleppo would be a small example of what is likely to happen in Damascus.”

Aleppo, Syria’s largest urban center and main commercial hub, has been convulsed by violence since the summer, when rebels launched an offensive to take control of the city. Since then the fighting has been locked in a deadly stalemate, with the war-ravaged city carved up into government- and opposition-held strongholds.

The latest Damascus offensive, launched from the northeastern side of the city, did not appear to be coordinated with rebels on other sides of the capital, and it was unclear whether the opposition fighters would be able to hold their ground.

Officials: Worst Of Flu Season May Be Over

NEW YORK (AP) — The worst of the flu season appears to be over.

The number of states reporting intense or widespread flu dropped again last week, U.S. health officials said Friday.

The season started earlier than normal, spiking first in the Southeast and then spreading. But now, by some measures, flu activity has been ebbing for at least four weeks in much of the country. Flu and pneumonia deaths have been dropping for two weeks, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported.

“It’s likely that the worst of the current flu season is over,” CDC spokesman Tom Skinner said in an email.

It’s been nine years since a conventional flu season started like this one. That was the winter of 2003-04 — one of the deadliest in the past 35 years, with more than 48,000 deaths. Like this year, that season had the same dominant flu strain, one that tends to make people sicker.

Massive Snowstorm Hits East Coast

BY JAY LINDSAY
Associated Press

BOSTON — A storm that forecasters warned could be a blizzard for the history books began clobbering the New York-to-Boston corridor Friday, grounding flights, closing workplaces and sending people rushing to get home ahead of a possible 1 to 3 feet of snow.

From New Jersey to Maine, shoppers crowded into supermarkets and hardware stores to buy food, snow shovels, flashlights as well as generators — something that became a precious commodity after Superstorm Sandy in October. Others gassed up their cars, another lesson learned all too well after Sandy. Across much of New England, schools closed well ahead of the first snowflakes.

“This is a storm of major proportions. Stay off the roads. Stay home,” said Boston Mayor Thomas Menino.

The wind-whipped snowstorm mercifully arrived at the start of a weekend, which means fewer cars on the road and extra time for sanitation crews to clear the mess before commuters in the New York-to-Boston region of roughly 25 million people have to go back to work. But it could also mean a weekend cooped up indoors.

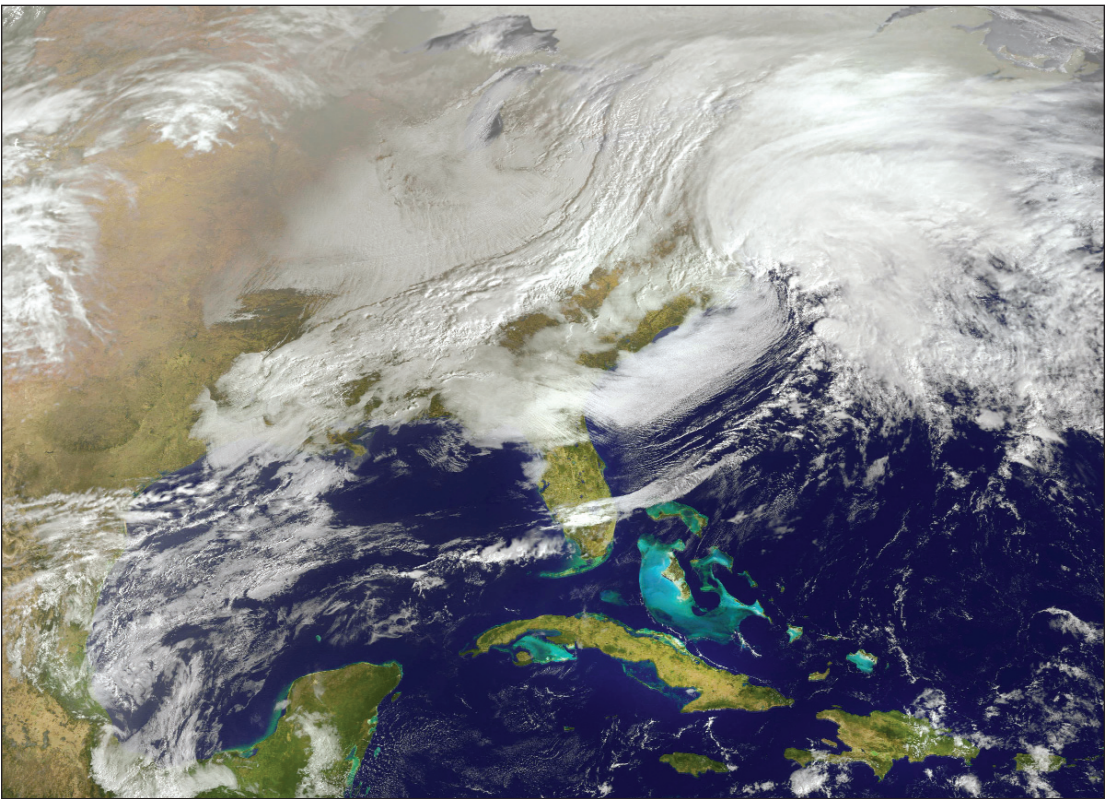
Rainy Neves, a mother of two in Cambridge, Mass., did some last-minute shopping at a grocery store, filling her cart to the brim.

