

23 dead, dozens missing in tornado-blasted Alabama community

By KIM CHANDLER AND JEFF MARTIN
Associated Press

BEAUREGARD, Ala. — Rescue crews using dogs and drones searched for victims amid splintered lumber and twisted metal on Monday after the deadliest U.S. tornado in nearly six years ripped through a rural Alabama community. At least 23 people were killed.

Dozens were missing in Lee County nearly a day after the twister struck, according to the sheriff, who said that crews had combed the hardest-hit areas but that other places had yet to be searched.

The winds on Sunday afternoon obliterated numerous homes, leaving huge, jumbled piles of wood and household belongings. Some homes were reduced to concrete slabs. Debris was scattered across the countryside, with shredded metal hanging from the pine trees.

“I’m not going to be surprised if we don’t come up with some more deceased. Hopefully we won’t,” Coroner Bill Harris said.

On the day after the disaster, volunteers used chain saws to clear paths for emergency workers. Neighbors and friends helped one another find some of their



People walk amid debris in Lee County, Ala., after what appeared to be a tornado struck in the area on Sunday.

belongings in the ruins. At the R&D Grocery, rattled residents asked each other if they were OK.

And a big banner that read “#BEAUREGARD-STRONG” was hung on a fence at Beauregard High School. Beauregard is an unincorporated community of roughly 10,000 people about 60 miles east of Montgomery near the Georgia state line.

The National Weather Service said one and possibly two tornadoes struck the area, with a powerful EF-4 twister with winds estimated at 170 mph blamed for most of the destruction.

It carved a path nearly a mile wide and 24 miles long, said meteorologist Chris Darden.

Darden said the “monster tornado” was the deadliest twister to hit the U.S. since May 2013, when an EF-5 killed 24 people in Moore, Oklahoma.

“It looks like someone almost just took a giant knife and scraped the ground,” Sheriff Jay Jones said.

County Emergency Management Director Kathy Carson said she was “pretty sure” that tornado sirens in Beauregard sounded warnings but that authorities were busy with the search-and-rescue and had not yet

a mile of their home as the children and pets took cover in the closet and bathroom.

He said he had been through numerous tornadoes over the years and had never heard one as loud.

“You could feel the energy that it was sucking into that system. It was the most crazy sound,” Willis said. “It sounded like a living, breathing beast.”

“All we could do is just hold on for life and pray,” said Jonathan Clardy, who huddled with his family inside their Beauregard trailer as the tornado ripped the roof off. “It’s a blessing from God that me and my young’ns are alive.”

Beauregard, named for a Confederate general, is in a corner of the same county that is home to Auburn University. The community has a few small stores, two schools and a volunteer fire department dotting the main highway that runs through it.

“Everybody in Beauregard is a real close-knit family,” Clardy said. “Everybody knows everybody around here. Everybody is heartbroken.”

Julie Morrison and her daughter-in-law picked through the ruins of Morrison’s home in Beauregard, looking for keys and a wallet. They managed to sal-

vage her husband’s motorcycle boots and a Bible.

Morrison said she and her husband took shelter in the bathtub as the twister lifted their house off the ground and swept it into the woods.

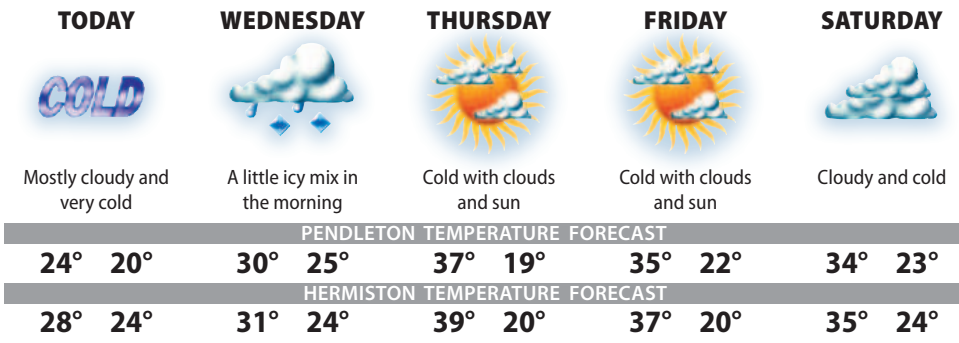
“We knew we were flying because it picked the house up,” Morrison said, figuring that the shower’s fiberglass enclosure helped them survive. She said her son-in-law later dug them out.

