

63 / 42



Mostly cloudy.

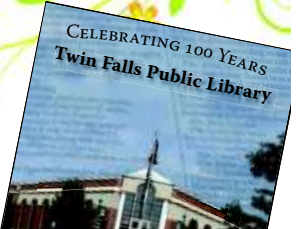
Business 8



ANGEL FLIES INTO TIE

Key birdies put Cabrera into first-place tie at Masters with Perry. SEE SPORTS 1

T.F. Public Library celebrating 100th birthday Special insert inside



HAS THE ECONOMY FINALLY HIT BOTTOM? >>> Some say worst is behind us, but rough spots not over, BUSINESS 1

SUNDAY April 12, 2009

TIMES-NEWS

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Program regression



Photos by MEAGAN THOMPSON/Times-News

Laura Ansley, 22, perches on a desk in her cell at the Twin Falls County Jail as she reflects on the drug use that landed her in the facility. Ansley is one of many addicts housed at the jail for drug-related crimes. She is looking forward to participating in a rider program that will give her the opportunity to be involved in drug treatment programs and parenting classes. But she wishes there was more programming offered at the jail. 'I lost a lot to meth,' says Ansley. 'I lost myself.'



Ansley shows the scars left on the insides of her arms from intravenous meth use. 'I was an IV user,' says Ansley before quickly correcting herself. 'I am an IV user.' The tracks on her left arm are covered by a tattoo that she says she did herself. Capt. Doug Hughes, jail administrator, says a new drug treatment program is planned in the Twin Falls jail.

Twin Falls County Jail tries treatment to ease crowding

By Andrea Jackson Times-News writer

An unfinished tattoo on Laura Ansley's arm conceals the scars of intravenous meth addiction.

Incarcerated, she rose from her cot and ran her finger over the dark, callused remnants of habitual injection.

"It's hard to believe you can change," Ansley told the *Times-News* last week from the confines of the Twin Falls County Jail. "Since I've been in here, I've lost a lot." The jail in Twin Falls is kicking off a pilot program this week to treat substance abusers like Ansley in an attempt to save bed space at the crowded 20-year-old lockup.

This kind of program, offered at no charge to inmates, is rare in Idaho's jails.

Most are struggling just to fund basic operations, said Vaughn Killeen, director of the Idaho Sheriff's Association.

"It's something that is just not very prevalent in our jail system," Killeen told the *Times-News*. "Other than Ada County, I'm not aware of any at this point in time."

But Killeen says that could change.

"As we move down the road, we will see more and more jails move into inmate treatment programs," he said. "The downturn in the economy isn't going to last



forever. I think the folks in my business are ready."

Unlike 20 to 30 years ago, Killeen says, "I think people realize it's an investment."

The new program comes as Twin Falls County leaders search for ways to reduce the pressure on the 20-year-old jail, which is often at capacity and cannot be expanded. This fiscal year, Twin Falls County plans to spend \$130,000 to house inmates in other lockups.

Last week, inmates at the Twin Falls County Jail were already welcoming the new program, funded by \$84,000 in county grants to treat drug and alcohol abuse.

The program is designed to serve as much as 20 percent of the jail's roughly 190 inmates, in two-hour-per-week, gender-specific groups. Treatment is provided by the Matrix Institute on Addictions, Twin Falls County officials said.

"While a person's clean and sober we should be helping them with options,"

Inmates at the Twin Falls County Jail play cards in their cell block. The county hopes to use to reduce inmate numbers and one day build a bigger jail.

Magicvalley.com

Watch a video on the Twin Falls County Jail's treatment plan for inmates as well as a photo gallery of life in the jail.

said Capt. Doug Hughes, the county's jail administrator. "We've never tried this sort of treatment before."

Inmate Ansley, 22, has been locked up since March 8, and says she wants to be in the program. She said she hopes to go back to cosmetology school and raise her

See PROGRAM, Main 3

No more free samples

Clinics stop giving out free medications

By Nate Poppino Times-News writer

Something's missing these days from the offices of doctors affiliated with St. Luke's Magic Valley Medical Center.

Free samples of various prescription medications will no longer be offered through the hospital's affiliated clinics, officials said this week, over concerns about patient safety and physician ethics.

The decision, announced

in an April 2 letter to clinic physicians and staff, means those doctors are now part of a growing national trend against accepting free medication samples from drug-company representatives — a large part of those companies' marketing efforts.

Sent out on behalf of the St. Luke's Clinic Physician Leadership Council, the letter states that the changes were made to ensure patients are receiving all the information they need about a medication when they get it — including the usual side-effect warnings and other documentation handed out by pharmacists. But Drs. Brian

See MEDS, Main 2

Sage grouse suit targets grazing, drilling in West

By Scott Sonner Associated Press writer

RENO, Nev. — Conservationists say federal rules that allow livestock grazing and oil and gas development across 25 million acres of public land in the West are illegal because they fail to acknowledge the harm being done to sage grouse.

A lawsuit recently filed in federal court accuses the Bureau of Land Management of violating two major environmental laws and its own regulations by allowing commercial activities to continue on those lands in Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah and California.

But in a switch in strategy, the environmentalists aren't asking a judge to immediately halt those operations. They want to talk, and they think they may have a willing listener in the new Obama administration.

"What we are after is finding a way to do things differently than in the past and better manage these public lands into the future," said Laird Lucas, a lawyer for the Western Watersheds Project, which filed the suit.

