

# Black Friday: Thinner Crowds, Protests, Beer

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Black Friday shoppers are starting to look like procrastinators.

The traditional kickoff to the holiday shopping season didn't seem as frenzied as in past years after many die-hard shoppers swarmed stores the night before on Thanksgiving.

Still, millions of Americans headed out in search of deals. In Colorado, the new retail marijuana industry joined in the discounting, as did a brewery in Milwaukee.

The day wasn't all about deals, though. In some regions, shoppers ran into protesters who turned out after a grand jury's decision not to indict a white police officer who fatally shot Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager. Elsewhere, protesters once again called on Wal-Mart to pay its workers \$15 an hour.

Here's a look at what happened this Black Friday:

## STILL NO. 1?

Since 2005, Black Friday has held the crown for the top sales day of the year, according to ShopperTrak, which tracks data at 70,000 stores globally.

That could change this year. The earlier openings on Thanksgiving are eating into Black Friday sales. As a result, the last Saturday before Christmas may edge out Black Friday.

Bill Martin, co-founder of ShopperTrak, said it should be close to a tie.

At Macy's, CEO Terry Lundgren says he thinks Black Friday will still be the company's biggest sales day of the year.

## FERGUSON PROTESTERS

Demonstrators temporarily shut down two large malls in suburban St. Louis as organized rallies nationwide protested a grand jury's recent decision not to indict the police officer who fatally shot Michael Brown in nearby Ferguson.

Protesters also entered a Target and multiple Wal-Mart stores in the St. Louis area, according to Johnetta Elzie, who tweeted and posted videos of the demonstrations.

After being moved out of one Wal-Mart by police, they chanted, "no justice, no peace, no racist police" and "no more Black Friday."

Elsewhere, about 200 people demonstrated near Chicago's popular Magnificent Mile shopping district, calling for a boycott on shopping to show solidarity with the ongoing Ferguson protests.

## MARATHON SHOPPER

At Westfield Fox Valley mall in Aurora, Illinois, parking spaces were plentiful and lines in many stores short or



Dozens of protesters in solidarity with Michael Brown march north on Clybourn Ave., chanting anti-police and anti-corporate slogans, during a Black Friday demonstration that started at Water Tower then proceeded northwest to the North Ave. shopping stores near Clybourn, Friday in Chicago.

non-existent Friday morning. Some groggy shoppers were in their pajama pants.

Kimberly States said it was noticeably quieter than the night before, when she made her first trip to the mall.

"It was a zoo last night around 10 p.m.," she said. "Now it seems like more of the old folks."

States and her daughter were shopping mostly for clothes. She planned to return later Friday with her son.

## BUYER'S REMORSE?

When stores first started opening on Thanksgiving a few years ago, the move was met with resistance by those who thought the holiday should remain sacred.

Some expressed a tinge of guilt even as they snagged deals on the holiday.

"It's ruining the spirit of Thanksgiving," said Cathyliz Lopez, 20, who spent \$700 at Target on Thanksgiving. But, she noted the best deals were on that day.

## U.K. GETS BLACK FRIDAY LESSON

Black Friday is becoming a tradition in the United Kingdom, too, and businesses there are finding it can lead to chaos.

Police were called to help maintain security at some supermarkets and shopping outlets that offered deep discounts starting at midnight.

Greater Manchester Police said there were two arrests and some stores were closed early.

Online retailer Amazon is believed to have introduced the concept of Black Friday to the U.K. four years ago, with more businesses joining every year since.



Linda Jackson, 51, is escorted and ticketed after blocking a street in an act of civil disobedience during a protest in front of Walmart Neighborhood Market on Friday in the West Loop in Chicago. Walmart Neighborhood Market store in Chicago is one of dozens around the country aimed at focusing attention of paltry wages of retail workers.

## WAL-MART WORKERS GET PROTESTS, TOO

About 100 protesters outside a Wal-Mart in Chicago called on the company to pay its workers \$15 an hour and provide more full-time positions.

"Wal-Mart, Wal-Mart, you're no good! Treat your workers like you should!" they chanted.

In Sacramento, California, a protester dressed as Santa Claus was arrested outside of a Wal-Mart, organizers said.

It's the latest round of protests to hit Wal-Mart, with labor organizers saying demonstrations were planned for 1,600 locations Friday.

Brooke Buchanan, a Wal-Mart spokeswoman, said Friday the company is not aware of anyone walking off the job. She said "a handful" of people worked their shifts before joining demonstrations.

## OF BEER AND BUD

Some people wait in the cold for cheap TVs. In Wisconsin, they do it for beer.

