

Holmes Notebook Describes ‘Obsession’

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (AP) — In a brown spiral notebook titled “Of Life,” Colorado theater shooter James Holmes scrawled a self-diagnosis of his “broken mind” and de-scribed his “obsession to kill” since childhood.

He made lists of weapons he planned to buy and in-cluded detailed drawings of the theater complete with pros and cons of attacking different auditoriums.

He wrote that his decision to storm the crowded audito-rium came after a “lifelong hatred of mankind,” and that his failures in graduate school served as the catalyst but were not the cause of the violence.

“Most fools will mistake correlation for causation,” Hol-mes wrote. “The message is there is no message.”

However, he also revealed that the “causation is my state of mind for the last 15 years.”

Obama Prods Senate To Renew Program

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama called on the Senate Tuesday to extend key Patriot Act provisions before they expire five days from now, including the gov-ernment’s ability to search Americans’ phone records.

“This needs to get done,” he told reporters in the Oval Office. “It’s necessary to keep the American people safe and secure.”

But with the May 31 deadline fast approaching, there was scant evidence Tuesday of a search for a deal on Capi-tol Hill. The House and Senate stood in recess for the week, and a House GOP leadership aide said there were no talks happening between the two chambers. The aide spoke on condition of anonymity, because the aide was not author-ized to discuss the issue on the record.

The Senate adjourned for its Memorial Day break early Saturday after a chaotic late-night session during which senators failed to pass a White House-backed House bill reforming the phone collection program. Attempts by GOP leaders to extend current law also repeatedly fell short, amid objections from presidential candidate Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., and others.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is calling the Senate back into session on Sunday, May 31, just hours before the midnight deadline, but it’s not clear lawmakers will have any new solution.

Reports Spike In Girls Used In Bombings

GUBIO, Nigeria (AP) — Children are now being seen as potential threats after an “alarming spike” in suicide bomb-ings by girls and women used by Boko Haram militants in northeastern Nigeria, the U.N. children’s agency said Tuesday.

The number of reported suicide attacks has jumped to 27 in the first five months of this year compared to 26 for all of last year, it said.

Tuesday’s report came as Gov. Kashim Shettima of Borno state visited the site of the latest Boko Haram attack and surveyed the damage: 37 people killed Sunday, 400 buildings razed including mosques and 22 vehicles and dozens of motorcycles torched.

“I appeal to you not to flee from your homes. We as-sure you that we are going to rebuild the ancient town of Gubio,” Shettima pleaded.

But locals looking at firebomb attacks that left even the earth and trees scorched said hundreds of traumatized residents already have fled to Maiduguri, the Borno state capital 90 kilometers (55 miles) away.

Gunmen Try To Assassinate Libya’s PM

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) — Gunmen tried to assassinate Libya’s internationally recognized prime minister on his way to the airport in the eastern city of Tobruk on Tuesday, a spokesman for his government said.

Arish Said, head of the government’s media department, said that Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni’s motorcade was attacked and one of his guards was lightly wounded but that there were no fatalities.

“They managed to escape,” Said said.

Prior to the attack, he said armed men who had been protesting outside a session of the Tobruk government’s House of Representatives tried to storm the building, firing shots into the air and demanding al-Thinni be removed from office.

They were “threatening to kill the prime minister and force the House to sack him,” Said said. He identified the men as being funded by “corrupted political financi-ers” linked to powerful Tobruk tribal leaders, without elaborating.

IRS Says Thieves Used Online Agency

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sophisticated criminals used an online service run by the IRS to access personal tax information from more than 100,000 taxpayers, part an elaborate scheme to steal identities and claim fraudulent tax refunds, the IRS said Tuesday.

The thieves accessed a system called “Get Transcript,” where taxpayers can get tax returns and other filings from previous years. In order to access the information, the thieves cleared a security screen that required knowledge about the taxpayer, including Social Security number, date of birth, tax filing status and street address, the IRS said.

“We’re confident that these are not amateurs,” said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. “These actually are organ-ized crime syndicates that not only we but everybody in the financial industry are dealing with.”

Koskinen wouldn’t say whether investigators believe the criminals are based overseas — or where they obtained enough personal information about the taxpayers to access their returns. The IRS has launched a criminal investiga-tion. The agency’s inspector general is also investigating.

Identity thieves, both foreign and domestic, have stepped up their efforts in recent years to claim fraudulent tax refunds. The agency estimates it paid out \$5.8 billion in fraudulent refunds to identity thieves in 2013.