"The next 20 years are going to be really critical, not just for sage grouse, but for the whole sagebrush

See SUIT, Main 2

People claiming POW benefits outnumber POWs

By Allen G. Breed Associated Press writer

Prisoners of war suffer in ways most veterans don't, enduring humiliating forced marches, torture or other trauma that may haunt them long afterward. In partial recompense, the government extends them special benefits, from free parking and tax breaks to priority in medical treatment.

Trouble is, some of the much-admired recipients of

these benefits apparently don't deserve them.

There are only 21 surviving POWs from the first Gulf War in 1991, the Department of Defense says. Yet the Department of Veterans Affairs is paying disability benefits to 286 service members it says were taken prisoner during that conflict, according to data released by VA to The Associated Press.

See POWS, Main 2



Mary and Chuck Schantag are seen March 16 in their home in Branson, Mo., with some of the files they have assembled on false prisoners of war. The Schantags are the founders of the POW Network, which works to expose those who fraudulently claim to have been held captive in combat.

"As we move down the road, we will see more and more jails move into inmate treatment programs. The downturn in the economy isn't going to last forever. I think the folks in my business are ready."

— Vaughn Killeen, director of the Idaho Sheriff's Association



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WHEN SICK BABIES GO HOME

Group advocates for transitional rooms at new T.F. hospital > Family Life 1

Program

Continued from Main 1

young daughter after her release.

In the meantime, though, she is awaiting sentencing for possessing a controlled substance, and faces new allegations of possession of a forged check and another controlled substance charge.

It remains to be seen how long Ansley will be locked up, but she says prison would be better than jail – at least in one way.

“They (prisons) have more structured programming, for sure” she said.

County officials say they hope the program will help people clean up their bodies and their lives, but they also note that a person needs to want change for it to happen.

“If they start the initial stuff in custody, and they seek treatment upon release, than if they truly want to live a clean and sober life it will have a huge effect on recidivism,” said Hughes.

But there’s no guarantee programming for substance abuse will work for life, inmates and jail officials said. Nationally, about two thirds of convicted jail inmates had already been through treatment before committing crimes under the influence of drugs or alcohol, according to a 2001 report by the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Ansley says she doesn’t want to use again, and wants to be in the jail’s new pilot program. “Now I’m ready to make a change. Now it’s real.”

There are some inmates, though, who participate in jail programs only to escape the monotony of incarceration, she said. “People go, but not all are serious.”

The Idaho Department of



MEAGHAN THOMPSON/Times-News
Naomi Angel Wilson, 27, stands in her cell at the end of the women’s block in the Twin Falls County Jail. She is in jail for felony possession of methamphetamine and misdemeanor possession of drug paraphernalia. Capt. Doug Hughes, jail administrator, says a new treatment program coming to the Twin Falls County Jail will benefit those serving time for drug-related crimes.

Correction, which pays local jails to hold some inmates, encourages the jails to offer programs like Twin Falls County’s pilot treatment effort.

“When we have a need to use county jail bed space we do take into (consideration) what programs they offer for our population,” said Pam Sonnen, chief of IDOC’s Prison Division. “We applaud any county who is becoming partners in our risk reduction practices. I think it shows that we are one system where everyone must play a part in establishing programs that reduce recidivism and provide for public safety.”

Other jail administrators in the Magic Valley agree programs for drug and alcohol abuse can lower recidivism but they’re not expanding substance abuse programs right now.

“We’ll watch Twin Falls and maybe more of us will look into it,” said Gooding County Sheriff Shaun Gough.

Most area jails offer inmates once-a-week Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous, along with volunteer community recovery groups, sheriffs said.

Jail officials in Burley, who handle prisoners for Minidoka and Cassia counties, unsuccessfully tried to get funding for more substance abuse programs from the state. They may try again, though, said Minidoka County Lt. Rob Neiwert, director of the jail.

“I think that if you have the right programs, it has a valid use in reducing recidivism,” said Neiwert. “I don’t think just any program is effective. I think you also have to have an individual

who is ripe, and able to pursue that program.”

Twin Falls County’s new program will use staff from the Twin Falls County Treatment and Recovery Clinic on Gooding Street, and is designed to continue treatment after an inmate’s release, said Twin Falls County Commissioner George Urie.

“We thought we’d have better control of the program by running it ourselves,” said Urie. “It’s an experiment, a new program, if we need to make adjustments, this would be easier.”

Twin Falls County officials said the space-limited programs will be free and voluntary for inmates in jail, and for as long as a year after release.

Andrea Jackson may be reached at 208-735-3380 or ajackson@magicvalley.com.

Don’t Ask Me

Steve Crump



The truth about dentists and jelly beans

If you want to send a dentist into low, geosynchronous orbit, mention the jelly bean.

These hard-shelled Easter favorites coat the teeth with a layer of sticky sugar, which serves as a neon sign to passing bacteria.

Jelly beans are responsible for most high blood pressure among dentists. Back when Ronald Reagan was president – The Gipper was a jelly bean addict, and kept a large jar of the candy on his desk – members of the American Dental Association voted Democratic.

So I wonder if dentists are behind the unsavory reputation that “jelly bean” has acquired when applied to people.

During the Jazz Age, a “jelly bean” was a pimp. If his 1922 short story of the same name, F. Scott Fitzgerald described a jelly bean as “the name throughout the undissolved Confederacy for one who spends his life conjugating the verb to idle in the first person – I am idling, I have idled, I will idle.”

