

Hurricane Lane lumbers toward Hawaii

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Associated Press

HONOLULU — Hurricane Lane spun in a dangerously unpredictable path today as it lumbered toward Hawaii, dumping rain on the mostly rural Big Island and forcing more than 1,000 people to flee to emergency shelters.

The Category 2 storm had winds of about 110 mph, with stronger gusts. It was unclear when the system would make an expected turn west and barrel toward the island chain. Even though it was not projected to make a direct hit on Hawaii, the storm could pass close to the islands, bringing a huge storm surge, high wind and heavy rain, meteorologists said.

"There's a lot of uncertainty in this forecast," warned Federal Emergency Manage-

ment Administrator Brock Long. "We're going to see torrential rains occur for the next 48 to 72 hours. We hope all citizens are heeding the warning that local officials are putting out."

Early today, National Weather Service meteorologist Chevy Chevalier described flooding on the Big Island as catastrophic. Some areas recorded 35 inches of rain in 48 hours. The hurricane was edging away, and may drop less rain, but the Big Island "is not out of the woods," Chevalier said.

"The sponge is full," he said. "There's nowhere for the water to go except to pond up and flood these areas."

At 5 a.m., the center of the hurricane was about 200 miles south of Honolulu. The island had recorded wind gusts up to 60 mph. Oahu and the other central islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai were bracing



Jessica Henricks

The Wailuku River floods near Hilo, Hawaii. A powerful hurricane unleashed torrents of rain and landslides that blocked roads on the rural Big Island.

for hurricane or tropical storm conditions later today.

Many of the safety concerns focused on high surf and storm surge, Chevalier said.

"We're expecting surf in the 15- to 20-foot range on

the southern shores of these islands," he said. When heavy rain falls on steep mountains,

"that water comes down fast. So it comes down and joins the water that's coming up on the southern shores and what does

that do? If floods the coastal areas."

Police warned tourists to leave the world-famous Waikiki Beach ahead of the storm's arrival in Honolulu. So far, about 1,500 people, mostly on Oahu, were in emergency shelters, said Brad Kieserman of the American Red Cross.

Emergency crews rescued five California tourists from a home they were renting in Hilo after a nearby gulch overflowed and flooded the house on the Big Island.

Suzanne Demerais said a tiny waterfall and small stream were flowing near the home when she first arrived with four friends from the Los Angeles area. But the stream turned into a torrent, and the river rose rapidly over 24 hours.

Hawaii County firefighters, who were in touch with the home's owner, decided to evacuate the group before the

water rose any higher. They floated the five out on their backs, Demerais said.

"It was quite an experience because we weren't planning to have a hurricane during our vacation time," Demerais said.

Elsewhere, a brushfire forced the relocation of a hurricane shelter in Lahaina on the island of Maui. Nearby residents were also being evacuated. A Maui County spokesman said it's not clear if the fire was hurricane related.

Hurricane Lane lashed the Big Island with more than 30 inches of rain in about 24 hours. A wind gust of 67 mph was recorded at Kohala Ranch on the northern side of the island.

About 200 miles north of Hilo, on the state's most populated island of Oahu, employees of the Sheraton Waikiki resort filled sandbags to protect the oceanfront hotel from surging surf.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

McCain's family says he's stopping medical treatment

WASHINGTON — John McCain, the six-term Arizona senator and the Republican presidential nominee in 2008, has chosen to discontinue medical treatment for his brain cancer, his family said today.

In a statement, the family said McCain has surpassed expectations for survival, but "the progress of disease and the inexorable advance of age render their verdict." The family added, "With his usual strength of will, he has now chosen to discontinue medical treatment."

The senator, who would be 82 next week, has been away from the Capitol since December.

McCain, a former Navy pilot, was held as a prisoner of war in Vietnam for more than five years. He was elected to Congress in the early 1980s and was elected to the Senate in 1986, replacing Barry Goldwater, who retired. McCain gained a reputation as a lawmaker who was willing to stick to his convictions rather than go along with party leaders. It is a streak that draws a mix of respect and ire.

