

Authorities work with armed border group

By CEDAR ATTANASIO and ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press

SUNLAND PARK, New Mexico — Authorities on the U.S.-Mexico border have distanced themselves from an armed civilian group that detains asylum-seeking families, but the United Constitutional Patriots have never been shy about saying they work with Border Patrol agents.

After its activities drew widespread criticism, the group was thrown out of its camp this week for trespassing in Sunland Park, New Mexico, a suburb of El Paso, Texas. Frequent social media posts show masked men in combat fatigues chasing migrants and ordering them to stay put until

border agents arrive. Videos capture agents taking migrants into custody. Jim Benvie, a spokesman for the group, said in a March 7 video on Facebook titled “Hunting illegals/us Mexico border” that he agreed to join the effort because he was “looking for action and video.” He encouraged anyone who “wants to do the militia thing” to come to Sunland Park — with a gun, if available.

“Everything is registered, so you work in hand with the Border Patrol,” he said.

Armed civilian groups have been an intermittent presence on the border for years, portraying themselves as auxiliaries to the Border Patrol and operating in areas where agents are not stationed. As the videos

show, U.S. authorities keep them at arm’s length while also responding to reports of people entering the country illegally.

Customs and Border Protection, which includes the Border Patrol, said today on Twitter that it “does not endorse or condone private groups or organizations that take enforcement matters into their own hands.”

“Interference by civilians in law enforcement matters could have public safety and legal consequences for all parties involved,” the agency said.

The Sunland Park police chief said he had told the small group they could stay as long as they did not try to arrest anyone or hold anybody at gunpoint.

Three Democratic mem-



AP Photo/Cedar Attanasio

A self-styled Patriot stands a quarter mile from a barrier that marks the U.S.-Mexico border in Sunland Park, N.M., hours before being removed from his group's campsite by police.

bers of Congress, including Veronica Escobar of El Paso, wrote FBI Director Christopher Wray asking for an investigation into the presence of armed civil-

ians and any assistance from U.S. authorities.

“The right to stop and detain should be reserved to law enforcement,” they wrote.

Border Patrol spokesman Carlos Antunez said Wednesday that agents will investigate such groups only if a migrant complains, which has not happened with the United Constitutional Patriots.

If the group is detaining migrants, “that’s all they’re doing,” Antunez said. “At that point, we take charge ... We end up arresting the people that entered illegally, and then we take it from there.”

The group’s leader, Larry Hopkins, was arrested last weekend on federal weapons charges. Hopkins, 69, was transferred Tuesday out of a New Mexico jail after suffering unspecified non-life threatening injuries, the Dona Ana County Sheriff’s Office said.



John J. Kim/Chicago Tribune

Mourners view a growing memorial outside the home of 5-year-old Andrew ‘AJ’ Freund.

Illinois boy found buried in shallow grave; parents charged

Associated Press

CRYSTAL LAKE, Ill. — Authorities searching for a missing 5-year-old Illinois boy who had lived in deplorable conditions dug up his body Wednesday and charged his parents with murder, sadly declaring that the youngster would “no longer have to suffer.”

The body, believed to be that of Andrew “AJ” Freund, was covered in plastic and buried in a shallow grave in a rural area of Woodstock in McHenry County, Crystal Lake police Chief James Black said.

Black said investigators went to the site after they interviewed the boy’s parents overnight and presented them with cellphone evidence. Woodstock is about 50 miles northwest of Chicago and a few miles from the family’s home in Crystal Lake.

“This is not the outcome that we want to talk about ... but it is the unfortunate result,” said Jeffrey Sallet, who runs the FBI in northern Illinois.

The parents, Andrew Freund Sr. and JoAnn Cunningham, each face charges of first-degree murder and other crimes.

The couple reported AJ missing last Thursday, telling officers they had last seen him at bedtime the previous night. Freund told a dispatcher that they’d checked “closets, the basement, the garage, everywhere,” but investigators quickly knocked down the possibility of a kidnapping.

Speaking to reporters, Black had a message for AJ’s relatives: “It is my hope that you may have some solace in knowing that AJ is no longer suffering and his killers have been brought to justice.”

Crystal Lake police had visited the house over the years, according to records released by the department. One report described the home as littered with dog feces and urine, including a child’s bedroom where the “smell of feces was overwhelming.” Another report said the house was “cluttered, dirty and in disrepair,” and sometimes without electricity.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Biden launches 2020 bid warning ‘soul’ of America at stake

WASHINGTON — Former Vice President Joe Biden formally joined the crowded Democratic presidential contest today, declaring the “soul of this nation” at stake if President Donald Trump wins re-election.

In a video posted on Twitter, Biden focused on the 2017 deadly clash between white supremacists and counter protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia. Biden noted Trump’s comments that there were some “very fine people” on both sides of the violent encounter, which left one woman dead.