Nasty stuff. But truth be told, when it comes to jelly beans nobody’s listening to his or her dentist anyway.

The California-based Jelly Belly Candy Company is producing 300,000 pounds a day, even in a recession. Jelly Belly’s market share continues to grow, with sales up 25 percent since 2006.

Jelly Belly even has a market for its flawed candy.

In the production process, some of the beans stick together, or are too large or too small. Rather than throwing them out, the company repackages them as “Belly Flops” and sells them online, in factory outlets or in dollar stores. It gets \$9 for a two-pound bag.

Not surprising, really. Everybody has a jelly bean story. Here’s mine:

When I was 6 or 7, we went to my Aunt Hazel’s for Easter. While everybody was outside hunting Easter eggs, Hazel’s cocker spaniel, Taffy, got into a bowl of jelly beans that was sitting on the coffee table in the living room. All that candy didn’t make the dog sick, exactly, but left her constipated.

I mean, real constipated. So Hazel did the logical thing and gave Taffy a spoonful of castor oil.

At the time, my aunt had a tan-colored carpeting throughout her house, except for the kitchen and bathroom. To make a long story short, she had to get all new carpet the very next week.

Taffy, however, lived to be 18. But after that incident, she lived outside.

Where every Easter, like clockwork, us kids would feed her jelly beans.

And she never once went to the dentist.

Steve Crump may be reached at 735-3223. Hear him live on KLIX-1310 AM at 8:30 a.m. Fridays or on the Web at Magicvalley.com/opinion.

Grant allows Glens Ferry District to start after-school program

By Ben Botkin
Times-News writer

Glens Ferry School District is starting a new after-school program this fall with money coming from a federal grant.

The district has received a grant worth \$160,506 annually, which comes through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, a federal program. The grant can be renewed for up to five years.

The Idaho State Department of Education awards the grants and Glens Ferry School District’s award was part of \$1.4 million given for nine programs in the state.

The district’s program will be called the Glens Ferry Youth Enrichment Center and have activities for students from kindergarten through 12th grade. The program will be available four days a week and include 20 to 40 minutes of academic enrichment activities, a snack and two to three hours of other activities like art, music, and sports.

“A lot of our kids, they go home often ... times to an empty house or to a house that doesn’t have anything to do,” Superintendent Wayne Rush said. “It really gives them an opportunity to have something to do.”

There will also be programs in areas such as self-defense, English as a Second Language and family nights covering a variety of topics from drug awareness to cooking.

Rush said that children in Glens Ferry are in a rural location without places to go after school lets out.

“Really there is nothing in Glens Ferry for kids,” Rush said, adding that there’s no bowling alley or movie theater. “We’re trying to find a place for them to go.”

Rush said that community support and interest in the program has been key in helping it get started.

“A lot of our kids, they go home often ... times to an empty house or to a house that doesn’t have anything to do. It really gives them an opportunity to have something to do.”

— Glens Ferry Superintendent Wayne Rush

The after-school program will also be open during summer school starting in the summer of 2010.

Ben Botkin may be reached at bbotkin@magicvalley.com or 208-735-3238.

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Will 2009 session set the record?

BOISE — Weeks ago, as legislators wrangled among themselves and Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter over how to set a bare bones budget, many conceded the 2009 session would be the second-longest ever.

Now the question is will this year take the title?

"Perhaps," said Sen. Dean Cameron, R-Rupert. "But nobody wants that."

The longest session ever, in 2003, ran 118 days. Monday will mark the 92nd day of the session, ranking it the fourth-longest ever.

Lawmakers are pointing to Friday for adjournment — it would surpass the second-longest session, 95 days in 1983 — but even that target remains in doubt.

"It would be foolish for anyone to think we're getting out of here anytime soon," said Cameron. The shortest session, in 1943, was 56 days, but that was when the Legislature met biannually.

Like 2003, this year's session met under the shadow of a national recession, and a number of issues remain unresolved. Payroll cuts for state workers, how to allocate federal stimulus money and approval of most agency budgets still loom. Some disagreements are between the House and Senate, while others pit Otter and legislators in opposing corners.

"Our calendars are gonna look pretty sick by next Friday," said Senate Pro Tem Bob Geddes, R-Soda Springs. "We don't have much left up there."

Finally, Otter and lawmakers continue to debate over how — and if — new revenue can be raised to fix Idaho's deteriorating roads and bridges. Legislators made progress by passing another round of bonding



LEGISLATIVE NOTEBOOK

Jared S. Hopkins

for road projects, while state budget writers allocated more stimulus money toward local road districts.

But the Legislature on Thursday rejected another bill to raise the state's gas tax. Otter released a statement calling lawmakers against the bill "irresponsible" but promised to continue to work with them.

Clete Edmunson, Otter's transportation aide, said "They need to understand we're not leaving without passing something."

• On Thursday, the joint budgeting committee voted 11-9 to send \$17.4 of the \$45 million in discretionary stimulus to local highway districts. Otter wanted \$29 million to funnel to both local and state projects.

But his spokesman, Jon Hanian, notes several problems: urban areas would receive more money; funding to rural areas won't be enough to maintain infrastructure; and Otter's original \$29 million proposal would've been easier to report.

"As the governor has pointed out on numerous occasions, there are lots of strings attached to spending (stimulus)," Hanian said. "In some cases they might not receive enough money just to post the federal government mandated signage advertising the fact it is a (stimulus) project. That's a problem."