McCain underwent surgery in July 2017 to remove a blood clot in his brain after being diagnosed with an aggressive tumor called a glioblastoma. It's the same type of tumor that killed Sen. Edward M. Kennedy at age 77 in 2009.

McCain rebounded quickly, however, returning to Washington and entering the Senate in late July to a standing ovation from his colleagues. In a dramatic turn, he later cast a deciding vote against the Republican health care bill, earning the wrath of President Donald Trump, who frequently cites McCain's vote at campaign events.

Reports: Trump Organization finance chief gets immunity

NEW YORK — Media outlets are reporting that President Donald Trump's bookkeeper for his personal and business affairs for decades has been granted immunity in the federal probe of former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen.

The Wall Street Journal and NBC News, citing anonymous sources, said longtime Trump Organization finance chief Allen Weisselberg got immunity to talk to federal prosecutors in the investigation of hush money Cohen paid to two women who claimed affairs with Trump.

Though not named in the Cohen case, Weisselberg is believed to be one of two Trump executives mentioned in the suit who reimbursed Cohen and covered up the payments by saying they were legal expenses.

Weisselberg has been a Trump confidant who started working for his family in the early 1970s.

National Enquirer had safe with damaging Trump stories

WASHINGTON — The National Enquirer kept a safe containing documents about hush-money payments and damaging stories it killed as part of its cozy relationship with Donald Trump leading up to 2016 presidential election, people familiar with the arrangement said.

The detail comes as several media outlets reported Thursday that federal prosecutors have granted immunity to National Enquirer chief David Pecker, potentially laying bare his efforts to protect his longtime friend Trump.

Trump ex-lawyer Michael Cohen pleaded

guilty this week to campaign finance violations alleging he, Trump and the tabloid were involved in buying the silence of a porn actress and a Playboy model who alleged affairs.

Several people familiar with the Enquirer's parent, American Media Inc., said the safe was a great source of power for Pecker, the company's CEO.

The Trump records were stored alongside similar documents pertaining to other celebrities' catch-and-kill deals, in which exclusive rights to people's stories were bought with no intention of publishing to keep them out of the news. By keeping celebrities' embarrassing secrets, the company was able to ingratiate itself with them and ask for favors in return.

But after The Wall Street Journal initially published the first details of Playboy model Karen McDougal's catch-and-kill deal shortly before the 2016 election, those assets became a liability. Fearful that the documents might be used against American Media, Pecker and the company's chief content officer, Dylan Howard, removed them from the safe in the weeks before Trump's inauguration.

It was unclear whether the documents were destroyed or simply moved to a location known to fewer people.

While Trump denies the affairs, his account of his knowledge of the payments has shifted. In April, Trump denied he knew anything about the Daniels payment. He told Fox News in an interview broadcast Thursday that he knew about payments "later on."

Georgia county scraps plan to close most polling places

ATLANTA — Election officials in a majority black Georgia county voted today to scrap

a widely condemned proposal to eliminate most of their polling places.

Concern about the proposal to close seven of nine voting locations in the rural county was "overwhelming," and is "an encouraging reminder that protecting the right to vote remains a fundamental American principle," the elections board in Randolph County said in a statement.

Voting and civil rights groups applauded the decision but said the episode demonstrates the need to restore Voting Rights Act protections that were tossed out by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013.

The elections board, made up of a black woman and a white man, took about 30 seconds to vote down the proposal, county attorney Tommy Coleman said.

The plan to close polling places had drawn national media attention over the past week, and county officials were inundated with angry emails from all over the country in what Coleman called "a tsunami of attention."

Critics questioned why a county would make it harder to vote during the hotly contested governor's race. Georgia's top elections official, Republican Brian Kemp, is running against Democrat Stacey Abrams, who is trying to become Georgia's first black governor. Both said they oppose the plan.

An independent consultant recommended the consolidation and said the seven polling places in question don't comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The county fired that consultant in a letter sent Wednesday.

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the ACLU of Georgia sent a joint letter Wednesday to election officials in all 159 Georgia counties, urging them to avoid polling place changes that could disenfranchise voters.