Chief’s Take On Iraqis’ ‘Will To Fight’

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Ash Carter’s blunt assessment that Iraqi forces lack the “will to fight” undermines a central premise of President Barack Obama’s strategy for defeating the Islamic State: that Iraq’s military can effectively handle ground operations so Americans don’t have to.

Carter’s comments in a weekend interview reflect deep concern within some quarters of the administration about the capabilities of Iraq’s security forces. Despite outnum-bering Islamic State forces, the military suffered a major defeat this month in the city of Ramadi. And some officials question whether it can overcome the same sectarian divisions between Sunnis and the Shiite-dominated govern-ment that gave the Islamic State space to thrive.

“The failure, it’s not one of courage,” Marina Ottaway, a Middle East analyst at the Wilson Center, said of the Iraqi military. “It’s one of politics.”

For now, Obama is showing no sign of significantly shifting his strategy or easing his opposition to sending American forces back into combat in Iraq. Instead, the White House is essentially pleading for patience and even more time to train Iraqis.

“That’s a training process that can’t be done in a week,” White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Tuesday. “That’s not a seven-day training course. This is going to require a more sustained commitment.”



A destroyed car is submerged in the Blanco River in Wimberley, Texas, after the flood on Tuesday.

Floodwaters Deepen In Houston After City Gets More Rain

BY KRISTIE RIEKEN
AND PAUL J. WEBER

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Floodwaters deepened across much of Texas on Tuesday as storms dumped almost another foot of rain on the Houston area, stranding hundreds of motorists and inundating the famously congested highways that serve the nation’s fourth-largest city.

Meanwhile, the search went on for at least 13 people who were still miss-ing, including a group that disappeared after a vacation home was swept down a river and slammed into a bridge.

Several more fatalities were reported — four in Houston and one more in Central Texas. That brought to 14 the number of people killed by the holiday weekend storms in Texas and Oklahoma.

Similar search efforts unfolded just south of the Texas-Mexico border, where crews tried to track down the missing and assessed damage in the city of Ciudad Acuna after a tornado killed 13 people Monday.

In Houston, the water rose sharply overnight as about 11 more inches of rain fell, much of it in a six-hour period. By Tuesday evening, most rivers had receded back within their banks.

The floodwaters affected virtually every part of the city and paralyzed some areas. Firefighters carried out more than 500 water rescues, most involving stranded motorists. At least 2,500 vehicles were abandoned by drivers seeking higher ground, officials said.

“Given the magnitude and how quickly it happened, in such a short period of time, I’ve never seen this before,” said Rick Flanagan, Houston’s emergency management coordinator.

The drenching weather threat-ened to linger. Forecasts called for a 20 to 40 percent chance of thunder-storms through the rest of the week in Houston.

The flooding closed several high-ways, and the ones that stayed open became a gridlocked mess.

Interstate 45 near downtown was backed up for miles on Tuesday morn-ing, and a handful of motorists traveled

the wrong way on the highway to retreat from high water.

The small cars weaved between massive 18-wheelers as other drivers stared at them in disbelief. With no end to the backup in sight, some drivers got off the freeway, only to be held up again by water covering nearby access roads.

In the Heights neighborhood about 5 miles from downtown, groups of people roamed the streets after escaping their stalled cars, and police cruisers blocked some dangerous roads.

Some motorists were stuck on I-45 all night, sleeping in their cars until the backup was cleared about 8 a.m.

NBA fans at the Toyota Center, where the Rockets hosted a Western Conference finals game against Golden State on Monday, were asked with about two minutes left in the game not to leave the arena because of the weather.

The game ended before 11 p.m., but about 400 people remained in their seats at 1:30 a.m., choosing to stay in the building rather than brave the flooded roads that awaited them out-side. Up to 150 people stayed all right, according to arena officials.

A spokeswoman for the flood district of Harris County, which includes Hou-ston, said up to 700 homes sustained some level of damage.

Yesenia Lopez and husband, Arman-do, waded through knee-deep water, carrying bags of possessions over their heads. During the night, a nearby bayou overflowed and flooded their apartment complex.

“We tried to do as much as we could, saved the family portraits and stuff like that, but everything else is destroyed,” she said.

The two planned to stay with her mother-in-law.

Dripping with water, she said: “Eve-rything is scary. That’s the first time I lived through something like this, so it gives you a lot to think about.”

Officials in Hays County, about 180 miles west of Houston, said 30 people who had been reported as missing were accounted for by mid-afternoon Tuesday.

Some of the worst flooding in Texas

was in Wimberley, a popular tourist town along the Blanco in the corridor between Austin and San Antonio. That’s where the vacation home was swept away.

The “search component” of the mission ended Monday night, meaning no more survivors were expected to be found, said Trey Hatt, a spokesman for the Hays County Emergency Operations Center.