Rep. Jim Patrick, R-Twin Falls, who seconded the motion in committee, conceded Friday that he spoke

with Otter's office about the difficulties of money going to rural areas.

"I don't know if it's going to work," he said.

• The House has yet to vote on a bill to tighten regulations at small day cares, which cleared the House Health and Welfare Committee more than a week ago. It's sitting in the House amending order, where about a dozen changes are attached.

House leaders said it's unclear whether they'll enter the amending order, which happens irregularly. The bill requires licensure requirements to facilities with at least seven children. Current law sits at more than 12 children.

• Weeks ago, the House passed a measure to require companies — such as insurers and warranty providers — offering contracts to owners of vehicles to clearly disclose they are not the owner's vehicle manufacturer or dealer. It's now sitting in the Senate's amending order, and only made it out of a Senate committee after weeks of inaction.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Jim Patrick, R-Twin Falls, is intended to protect consumers from deceptive advertising. It cleared the House unanimously March 10 but didn't get a hearing for several weeks in the Senate Transportation Committee.

"That's politics at its worst," Patrick said.

• The Senate Education Committee voted 5-3 Wednesday to kill a bill sponsored by Rep. Donna Pence, D-Gooding, to permit children who attend private in-state kindergarten to enter public schools in the first grade, even if they do not reach the minimum age required but pass a special

test.

Republicans who opposed the measure said it would be unfair to kids who couldn't afford private school and could lead to children advancing through the school system too quickly.

"I look back at all the dumb juniors when I was in school and I think I could've been the top dog in that bunch," Sen. Monty Pearce, R-New Plymouth, who said there's an advantage to being among the younger students in a grade.

• As of Friday morning, Otter had signed 160 bills into law. Three bills, however, went into law without his signature. One which drew a handful of opponents in both chambers increases fines and strengthens penalties to violators of commercial driver license laws. Otter said the bill will improve safety but opposed it due to the federal mandates associated with it, Otter said in a statement to the Legislature.

• Quote of the Week: "Apparently politics is not the art of compromise, and I'm feeling very, very guilty costing the taxpayers \$30,000 a day to stay here and be stubborn. It's troubling to me, and I will be supporting (Otter's) full flexibility, not because I think he's right. I hope he's right." — Rep. Maxine Bell, co-chairwoman of the joint budgeting committee, making it clear she was reluctantly supporting a proposal to cut state employee personnel cuts by 5 percent. The committee instead agreed to a 3 percent reduction with all eight House GOP members opposing.

Jared S. Hopkins may be reached at jhopkins@magicvalley.com or 208-420-8371.

SIRCOMM makes progress on mandated upgrades

By Nate Poppino
Times-News writer

JEROME — The Southern Idaho Regional Communications Center is closer to meeting a federal mandate to change its radio system by late 2012, after its governing board discussed possible equipment purchases on Thursday.

Jerry Gonterman, SIRCOMM's communications technician, presented the dispatch center's Joint Powers Board with quotes from two companies that manufacture narrow-band communications systems. A combination unit with both new and older frequencies from White Cloud Communications would cost SIRCOMM \$28,000 per site, he said. A fancier package hooking two radios together pitched by Teton Communications would cost about \$48,000 per site, he said.

The dispatch center has six tower sites throughout the Magic Valley, all of which must eventually be upgraded to the narrow-band broadcasts as part of the federal mandate. At the same time, the center will shift its broadcasts to frequencies in the 700-megahertz range and adopt interoperable radio-communications standards known as Project 25.

Board members chose the cheaper proposal, and Gonterman said he plans to try out the equipment at a couple of sample sites before making any large-scale installations. The initial equipment will likely be purchased through a

Bureau of Homeland Security grant that Jerome County has to use by the end of the month, said board member and Jerome County Commissioner Charlie Howell.

Board Chairman and Twin Falls County Commissioner Tom Mikesell said both companies would allow SIRCOMM to specify in the contract that they would remove and replace the new equipment if it doesn't work. He said he envisions the system being P25-compliant within the next year.

Dispatch centers across the state, as well as fire, police and emergency medical agencies, all face the same deadline to switch to narrow-band. Blaine County officials have worked on plans to upgrade their system to P25 for some time now. The city of Twin Falls plans to get by with just narrow-banding its current equipment for the near future, said Police Lt. Craig Stotts. And in Minidoka County, Sheriff Kevin Halverson said his dispatch center is P25 compatible now and is putting together a five-year plan for the 700-MHz switch.

SIRCOMM handles more than 40 police, fire and EMS agencies in Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln and Twin Falls counties — everything in the four counties except for the city of Twin Falls' police and fire departments. The governing board is made up of one county commissioner from each of the four counties.

Volunteers plant bitterbrush in South Hills

By Ben Botkin
Times-News writer

Scores of volunteers entered the South Hills on a gray, misty Saturday morning to plant bitterbrush.

Their work started bitterbrush growing in an area where fires from years past have destroyed the plant. Bitterbrush is a desert shrub eaten by elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep.

"We're trying to restore shrub cover before noxious weeds get in there," said Ed Papenberg, volunteer coordinator for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

The state agency and Bureau of Land Management work together for the volunteer planting program, which lasts several weeks and involves children, adults, schools and community organizations such as 4-H clubs and Boy Scout troops. While about 60 had signed up to volunteer Saturday, the entire program will bring about 600 to 700 volunteers, Papenberg said.