Suboxone: More than 72,000 people died in the US from drug overdoses in 2017

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Drug Administration to treat opioid addiction. A mixture of buprenorphine and naloxone, Suboxone reaches some of the same receptors in the body as heroin or prescription opioids, but can help wean addicts off the drugs while easing withdrawal symptoms.

Since June, about a dozen people have participated in treatment through the Oregon Health Plan, the state's version of Medicaid. In the first year, the two doctors certified by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration to prescribe Suboxone can treat up to 30 people each, so the initial cap is 60 patients.

Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare and Columbia Memorial have been looking for referrals from the county's needle-exchange program, the county jail and primary care doctors who have patients struggling with opioid abuse. Some patients first go through detox at Bridge to Pathways in St. Helens, the

closest medical detox to Clatsop County.

"When we started doing this, we thought there was going to be a line out the door and down the street, based on the problem in this community," said Amy Baker, the executive director of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare, the county's mental health contractor. "And we really haven't seen that."

One obstacle is finding people during the often small windows of readiness when they are open to treatment and willing to endure the anxiety of withdrawal. Another is overcoming the stigma among people who may be abusing prescription opioids initially meant to treat pain and, in their minds, do not fit the stereotype of an addict.

"There are people that you see in your everyday life that you wouldn't consider an addict, but they are having a hard time kicking the amount that they're on, and it's really not serving them well, and so trying to taper them down to

what is a more appropriate dose, or to a different medication in general, some people still struggle with that," Schacher said.

"So this is an option for us, from the primary care standpoint, to help those patients wean down from those medications."

Record number

More than 72,000 people in the United States died from drug overdoses in 2017, according to preliminary estimates from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a record number driven by a spike in overdoses from synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl.

While many conservatives, and some in law enforcement, are uncomfortable with treatment options that substitute one powerful drug for another and do not stress abstinence, the Trump administration has embraced medication-assisted treatment in response to the opioid epidemic.

The FDA has encouraged

greater innovation among drug-makers and called for expanded access to treatment, describing it as having the highest probability of success for people in recovery. Three FDA-approved drugs — buprenorphine, methadone and naltrexone — are commonly used in treatment.

The government also recognizes new ways to gauge progress beyond abstinence, such as reducing overdoses, preventing the spread of infectious diseases like Hepatitis C and improving well-being.

"They need medicine to return to work, re-engage with their families, and regain the dignity that comes with being in control of their lives," Alex Azar, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, told the nation's governors in February. "These outcomes are literally the opposite of how we define addiction."

Michael McNickle, the county's public health director, who helped start the needle-exchange program last year, said

medication-assisted treatment is a positive step forward.

"It is important to provide treatment for people struggling with opioid use disorder to prevent overdose or even death," he said in an email. "I believe it is crucial to have access to evidence-based treatments to combat the opioid epidemic, including MAT. I think MAT should only be offered in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies."

Once or twice a week

Launched with startup money from the Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization, which oversees the Oregon Health Plan in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties, medication-assisted treatment is part of a broader effort to treat substance abuse locally.

Patients get prescriptions for Suboxone once or twice a week at the clinic to pick up at pharmacies. While they are subject to urinalysis to screen for drug use, and are expected to attend therapy, they are not

required to stay completely free of other drugs, since the intent is to reduce harm during recovery and avoid the kind of dangerous relapse where there is a higher risk of overdose.

"No. 1, you're keeping people alive," Schacher said. "But you're allowing people to be productive members of society, productive members of our community, present in their family."

Schacher and Baker consider opioid abuse a significant problem in Clatsop County, which also has high rates of methamphetamine and alcohol abuse. Like in many rural communities, substance abuse helps fuel disparities in health care and mental health and bleeds into criminal justice.

"If you want to talk about it as being a choice or a moral failing, go talk to somebody who has lost a loved one to overdose," Baker said. "It's the pain and the frustration of not being able to help somebody when they're struggling in the throes of addiction."

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REENACTMENT

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Admission: Adults \$8 | 55 & older, Active Military & Kids 6-12 \$5 | Kids 5 & Under Free | Parking \$5

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