The 76-year-old Biden becomes an instant front-runner alongside Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who is leading many polls and has proved to be a successful fundraiser. Biden has legislative and international experience that is unmatched in the Democratic field, and he is among the best-known faces in U.S. politics.

He quickly racked up endorsements this morning, becoming the first Democrat running for president with the backing of more than one U.S. senator.

Still, Biden must compete in a field that now spans at least 20 Democrats and has been celebrated for its racial and gender diversity. As an older white man with occasionally centrist views, Biden has to prove he’s not out of step with his party. He’s yet to outline his positions on the issues defining the 2020 Democratic primary, most notably “Medicare for All,” the universal health care plan authored by Sanders that has been adopted by virtually the entire Democratic field.

Veteran held on attempted murder counts after car hits crowd

SUNNYVALE, Calif. — A former U.S. Army sharpshooter with a history of PTSD plowed his car at high speed into a group of pedestrians in a quiet Silicon Valley suburb, injuring eight people including three children, and then told authorities that he intentionally hit them but has not said why.

Police in Sunnyvale, California, said Wednesday that Isaiah Joel Peoples, 34, was being held on eight counts of attempted murder. Four of the victims remained hospitalized with major injuries, including a 13-year-old girl in critical condition.

A witness, 72-year-old Don Draper, said he watched in horror as Peoples’ car sped through a crosswalk in a Sunnyvale shopping area Tuesday evening and bodies went flying. It was a warm night, around dinner time and people were out in cafes and restaurants in the area.

Sunnyvale police Capt. Jim Choi said authorities were still trying to determine a motive. There was no evidence linking Peoples to any terrorist organization but the crash was deliberate, he said.

“He did intentionally try to run over the people,” Choi said. “He did not express any remorse, as far as we can tell.”

Ammonia leak sends 31 to hospitals in Chicago suburb

BEACH PARK, Ill. — Plumes of a toxic gas that leaked in a northern Chicago suburb this morning sent at least 31 people to hospitals and prompted an order for residents to stay locked inside their homes with windows shut tight, officials said.

Three law enforcement officers who responded to the leak in Beach Park were among those injured and they were in good condition. Several other people were in serious but stable condition. Authorities said most of those injured suffered breathing problems.

Lake Forest Fire Chief Mike Gallo said a tractor was towing two separate two-ton containers of anhydrous ammonia when the leak occurred around 4:30 a.m. The leak created a toxic cloud that lingered over Beach Park, about 40 miles north of downtown Chicago.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, anhydrous ammonia is a colorless gas that can cause breathing difficulties, burns, blisters and is fatal if breathed in high concentrations. Farmers use it to add nitrogen to soil.

The first two officers who responded to the leak had to retreat because they were overcome by the ammonia.

Texas executes avowed racist in black man’s dragging death

HUNTSVILLE, Texas — An avowed racist who orchestrated one of the most gruesome hate crimes in U.S. history was executed Wednesday in Texas for the dragging death of a black man.

John William King, who was white, received a lethal injection for the slaying nearly 21 years ago of James Byrd Jr., who was chained to the back of a truck and dragged for nearly 3 miles along a secluded road in the piney woods outside Jasper, Texas. The 49-year-old Byrd was alive for at least 2 miles before his body was ripped to pieces in the early morning hours of June 7, 1998.

Prosecutors said Byrd was targeted because he was black. King was openly racist and had offensive tattoos on his body, including one of a black man with a noose around his neck hanging from a tree.

King, 44, was put to death at the state penitentiary in Huntsville, Texas. He was the fourth inmate executed this year in the U.S. and the third in Texas, the nation’s busiest capital punishment state.

King kept his eyes closed as witnesses arrived in the death chamber and never turned his head toward relatives of his victim. Asked by Warden Bill Lewis if he had a final statement, King replied: “No.”