After signing in, the volunteers formed a caravan of vehicles and traveled down a winding dirt road into the South Hills. Papenberg told the volunteers that they could leave if rain dropped from the cloudy skies.

"There will be no whips cracking out there," he said. "So don't feel like you've got to stay put."

The volunteers broke out into groups, with a supervi-



JUSTIN JACKSON/Times-News

Joe Mabey, right, and his son Joe Mabey Jr. plant bitterbrush in the South Hills Saturday morning. Volunteers gathered to plant the bitterbrush in an area where fires from years past have destroyed the desert shrub.

Magicvalley.com



WATCH: A video of the planting.

sor demonstrating how to dig a hole in the soil and plant the seedlings.

"Just make sure they're in tight," said Dean Grissom, a recreational site maintenance foreman with Fish and Game.

Joe Mabey Sr. and his son, 13-year-old Joe Mabey Jr., of Twin Falls, worked together to plant bitterbrush seedlings. For the younger Mabey, it was a first-time experience. His father has volunteered in the past because of his involvement with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, an organization aimed at preserving

elk habitat.

"It's pretty cool," the boy said. "It's kind of hard with the ones that have a bunch of roots."

Ike Isaacson of Buhl said he volunteered because he recently moved to the region from Montana and wanted to find out more about the area.

While the volunteers do provide free labor, their work also brings a sense of community involvement into the bitterbrush planting effort, Papenberg said.

"Everybody learns a little something," he said.

Ben Botkin may be reached at bbotkin@magicvalley.com or 208-735-3238.

"There will be no whips cracking out there. So don't feel like you've got to stay put!"


— Ed Papenberg, volunteer coordinator for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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11:40am-12:30pm	Carla Bowcut Presents a Food Demonstration	
12:45pm-1:30pm	Don Aslett Presents "Dejunking Your Life"	
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The increasing cost of camping

BLM officials OK Forest Service fee increases

By Blair Koch
Times-News correspondent

HAGERMAN — The cost to camp this summer has increased in several Boise and Sawtooth National Forest sites.

At Thursday's joint meeting between the Twin Falls District and Boise District Bureau of Land Management Resource Advisory Councils in Hagerman, the councils approved fee increases and new fee site implementations based on recommendations from the BLM Recreation Resource Advisory Council Subcommittee.

Terry Clark, Sawtooth National Forest recreation program manager, said the slight fee increases will help cover annual operation and maintenance costs.

The fees are "considerably less than anything around us," Clark said, in comparison with sites in the Boise and Payette National Forests.

The Abbott, Bird Creek, Willow Creek, Chaparral, Bowns and Canyon campgrounds in the Fairfield Ranger District will see fee increases to \$6 per night, up from \$2 per vehicle per site, with the exception of Bowns, which was charging



BLAIR KOCH/For the Times-News

Boise District BLM Recreation Resource Advisory Council Subcommittee Chairman Grant Simonds and Twin Falls Resource Advisory Council member Debbie Dane listen to comments during a meeting Thursday in Hagerman. The council approved the Forest Service's request to increase campground fees in certain Idaho sites.

\$4 nightly per vehicle per site.

Fees approved include the implementation of a new \$100 per night reservation fee for the Baumgartner Campground group site, which accommodates up to 100 people.

The \$100 fee wouldn't apply for campers who find the site vacant and without reservation.

Minidoka Ranger District Schipper and Steer Basin campgrounds will see a new fee of \$5 per night per site and the Diamondfield Jack campgrounds will charge \$8 per site nightly.

The three popular spots in the South Hills previously offered no-fee camping. Samantha Anderson, vice-chairwoman for the Twin Falls RRAC Subcommittee, said she felt the sites should remain free.

Anderson, who said her

two teenage sons are frequent summer campers, added the move to charge campers could encourage people to set up their tent in non-developed, primitive areas. Starting a camp fire without a developed pit could increase the risk for forest fires, she said.

"I hate to discourage them more ... and have them go into an area so they can stay the night for free," she said.

Anderson said the move to charge Diamondfield Jack campers was unfair, especially since the site is extremely popular in the wintertime and those users aren't charged.

"It's not right to impose fees on people using it during fair weather to pay for upkeep all year," she said.

Other council members said charging users nightly could help curb abuse of the

sites, especially by residents of nearby towns who park their camper trailers in a spot all summer for week-end use.

In addition to raising fees for increased revenue options, the council approved a plan to rent out the Redfish Lake cabin and Sawtooth Valley Work Center cabins during the winter, when the facilities are not being used to house Forest Service personnel.

The Redfish Lake Cabin will be rented for \$50 nightly and the Sawtooth cabin will cost \$65 nightly.

Elmore County commissioners wrote a letter of support in renting the cabins but were concerned with the possibility of the Forest Service competing with private accommodation rentals.

Sawtooth Forest Deputy Ranger Kelley Jardine said the concern was addressed, and the cabins lack winter-time water, power and other amenities available at a hotel or inn.

"It doesn't interfere with local lodging like they thought it would," Jardine said.

Now that the advisory council has given its approval for the rate recommendations the Forest Service will implement the increase during Memorial Day weekend, which marks the beginning of the summer recreation season.

Blair Koch may be reached at 208-316-2607 or blairkoch@gmail.com.

Police nab man wanted on out-of-state warrant

Times-News

police said.