“Honestly, a lot of junk — a lot of quick things you can make just in case lights go out, a lot of snacks to keep the kids busy while they’d be inside during the storm, things to sip with my friends, things for movies,” she said. “Just a whole bunch of things to keep us entertained.”

In heavily Catholic Boston, the Archdiocese urged parishioners to be prudent about attending Sunday Mass and reminded them that, under church law, the obligation “does not apply when there is grave difficulty in fulfilling this obligation.”

Halfway through what had been a mild winter across the Northeast, blizzard warnings were posted from parts of New Jersey to Maine. The National Weather Service said Boston could get close to 3 feet of snow by Saturday evening, while most of Rhode Island could receive more than 2 feet. Connecticut was bracing for 2 feet, and New York City was expecting as much as 14 inches.

By Friday evening, the New York-to-Boston corridor was getting blowing, swirling snow and



NASA/MCT
A massive winter storm is coming together as two low pressure systems are merging over the U.S. East Coast. A satellite image from NOAA's GOES-13 satellite on February 8, 2013 shows a western frontal system approaching the coastal low pressure area. The satellite image, captured at 9:01 a.m. EST, shows clouds associated with the western frontal system stretching from Canada through the Ohio and Tennessee valleys, into the Gulf of Mexico. The comma-shaped low pressure system located over the Atlantic, east of Virginia, is forecast to merge with the front and create a powerful nor'easter.

freezing rain. Early snowfall was blamed for a 19-car pileup in Cumberland, Maine, that caused minor injuries.

The snow was expected to be at its heaviest Friday night and into Saturday. Forecasters said wind gusts up to 75 mph could cause widespread power outages and whip the snow into fearsome drifts. Flooding was expected along coastal areas still recovering from Superstorm Sandy.

Meteorologist Jeff Masters of Weather Underground said the storm was actually a collision of two storms, and may end up among the Boston area’s Top 5 most intense ever.

“When you add two respectable storms together, you’re going to get a knockout punch with this one,” he said.

It could break Boston’s all-time snowstorm record of 27.6 inches, set in 2003, forecasters said. The storm also comes almost 35 years to the day after the Blizzard of ‘78, a ferocious storm that dropped 27 inches of snow, packed hurricane-force winds and claimed dozens of lives.

Masters said the region could get a break from warmer air trailing behind that is expected to push temperature up to the 40s by Monday. “It’s going to be not that difficult to dig out, compared to maybe some other nor’easters in the past, where it stayed cold after the storm went through,” he said.

Drivers were urged to stay off the streets lest their cars get stuck, preventing snowplows and emergency vehicles from getting through. New York City ran extra commuter trains in the afternoon to help people get home before the brunt of the storm hit.

Amtrak stopped running trains in cities around the Northeast on Friday afternoon. Airlines canceled more than 4,300 flights through Saturday, and New York City’s three major airports and Boston’s Logan Airport all but shut down in the afternoon.

Interstate 95 in Rhode Island was closed to all but essential traffic. In Massachusetts, Gov. Deval Patrick enacted a statewide driving ban for the first time since the Blizzard of ‘78. Hours before the ban went into effect at 4 p.m., long

lines formed at gas stations, some of which were almost out of fuel.

James Stone said he was saving the remaining regular gas at his station in Abington, Mass., south of Boston, for snowplow drivers.

“It hasn’t snowed like this in two years,” Stone said. “Most people are caught way off-guard.”

In New York, Fashion Week — a series of designer showings, with some activities held under tents — went on mostly as scheduled, though organizers put on additional crews to deal with the snow and ice, turned up the heat and fortified the tents. The snow did require some wardrobe changes: Designer Michael Kors was forced to arrive at the Project Runway show in Uggs.

For Joe DeMartino of Fairfield, Conn., being overprepared was impossible: His wife was expecting their first baby Sunday. He stocked up on gas and food, got firewood ready and was installing a baby seat in the car. The couple also packed for the hospital.

“They say that things should clear up by Sunday. We’re hoping that they’re right,” he said.

Activists Push Path Towards Citizenship, Nothing Less

WASHINGTON (AP) — Immigration activists on Friday rejected the idea of granting legal status short of citizenship to illegal immigrants in emerging legislation. The activists said that only citizenship would be acceptable for the nation’s 11 million illegal immigrants and that the compromise idea floated by some House Republicans, offering legalization but not citizenship, won’t work.

Frank Sharry, executive director of America’s Voice, said allowing illegal immigrants to legalize their status without the prospect of citizenship would “create an institutionalized group of second-class non-citizens.”

“When we’ve said to a whole group of people, ‘You’re good enough to work here but not good enough to be one of us,’ it hasn’t worked out well,” Sharry said on a conference call with other activists to urge swift action on comprehensive immigration legislation.

A framework for a bipartisan bill in the Senate includes a path to citizenship, which President Barack Obama also supports. But some House Republicans uncomfortable with letting illegal immigrants become citizens — labeled amnesty by critics — have suggested finding another way of dealing with them.

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