THE DAILY
ASTORIAN

SCHEDULE

Evening listings
THURSDAY

THURSDAY EVENING

A - Charter Astoria/ Seaside - L - Charter Long Beach

APRIL 25

A	L	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
2 KATU	(2)	(5:00) NFL Draft "Round 1" (L)					KATU Special (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel of Fortune	Nightline Prime		News (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel
5 KOMO	(4)	(5:00) NFL Draft "Round 1" (L)					KOMO 4 News (N)	Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	KOMO 4 Primetime News (N)		KOMO4News (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel
5 KING	(5)	NBC News (N)	KING 5 News (N)	KING 5 News (N)	Evening	Superstore (N)	A.P. Bio (N)	Brooklyn 99 (N)	Abby's (N)	Law & Order: S.V.U. "Exchange" (N)		KING 5 News (N)	(35) Tonight Show
6 KOIN	(7)	News (N)	Evening News (N)	Extra	Ent. Tonight (N)	The Big Bang (N)	Young Sheldon (N)	Mom (N)	Life in Pieces (N)	S.W.A.T. "Rocket Fuel" (N)		KOIN News/ 11 (N)	(35) Colbert
6 KIRO	(7)	KIRO 7 News (N)	Evening News (N)	KIRO 7 News (N)	Ent. Tonight (N)	The Big Bang (N)	Young Sheldon (N)	Mom (N)	Life in Pieces (N)	S.W.A.T. "Rocket Fuel" (N)		KIRO 7 News (N)	(35) Colbert
8 KGW	(7)	KGW News at 6:00 p.m. (N)		Tonight Cassidy	Inside Edition	Superstore (N)	A.P. Bio (N)	Brooklyn 99 (N)	Abby's (N)	Law & Order: S.V.U. "Exchange" (N)		News (N)	(35) Tonight Show
9 KRCW	(3)	Modern Family	Modern Family	The Goldbergs	The Goldbergs	Supernatural "Moriah" (SF) (N)	In the Dark "The Graduate" (N)	Midsomer M.	(45) Midsomer "Murder of Innocence"	Friends Pt. 2 of 2		Two and a Half	Two and a Half
10 KOPB	(10)	Expeditions 1/2	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour (N)		Oregon Art Beat	Oregon Guide	Midsomer M.	(45) Midsomer "Murder of Innocence"	Masterpiece Mystery! "Endeavour: Colours"			
12 KPTV	(12)	6 O'Clock News (N)		Family Feud (N)	Family Feud (N)	Gotham "The Beginning" (F) (N)	Orville "The Road Not Taken" (SF) (N)	10 O'Clock News (N)				News (N)	Page Six TV
13 KPDX	(13)	Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	8pm Prime News (N)	Orville "The Road Not Taken" (SF) (N)	9pm Prime News (N)		Big Bang Theory	FamilyGuy 2/2	American Dad!	The Game
15 KCPQ	(13)	Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Gotham "The Beginning" (F) (N)	Orville "The Road Not Taken" (SF) (N)	Q13 NEWS AT 10 (N)		Big Bang Theory	Q13 NEWS AT 10 (N)	Conan (N)	The Simpsons
20 TBS	(20)	Family Guy	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
22 KZJO	(22)	Black-ish	Black-ish	Mom	Modern Family	Mom	Modern Family	Q13 News at 9 (N)		Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Two and a Half	Two and a Half
29 ESPN	(29)	(5:00) NFL Draft "Round 1" (L)					SportsCenter Scott Van Pelt presents the day in sports. (N)			SportsCenter (N)		SportsCenter (N)	
30 ESPN2	(30)	UFC Unleashed "Souza vs. Belfort"		UFC Main Event "Romero vs. Rockhold"		UFC Unleashed "Whittaker vs. Souza"		Rookie Combine	Hey Rookie	The Draft		Now or Never (N)	UFC Flashback
31 NICK	(31)	The Loud House	The Loud House	Double Dare (N)	Dude Perfect (N)	Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked	(11) David Cross, Jenny Slate, Jason Lee.	Friends	Friends	Friends		Friends	(35) Friends
32 DISN	(32)	Jessie Pt. 3 of 3	Coop & Cami	Jessie	Jessie	Sydney to the Max	Coop & Cami	Jessie	Jessie	Sydney to the Max	Coop & Cami	Andi Mack	Raven's Home
34 FAM	(34)	*** Shrek (2001, Animated) Voices of Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Mike Myers.		Cloak & Dagger "Alignment Chart" (N)		*** Shrek Forever After ("10) Voices of Eddie Murphy, Mike Myers.		The 700 Club					
35 FMC	(35)	(4:45) Deepwater Horizon		(35) *** Deepwater Horizon ("16) Kurt Russell, John Malkovich, Mark Wahlberg.		(35) *** Deepwater Horizon ("16) Kurt Russell, John Malkovich, Mark Wahlberg.		*** FXM Presents ("20) *** The Heat ("13, Com) Melissa McCarthy, Michael McDonald, Sandra Bullock.		(40) FXM Presents			
36 LIFE	(36)	LW Atlanta "Diss Means War"		LW Atlanta "Put a Ring on It"		Women "Show Up and Show Out" (N)		LW Atlanta "On the Dotted Line" (N)		(35) Little Women: LA (N)		(35) Women / (15) Little Women: LA	