A police stop in Jerome County on Saturday led to the arrest of a Seattle man who is wanted in connection with an attempted murder case in Washington state, according to the Jerome Police Department.

A maroon Hyundai vehicle was stopped on Friday at milepost 168 along Interstate 84 for speeding 101 mph in a 75 mph zone, police said.

That stop led to the arrest of a passenger, Antoine E. Davis, 21, of Seattle, who is wanted in connection with an attempted murder that took place on Tuesday in King County, Wash.,

Davis was arrested without incident.

Davis is currently being held in Jerome County Jail on a \$2 million bond for first degree assault and attempted murder charges.

Jerome police were assisted by officers from the Jerome County Sheriff's Department and Idaho State Police.

Despite the vehicle's high speed, no vehicles were damaged in the case, police said.

Detectives from the King County Sheriff's Department in Washington have traveled to Jerome to interview other people who were in the vehicle with Davis.

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Jackpot board approves sewer facilities plan

By Kimberly Williams-Brackett
Times-News correspondent

JACKPOT, Nev. — The sewer facilities improvement plan was presented before the Jackpot (Nev.) Advisory Board and approved on Thursday evening.

Stantec engineers Neil Kunz and Mike Kobe said they are pursuing the least costly alternative — modifying the current sewer system into compliance with Nevada Division of Environmental Protection standards.

Currently, Stantec is doing bench scale testing to make sure the modifications will work properly.

It will cost \$2.4 million to upgrade the system, which will reflect a 3 percent rate increase of \$4 monthly to Jackpot residents.

It will take another year to modify the existing lagoons, which includes relining the ponds.

Resident Sam Feltman said she has lived in Jackpot for 40 years and has been attending board meetings for 25 years. She noted several prior modifications and asked "Why didn't we get it right the first time? We should spend the money to get it right instead of applying Band-Aid after Band-Aid. It's the next generation's drinking water."

The sewer system simply reached the end of its 20-year lifespan, board members said.

"We don't think we did it wrong," said Chairwoman Beth Winans.

In other business, Jackpot Golf Club manager Brent Fleshman said lightning struck near hole 14 on Wednesday.

"The sprinklers were turned on but it fried the circuits."

He also reported the course was named one of the top 30 golf courses in Idaho since it is a member of the Idaho Golf Association. Coeur D'Alene has 13 golf courses, several award-winning, so "It was really a nice

award," said Fleshman.

Kimberly Williams-Brackett may be reached at gusandkim@rtci.net.



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"A Doctor's Confession to the City of Twin Falls..."

And why, despite all, I still do what I do...

Dear friend,

Confessions are tough. Real tough. But sometimes a confession can set the record straight and I want to give credit where credit is due. Before I talk about my confession, though, let me say a few other things first.

Let me start by explaining the photo in this letter. You know, when I meet people in town they usually say, "Oh, yeah, I know you, you're Dr. Al. I've seen your ad with that picture of you standing by some kind of device that is pointing up in the air...what is that? Let me set the record straight that is a special table to lower patients down on to give very specific light force adjustments. It is not a launching device to shoot patients into the air!

Years ago something happened to me that changed my life forever. Let me tell you my story.

Back then I was in high school. Sports were my main interest. But life was soon to change. My father, always a healthy man, even a WWII hero, developed a painful neck and shoulder it moved into his entire right side down to his legs. Pain in his shoulder/arm was so intense he couldn't sleep for more than a few minutes. Luckily he was self employed. He surely would have lost his job if the disability continued. After many doctors, drugs, and even considering surgery (that was one of the only options, according to the surgeon). He decided against it. But, there's more...

A friend of dad's convinced him to try his doctor. This new doctor did an exam, took some films, used some therapies, and then 'adjusted' the spine. The therapies and adjustments didn't hurt, and it actually felt good. He got relief, and could use his right arm again. Oh, did I mention that this doctor was a chiropractor? It worked so well for dad and he was so impressed with the other 'miracles' he saw in his office, our family began care. I eventually went to chiropractic school myself. And that's how it happened!

Amazingly, I find myself taking care of patients who suffered like my father and it reminds me over and over again why I became a doctor of chiropractic- to help people get well. What is very important to understand is that chiropractic is not just for bad backs. You see we work with the Nerve system. The Nerve system regulates and controls all of the body. When there is interference to the Nerve system all kinds of problems can arise. Check out what we see...

People come with headaches, migraines, chronic pain, neck pain, shoulder/arm pain, whiplash from car accidents, backaches, ear infections, asthma, allergies, numbness in limbs, athletic injuries, just to name a few.



Here's what some of my patients had to say:

"I now know what it is like to be headache free. I feel much happier because I have more energy to focus on my family, my hobbies, and my work." Shelby S.

"Emotionally I was drained. Why could I not get through a day without pain? I am happier and my day starts with a smile rather than a grimace of pain." Daryl W.

Several times a day patients thank me for helping them with their health problems. But I can't really take the credit. **My confession is that I've never healed anyone of anything.** What I do is perform a specific spinal adjustment to remove nerve pressure, and the body responds by healing itself. We get tremendous results. It's as simple as that!

Being a chiropractor can be tough, because there's a host of so-called experts out there. They tell people a lot of things that are just plain ridiculous about my profession. But the studies speak for themselves, like the Virginia study that showed that over 90% of patients who saw a chiropractor were satisfied with their results. That's just incredible!