Along one hard-hit country road, giant pieces of metal from a farm building dangled from pine branches 20 feet in the air, making loud creaking sounds as the wind blew. For an entire mile down the road, pines were snapped in half. A mobile home crushed by two trees marked the end of the path of destruction.

An early March tornado outbreak in the Alabama-Mississippi area is not unusual, tornado experts said.

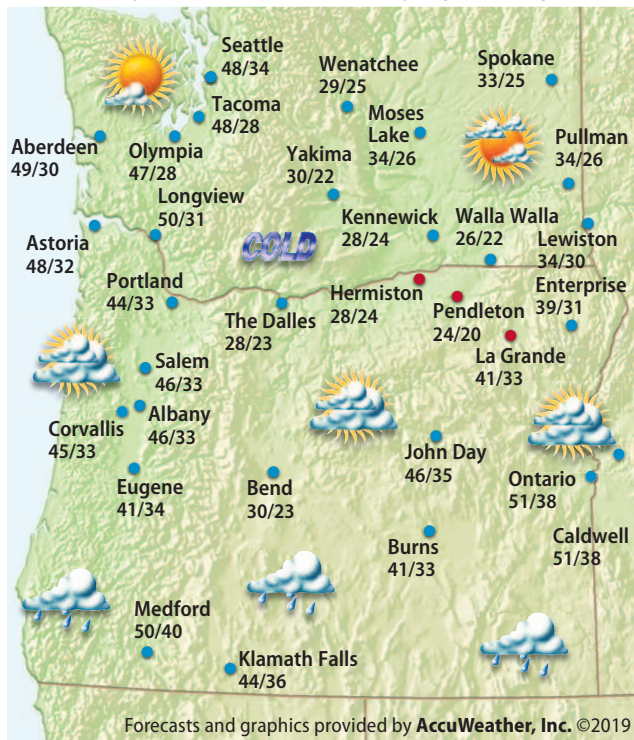
The weather service’s Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, posted forecasts for higher tornado activity in the region on Thursday, three days before the disaster. University of Georgia meteorology professor Marshall Shepherd said government forecasters “were all over it.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



ALMANAC

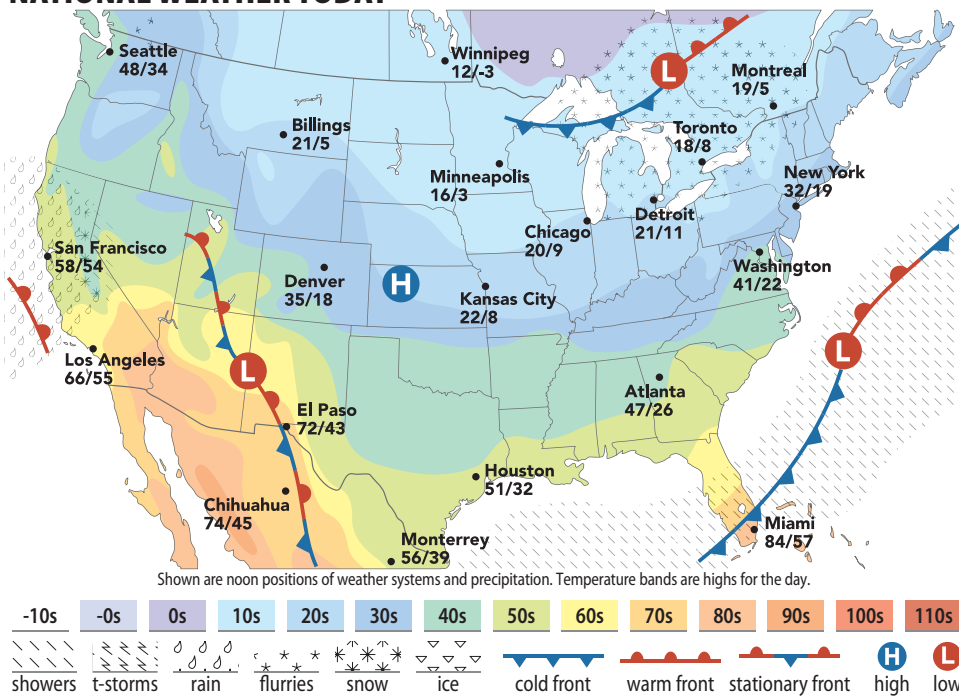
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	19°	16°
Normals	52°	33°
Records	75° (1968)	7° (1896)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	Trace	
Normal month to date	0.13"	
Year to date	4.85"	
Last year to date	2.82"	
Normal year to date	2.64"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	24°	14°
Normals	54°	31°
Records	70° (1987)	14° (2019)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.00"	
Normal month to date	0.14"	
Year to date	3.39"	
Last year to date	1.75"	
Normal year to date	2.38"	
WINDS (in mph)		
	Today	Wed.
Boardman	NE 4-8	NNW 4-8
Pendleton	N 4-8	NNW 4-8
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	6:27 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	5:47 p.m.	
Moonrise today	6:24 a.m.	
Moonset today	4:57 p.m.	