People arrived at Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee early Friday to get a shot at the limited-edition Imperial Stout Aged in Bourbon Barrels. A few stood outside overnight.

Brewery spokesman Matt Krajnak estimated around 800 people were in line by the time doors opened, when it was snowing and about 15 degrees.

In Colorado, the new retail marijuana industry joined the holiday rush too. The Grass Station in Denver offered deals on what some are calling "Green Friday." The most popular was an ounce of marijuana for \$50, about \$200 less than the normal price.

Jarret Morgan picked up the last available ounce at the special price. He says it was the best deal he saw this year.

# Police: Man Fired 100-Plus Rounds Downtown

BY JIM VERTUNO  
Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — A gunman fired more than 100 rounds at downtown buildings in Austin and tried to set the Mexican Consulate ablaze early Friday before he died during a confrontation with police, authorities said.

Some of the targeted buildings are near the popular Sixth Street entertainment district, where bars close at 2 a.m., about the same time the shootings began. Thousands of people are typically on the street at that time, Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo said.

"Many, many rounds were fired in downtown Austin," Acevedo said. "With all the people on the streets, we're very fortunate. I give thanks that no one but the suspect is injured or deceased."

Investigators identified the shooter as 49-year-old Larry McQuilliams of Austin. Police said he had a criminal record but didn't release details, and said they were still trying to determine a motive.

Mexico's Foreign Relations Department issued a statement expressing "profound concern and condemnation" of the attack, but also said "there is no evi-



LAURA SKELDING/AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN/TNS  
Police chief Art Acevedo briefs media at a press conference on Friday, Nov. 28, 2014 after a gunman, identified by law enforcement sources as Larry Steve McQuilliams, targeted buildings in downtown Austin including the Mexican consulate, the federal courthouse and Austin police headquarters before being shot and killed by police Friday morning in Austin, Texas.

dence the shots were exclusively directed at our facility."

Other targeted buildings included Austin police headquarters and the U.S. courthouse.

Acevedo said a sergeant, while holding the reins of two police horses after his patrol, shot the gunman just outside the main entrance to police headquarters. But Acevedo said it's not clear if the shot was fatal or if McQuilliams took his own life.

His targets were located throughout downtown

Austin and officers received multiple reports of gunfire, though the entire incident lasted about 10 minutes from the first call, Acevedo said.

Officers approached McQuilliams after he had been shot, but noticed cylinders in his vehicle, which was nearby. They also discovered he was wearing a vest they thought may have been rigged to explode. Officers retreated and a bomb squad was called, but it was later determined that the items were not explosive.

The shooter's white van was still on the street outside police headquarters several hours after the shooting. Its doors, the trunk and hood were open as investigators looked it over.

The fire at the consulate was extinguished before any significant damage was done to the building. The federal courthouse's guard house was shot several times, as was police headquarters, which Acevedo said was "extensively damaged."

As a precaution, a police tactical team later went to the Austin apartment complex where they believed the gunman lived. Some homes close to his apartment were evacuated.

Officers at the scene were seen removing about a dozen small tanks of propane, the type used in camping and the type police said was used in the attempt to set fire to the Mexican Consulate.

Adam Peyton, who lives in the area, said he awoke Friday to see SWAT vehicles and police officers on motorcycles in the southwest Austin neighborhood near the city's well-known Zilker Park. He said the area was "really laid back" and close-knit, where residents know each other and are often out walking their dogs.

## Devastated Town Fights Against ISIS

KOBANI, Syria (AP) — Blocks of low-rise buildings with hollow facades, shattered concrete, streets strewn with rubble and overturned, crumpled remains of cars and trucks. Such is the landscape in Kobani, where the sounds of rifle and mortar fire resonate all day long in fighting between Islamic State extremists and the Syrian town's Kurdish defenders.

Kurdish fighters peek through sand-bagged positions, firing at suspected militant positions. Female fighters in trenches move quickly behind sheets strung up to block the view of snipers. Foreign jets circle overhead.

An exclusive report shot by a videojournalist inside Kobani offered a rare, in-depth glimpse of the horrendous destruction that more than two months of fighting has inflicted on the Kurdish town in northern Syria by the Turkish border.

There, Kurdish fighters backed by small numbers of Iraqi peshmerga forces and Syrian rebels, are locked in what they see as an existential battle against the militants, who swept into their town in mid-September as part of a summer blitz after the Islamic State group overran large parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq.

Helped by more than 270 airstrikes from a U.S.-led coalition and an American airdrop of weapons, the Kurds have succeeded in halting the militants' advance and now believe that a corner has been turned.