Forty-eight million Americans **no longer have health insurance**, and those who do have found that their benefits are reduced. That's where chiropractic comes in. Many people find that they actually save money on their health care expenses by seeing a chiropractor. Another way to save...studies show that chiropractic may double your immune capacity, naturally and without drugs. The immune system fights colds, the flu, and other sicknesses. So you may not be running off to the doctor as much. This is especially important if you are self-employed.

You Benefit from an Amazing Offer!

Look, it shouldn't cost you an arm and a leg to correct your health. You are going to write a check to someone for your health care expenses. We see patients on a regular basis who have spent tens of thousands of dollars on health care and still have the same problems. We have no hidden fees. All cost are explained before services are rendered. We are not the least expensive care available. The state of the art technologies we use in the office aren't cheap, but do provide the best results. Good things are rarely cheap and cheap things are rarely good. **When you bring in this article, you will receive a consultation, exam, and x-rays (if necessary \$270.00 value) for \$47.00.** Please call right away because this offer expires on April 30, 2009. Don't miss out.

The kind of care we provide such as adjustments and therapies range from \$ 50.00 to 125.00. Some insurance coverage is available and we are contracted with Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Regence Blue Shield. We accept Cash, Check and Credit Cards

You see *I'm not trying to seduce you to come see me with this low start up fee, then to only make it up with high fees after that.* Further care is very important to consider when making your choice of doctor. As I said there are NO HIDDEN cost. We are honest about our fees. By law, this offer excludes Medicare/Medicaid patients.

My qualifications, I am a graduate of Logan College of Chiropractic in St. Louis. I have been entrusted to take care of tiny babies to professional athletes such as heavyweight champions Mike Spinks and Reddick Bowe. I have practiced in Twin Falls for over twenty five years.

My assistants are Jenny and Rachael and they are really great people. Our office is both friendly and warm and we try our best to make you feel at home. Our office is **Fox Chiropractic Wellness Center 1126 Eastland Dr. N.** (across from Amazing Grace church). Our phone number is 734-7077. Call today for an appointment. We can help. Thank you.

Al Fox, D.C., C.C.W.P.

P.S. Can you imagine not having to wait at a doctor's office? Well, your time is as valuable as mine. You will be seen within minutes of your appointment.

First visit Exam and X-rays \$270.00 value for \$47.00

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5TH DISTRICT COURT NEWS

Recent activity in Twin Falls County 5th District Court included the following:

CITY OF TWIN FALLS MISDEMEANOR SENTENCINGS

Brandon M. McGinnis, 24, Twin Falls; driving without privileges, second offense; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$90.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 180 days jail, 160 suspended; driving privileges suspended 365 days; 12 months probation.

Trevor H. Fullerton, 19, Twin Falls; failure to purchase/invalid driver's license; \$300 fine, \$275 suspended; \$75.50 costs; 10 days jail, 10 suspended; four months probation.

Aaron Z. Donabedian, 20, Jerome; driving without privileges; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$90.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 65 suspended, credit for two days served; driving privileges suspended 180 days; 12 months probation.

James J. Johnson, 28, Twin Falls; driving without privileges; costs waived; 60 days jail, credit for 58 days served; driving privileges suspended 180 days. Tyler S. Christiansen, 26, Caldwell; driving without privileges, second offense; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$90.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 180 days jail, 160 suspended, credit for nine days served; driving privileges suspended 365 days; 12 months probation.

Tasha M. Virgil, 20, Twin Falls; theft by possessing/receiving stolen property; withheld judgment granted; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 88 suspended, two days work detail; 12 months probation; restitution to victim.

Nu T. Bowers, 58, Twin Falls; petit theft; amended to wilful concealment; withheld judgment granted; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$75.50 costs; 90 days jail, 88 suspended, two days work detail; 12 months probation; restitution to victim.

Paul R. Afeaki, 40, Rupert; violation of protection order; withheld judgment granted; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; 90 days jail, 90 suspended; 12 months probation; two days work detail; no contact with victim.

Gerald J. Garcia Jr., 31, Twin Falls; petit theft; \$300 fine; \$75.50 costs; 10 days jail.

Raudel M. Arteaga, 21, Jerome; maintaining a disorderly house; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; 10 days jail, 10 suspended; four months probation; one day work detail.

David Nunn III, 19, Twin Falls; petit theft; amended to wilful concealment; costs waived; 30 days jail, credit for three days served.

Katie L. Presgraves, 32, Twin Falls; fraudulent use of a financial transaction card; amended to petit theft; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 87 suspended, credit for one day served, two days work detail; \$102.50 restitution to First Federal; 12 months probation.

Jason F. Muegerl, 33, Twin Falls; petit theft; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 70 suspended, 20 days house arrest; 12 months probation; restitution to victim.

Skyler L. Hills, 20, Kimberly; petit theft; amended to wilful concealment; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 80 suspended; six months probation; restitution to victim.

Christopher J. Viveros, 20, Twin Falls; malicious injury to property; amended to disturbing the peace/disorderly conduct; withheld judgment granted; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 89 suspended, one day work detail; six months probation; no contact with victim; restitution as ordered.

Joseph W. Brown, 25, Twin Falls; no insurance; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 30 days jail, 30 suspended; one day work detail; six months probation.

Yvonne L. Cheeney, 24, Twin Falls; possession of a controlled substance; \$700 fine, \$400 suspended; \$85.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 180 days jail, 160 suspended, credit for one day served, 19 days house arrest; 12 months probation; no alcohol; possession of drug paraphernalia dismissed.