38 ROOT	(38)	Mariners Access	MarinersPre-game	MLB Baseball Texas Rangers at Seattle Mariners Site: T-Mobile Park - Seattle, Wash. (L)				Post-game		MLB Baseball Texas Rangers at Seattle Mariners			
39 FS1	(39)	Magnify "They Fight"		Boxing Classics	MLB Whiparound (L)			TMZ Sports (N)	Fair Game	Skip and Shannon: Undisputed Opinions on the biggest sports topics of the day.			
43 SPIKE	(43)	Mom	*** Forgetting Sarah Marshall (2008, Comedy) Mila Kunis, Kristen Bell, Jason Segel.			Wife Swap "Goss vs. Joseph" (N)		Wife Swap	"Degarmo vs. Mosby"	Forgetting Sarah Marshall Jason Segel.			
44 COM	(44)	(15) Parks and Rec	(50) The Office "Niagara" Pt. 1 of 2	(25) The Office 2/2	The Office	The Office		The Office		The Office		The Daily Show (N) (35) South Park	
45 HIST	(45)	Swamp People "Cajun Combat"		Swamp People: Blood and Guts Enhanced episodes of the show with bonus content. (N)				American Farm "Invading Hordes" (N)		(35) Swamp People: Blood and Guts			
46 A&E	(46)	The First 48 "Standing Ground"		The First 48 "The Visitor"		The First 48 "Tracked" (N)		Child Bride Heart-wrenching stories of child marriage victims. (N)		(35) The First 48 "Family First"			
47 TLC	(47)	Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	My 600-lb Life: Supersized "LaShanta's Story" (N)		Dr. Pimple Popper "A Lipoma Jackpot"		Untold Stories of the ER "Oh, Deer!"			
48 DISC	(48)	Naked and Afraid "Seminole Forest"		Naked and Afraid "Nicaragua Part III"		Naked and Afraid "Alaskan Tundra"		Naked and Afraid "Mexico Jungle" (N)		Naked and Afraid: Pop-Up Edition (N)			
49 NEOG	(49)	Challenger Disaster: The Lost Tapes		Expedition Mars: Spirit and Opportunity (N)				Rookie (N)		Hubble's Amazing Universe		StarTalk "Actor Jeff Goldblum" (N)	
50 TNT	(50)	(4:00) NBA Basketb.	(4:00) NBA Basketball Playoffs (L)			Inside the NBA		NBA Basketball Playoffs (L)					
51 AMC	(51)	(5:30) *** The Expendables (2010, Action) Eric Roberts, Steve Austin, Jet Li.		*** The Expendables 2 ("12) Liam Hemsworth, Jason Statham, Sylvester Stallone.				*** The Expendables 3 (2014, Action) Jason Statham, Jet Li, Sylvester Stallone.					
52 USA	(52)	(4:00) NHL Hockey Stanley Cup Playoffs		NCIS "React"		NCIS "After Hours"		NCIS "Scope"		Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family
53 FOOD	(53)	Chopped "Double Trouble"		Chopped "Viewers' Vengeance"		Family Food Showdown (N)		Chopped "Squab Goals"		Beat Bobby Flay	Beat Bobby Flay	Beat Bobby Flay	Beat Bobby Flay
54 HGTV	(54)	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop Vegas		FlipFloVegas (N)	Flip or Flop Vegas	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters	House Hunters
56 FX	(56)	(5:00) *** Split ("16, Hor) Anya Taylor-Joy, James McAvoy.		*** The Girl on the Train (2016, Mystery) Rebecca Ferguson, Haley Bennett, Emily Blunt.				Better Things (N)	Better Things	Better Things		Movie	
57 CNN	(57)	Cuomo Prime Time		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Cuomo Cooper 360		Cuomo Prime Time		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon	
58 FNC	(58)	Hannity		The Ingraham Angle		Fox News @ Night		Tucker Carlson Tonight		Hannity		The Ingraham Angle	
61 CNBC	(61)	Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Paid Program	Paid Program
63 BRAV	(63)	(5:30) Below Deck		Project Runway "Power Play"		Project Runway "Elegance Is the New Black" (N)		Project Runway "Elegance Is the New Black"		Watch What (N)		Beverly Hills	
64 TCM	(64)	Movie	(45) *** The Shop Around the Corner ("40) Margaret Sullivan, James Stewart.		(45) *** Gigi (1958, Musical) Louis Jourdan, Maurice Chevalier, Leslie Caron.			*** Ant-Man (2015, Action) Michael Douglas, Evangeline Lilly, Paul Rudd.		The Great Jewel Robber David Brian.			
65 SYFY	(65)	(3:05) *** 10,000 B.C. (2008, Epic) Camilla Belle, Cliff Curtis, Steven Strait.								Happy! "19 Hours and 13 Minutes"			
162 RFD	(162)	SF Machinery	Small Town	Rural America "Live" (N)		Steve Lantvit		Rural News (N)	Grown	Farm Monitor		SF Machinery	Time Life Library