Eight of those missing from the de-stroyed house were friends and family who had gathered for the holiday, said Kristi Wyatt, a spokeswoman for the City of San Marcos. She said three more were members of another family in a separate situation. An unrelated person was also missing, Wyatt said.

Young children were believed to be among the missing.

The Blanco crested above 40 feet — more than triple its flood stage of 13 feet. The river swamped Interstate 35 and closed parts of the busy north-south highway. Rescuers used pontoon boats and a helicopter to pull people out.

Hundreds of trees along the Blanco were uprooted or snapped, and they collected in piles of debris up to 20 feet high.

The deaths in Texas included a man whose body was pulled from the Blanco; a 14-year-old who was found with his dog in a storm drain; a high school senior who died after her car was caught in high water; and a man whose mobile home was destroyed by a reported tornado.

The Oklahoma Department of Emer-gency Management also reported four fatalities between Saturday and Monday after severe flooding and reports of tornadoes.

In Ciudad Acuna, Mayor Evaristo Perez Rivera said 300 people were treated at local hospitals after the twister, and more than 200 homes had been completely destroyed in the city of 125,000 across from Del Rio, Texas.

Thirteen people were confirmed dead — 10 adults and three infants, including one that was ripped from its mother’s arms by the storm.

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Authority?” Morris said Tuesday. “Emotionally, I would say yes. Technically, we need to make sure it’s done right because there wasn’t proceedings and the hearings to go forth with it.”

Morris said that there are cases of overlapping rail au-thorities in the state and that the authorities could easily work together.

“I don’t see it as a threat to the Napa-Platte Authority,” he said. “If anything, I see it as another enhancement for you in Yankton County.”

Napa-Platte Regional Rail Authority board member Garry Moore — who was also on the County Commis-sion when the board voted to have Yankton County join the authority — spoke at Tues-day’s meeting, saying that the city needs to be wary about what the agreement entails.

“I think you need to walk before you run here and define what this rail author-ity is going to be, rather than all-encompassing,” Moore said. “The way I’m reading the resolution now is, it’s all-encompassing — and it’s really not all-encompassing because you’ll have no au-thority over the Napa-Platte (line).”

Moore said Napa-Platte has jurisdiction on the line all the way up to the switch at Napa Junction that

connects to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe mainline.

However, Morris said the state owns and administers the first two miles of the line, no matter what.

“Technically, the first two miles of that rail is state owned and they have always maintained those first two miles will be state owned,” he said.

The commission voted unanimously to approve an agreement to enter into the Yankton County Regional Rail Authority with the county, and further approved a resolution that would name the city manager and one city commissioner to the authority.

Commissioner Charlie Gross was absent during Tuesday’s meeting.

In other business Tues-day, the commission:

- * Approved the purchase of 11.27 acres of property from the state on the campus of the Human Services Center for \$395,000.
- * Approved the rezoning for lots to be used in the Westbrook Estates housing development.
- * Issued Proclamations for Mental Health Awareness Conference Days, Catholic Daughters of America and Bike to Work, Bike to Play Month.

Follow @RobNielsenPandD on Twitter.

Penn State Frat Linked To Nude Photos Shut Down For 3 Years

BY MARK SCOLFORO
Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — A fraternity linked to a secret Facebook page on which photos of nude and semi-nude women were posted was shut down by Penn State for at least three years on Tuesday after the university’s Inter-fraternity Council recommended a milder punishment.

Penn State said its investigation found some Kappa Delta Rho members had engaged in sexual harassment, hazing that included boxing matches and a “persistent climate of humiliation for several females.”

The university’s vice president for student affairs, Damon Sims, said not all frat members were equally culpable.

“Even so, the sum of the organizational misbehaviors is far more than the university can tolerate from a student organization that seeks its imprimatur,” Sims said.

The university canceled the fraternity’s recognition as a campus organization as of Tuesday, a status that will remain until May 2018.

A phone message left at the State College chapter house wasn’t returned. An email sent to chapter president Tom Friel’s university account also wasn’t returned. A phone number for the president of the chapter’s alumni corporation rang several times before the line went dead.

Penn State said it found members had forced pledges to run errands, clean the house, participate in boxing matches and maintain a painful posture similar to a push-up position, called a plank, with bottle caps under their elbows. Pledges also produced stories with pornographic images and what was described as a sex position of the day. The university said underage drinking and drug sales and use also were problems.

Two women, the university said, were subject to per-sistent harassment.

“The investigative report makes clear that some mem-bers of the KDR chapter promoted a culture of harassing behavior and degradation of women,” Sims said.