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 91° in Tamiami, Fla. Low -39° in Bozeman, Mont.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



House Democrats launch another aggressive Trump probe

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats launched a sweeping new probe of President Donald Trump on Monday, an aggressive investigation that threatens to shadow the president through the 2020 election season with potentially damaging inquiries into his White House, campaign and family businesses.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler said his panel was beginning the probe into possible obstruction of justice, corruption and abuse of power, and is sending document requests to 81 people

linked to the president and his associates.

The broad investigation could be setting the stage for an impeachment effort, although Democratic leaders have pledged to investigate all avenues and review special counsel Robert Mueller’s upcoming report before trying any drastic action. Nadler said the document requests, with responses to most due by March 18, are a way to “begin building the public record.”

“Over the last several years, President Trump has evaded accountability for his near-daily attacks on our basic legal, ethical, and constitutional rules and norms,”

Nadler said. “Investigating these threats to the rule of law is an obligation of Congress and a core function of the House Judiciary Committee.”

Trump dismissed the Nadler probe and others as futile efforts “in search of a crime.”

“Ridiculous!” he exclaimed on Twitter.

Separate congressional probes are already swirling around the president, including an effort announced on Monday by three other House Democratic chairmen to obtain information about private conversations between him and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Oregon man snowed in with his dog and some taco sauce grateful for rescue

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

PORTLAND — An Oregon man who was rescued after five days stuck in deep snow with his dog is deeply grateful to his rescuers and embarrassed to have caused so much trouble, his aunt told The Associated Press on Monday.

Jeremy Taylor’s 4-wheel-drive vehicle got stuck on Feb. 24 in snow on a U.S. Forest Service road as he headed to do some off-road driving in the wilderness outside of Bend.

As night fell, Taylor, 36, decided to sleep in his car with his Australian shepherd, Ally, and hike out the next day, his aunt, Denise Tremaine said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

Taylor fashioned some snowshoes from pieces of the roof rack he uses for

his kayak and started off on Feb. 25. But after a mile, Taylor had to turn around because the dog was sinking in the deep snow and could not continue.

Taylor carried Ally back to the car and the two hunkered down there, sharing a sleeping bag to keep warm. Taylor had a full tank of gas and was able to blast the heat briefly when it got unbearably cold and ate a few packets of taco sauce he had with him, she said.

He and the dog drank melted ice, but she said she does not think Taylor fed the dog hot sauce.

“That’s his world right there, that dog. She goes everywhere with him,” Tremaine said of the dog. “He would never, ever leave that dog in the car.”

Eventually, Tremaine said, heavy snow from more snowstorms made it impossible for Taylor to open his

vehicle’s door.

At one point, he saw an airplane overhead and raced to push the snow off the car’s roof so rescuers might see him, but it did not work. He did not have a cellphone with him or any emergency supplies, she added.

On Friday afternoon, a snowmobiler found Taylor and he and his dog were brought out of the woods on a snowcat, a type of snow tractor, and they were reunited with family and friends. He returned home to find his roof was damaged from heavy snow and his water pipes were frozen, Tremaine said.

On Monday, he headed back to work and ignored interview requests as well as messages to talk with public relations representatives for Taco Bell. He did not respond to a Facebook message from the AP seeking comment.

CORRECTIONS: The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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