## Bomb Blasts At Nigerian Mosque Kills 35

KANO, Nigeria (AP) — Multiple explosions tore through the central mosque in Nigeria's second-largest city on Friday, killing 35 people, police said.

One hundred and fifty others sustained various degrees of injuries in the blasts in the city of Kano, State Deputy Police Commissioner Sanusi Lemu said.

Hundreds had gathered to listen to a sermon in a region terrorized by attacks from the militant group Boko Haram.

Witnesses said heavy smoke could be seen billowing in the sky from a long distance away. Immediately after the blasts, hundreds of angry youth took to the streets in riots, throwing stones, brandishing sticks and shouting at security officials.

The palace of the Emir of Kano is near the central mosque. Palace officials told AP that the Emir, one of the highest ranking Islamic figures in Nigeria, is currently out of the country.

## French President Cheered In Guinea

CONAKRY, Guinea (AP) — French President Francois Hollande brought a message of hope to Guinea on Friday, where thousands of residents lined the roads while clapping, drumming and dancing to catch a glimpse of the first Western leader to visit a country hard hit by Ebola.

Guinean President Alpha Conde greeted his French counterpart at the airport and said that if Hollande could visit the country, then anybody could.

"There is hope," said Hollande. "The hope of those who have been cured. The hope that we can control this epidemic ... The very fact that hope exists."

But the French leader also warned that isolation "in a health crisis can become an economic crisis which can set off a political crisis." Guinea is scheduled to have presidential elections next year, and Conde is the first democratically elected president since its independence from France in 1958.

During a visit of about eight hours, Hollande toured an Ebola treatment center run by Doctors Without Borders, the principal care provider in the epidemic, and congratulated French and Guinean health workers for their bravery.

## Pope Condemns Barbaric War Violence

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Pope Francis urged Muslim leaders to condemn the "barbaric violence" being committed in Islam's name against religious minorities in Iraq and Syria as he arrived in neighboring Turkey Friday for a delicate visit aimed at improving interfaith ties.

Francis sought to offer a balanced message as he met with Turkish political and religious officials at the start of his second trip to the Middle East this year. He reaffirmed that military force was justified to halt the Islamic State group's advance, and called for greater dialogue between Christians, Muslims and people of all faiths to end fundamentalism.

"As religious leaders, we are obliged to denounce all violations against human dignity and human rights," Francis told Mehmet Gormez, Turkey's top cleric and other religious officials gathered at the government-run Religious Affairs Directorate. "As such, any violence which seeks religious justification warrants the strongest condemnation because the omnipotent is the God of life and peace."

Francis condemned the "barbaric violence" by IS against Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities and the destruction of their places of worship.

The Vatican has voiced particular concern about the expulsion of Christians from communities that have had a Christian presence for 2,000 years and has demanded that they be allowed to return home in safety once the conflict settles.

## Islamists Protest In Egypt, 5 Killed

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptian security forces quickly put down scattered protests Friday as an attempt by Islamists to hold the first major anti-government rallies in months fizzled, with at least two protesters and three army and navy officers killed in separate incidents.

The call for nationwide rallies to topple the government marked the first attempt in months to hold large protests in the face of a massive crackdown since the military's ouster last year of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi.

Several mosques listed as gathering points by organizers remained largely empty. Small, scattered demonstrations by a few hundred protesters were quickly quashed by security forces.

The three military officers were killed in separate shootings early Friday morning. The army officers were shot dead in Cairo while the navy officer was killed in Alexandria. After Friday prayers, two civilians were killed in the eastern Cairo neighborhood of Matariya, where security forces clashed with protesters, according to the Health Ministry.

## UN Panel Raps US Record On Torture

GENEVA (AP) — Police brutality, military interrogations and prisons were among the top concerns of a U.N. panel's report Friday that found the United States to be falling short of full compliance with an international anti-torture treaty.

The report by the U.N. Committee Against Torture, its first such review of the U.S. record since 2006, expressed concerns about allegations of police brutality and excessive use of force by law enforcement officials, particularly the Chicago Police Department's treatment of blacks and Latinos. It also called for restricting the use of taser weapons by police to life-threatening situations. But it had no specific recommendation or reaction to a grand jury's decision not to indict the white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri who fatally shot a black and unarmed teenager.

The report also criticizes the U.S. record on military interrogations, maximum security prisons, illegal migrants and solitary confinement while calling for tougher federal laws to define and outlaw torture, including with detainees at Guantanamo Bay and in Yemen. It also called for abolishing interrogation techniques that rely on sleep or sensory deprivation "aimed at prolonging the sense of capture."