Cherilyn S. Ulrich, 27, Twin Falls; failure to purchase/invalid driver's license; \$100 fine; \$75.50 costs.

Richard J. Folk, 18, Kimberly; failure to purchase/invalid driver's license; \$100 fine; \$75.50 costs.

Raquel L. Roberts, 22, Hazelton; open container; \$100 fine; \$75.50 costs.

Rick A. Scherbinske, 51, Twin Falls; petit theft; amended to wilful concealment; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; 90 days jail, 90 suspended; two days work detail; 12 months probation.

Carl G. Knape, 47, Twin Falls; failure to purchase/invalid driver's license; \$300 fine, \$275 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 10 days jail, 10 suspended; two months probation.

Enrique Rios-Gutierrez, 23, Gooding; petit theft; costs waived; 30 days jail, 20 suspended, credit for four days served; 12 months probation; provide false information to an officer; 30 days jail, 18 suspended, credit for four days served; 12 months probation.

Ethan N. Lewis, 19, Twin Falls; battery; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee; 90 days jail, 88 suspended, credit for time served; 12 months probation; no contact with victim.

Robert J. Berry, 31, Twin Falls; possession of drug paraphernalia, failure to appear, unlawful possession of prescription drugs; costs waived; 90 days jail, 26 suspended, credit for time served; 24 months probation; no alcohol.

Emil B. Melkumov, 21, Twin Falls; inattentive/careless driving; \$25 fine; \$75.50 costs; \$75 public defender fee.

Dakota A. Collins, 16, Twin Falls; hunting without a license; withheld judgment granted; \$500 fine, \$300 suspended; \$83 costs; 10 days jail, 10 suspended; one day work detail; four months probation.

Boise dog trainer survives sepsis after dog bite

By Bethann Stewart
Idaho Statesman

BOISE — The fight broke out over toys.

Rene Cawley was exercising six dogs in her Boise backyard when she ducked under an overhang to get out of the rain. She brought a handful of toys with her. The dogs followed her, but now in close quarters, they suddenly were at each others' throats. Cawley responded instinctively — she reached down to pull them apart.

A petite woman in her 40s, Cawley had been bitten so many times during her work with aggressive dogs that she didn't think anything of the bites she got on Dec. 3. But two days after being bitten, Cawley felt disoriented. At the time, her fiancé, David Currie, had the flu.

"We thought we both had the flu," Currie said.

His mom, Loralee Gray, took Cawley to the doctor, but the blood and urine cultures showed nothing wrong. As Cawley was leaving her doctor's office, she fainted.

She was rehydrated and told to go to the hospital if things got worse. By the time she got home, a rash had moved up her legs,

marbling her skin red and white.

"It's the scariest thing I've ever seen," Currie said.

Cawley felt like her flesh was being eaten, and her temperature skyrocketed. She argued briefly with Currie about going to the emergency room because she doesn't have health insurance.

"She just figured it was an unnecessary expense," Currie said.

Gray took Cawley to the emergency room at St. Luke's Boise Medical Center. Cawley was screaming in pain. She doesn't remember it, but she told them to kill her.

From the purplish, dusky, mottled color of her skin, Dr. Tom Ahlquist recognized that Cawley was septic.

"Her color was so bad," Ahlquist said. "The problem was not that she had sepsis, but where was it from and how do we treat it?"

The dog bite was a clue, but when Currie's mom told Ahlquist that Cawley no longer had a spleen, the doctor knew: The cause of the sepsis was capnocytophaga canimorsus, a common bacteria found in dog and cat saliva.

"The spleen normally does a pretty good job of

taking care of it, but without one ... they're easily overwhelmed," Ahlquist said.

Cawley's spleen was removed when she was 19 as a treatment for hereditary spherocytosis, an abnormality of her blood cells. Neither her mom nor her younger sister have spleens.

None of them had ever been told that a dog bite could kill them.

In the emergency room, Cawley went into cardiac arrest and her kidneys failed.

Doctors induced a coma to give Cawley's body the best shot at survival, Ahlquist said.

Cawley's mom, Rochelle, who lives in Las Vegas, got the phone call no parent ever wants to get: Rene was dying, and Rochelle had to get to Boise immediately.

"I asked God what I should do," Rochelle said.

"One of the things he told me was that I was going to see a healing, so I grabbed my camera."

Rochelle and her husband called prayer groups before she left, asking to keep Rene alive until Rochelle could get to Boise.

"We were told it was a dog bite and that she had gone septic," Rochelle said. "I didn't comprehend what sepsis was at the time?"

There was no way for Rochelle to be prepared for what she saw when she got to St. Luke's.

Cawley's hands and feet were solid black as if frost-bitten, as were her ears and nose. When Rochelle arrived, doctors were talking about amputating the black parts.

"You always think the worst phone call you can get is that your child has died," Rochelle said. "But what if your child has to live without her hands and feet? How is a mother to make those decisions?"

Rochelle called the prayer trees, and they prayed that Renee wouldn't lose her limbs. Then she set about documenting what was happening to her daughter.

"One of the things I was really adamant about was I was going to take pictures of where she was at and where she was going," Rochelle said. "I just pulled back the covers and started taking pictures."

Every couple of days, she would take pictures of the same places.

Then the unexpected happened. During the three days Rene was in a coma, the color began to return to her black feet, hands and nose.

By the time doctors

brought her out of the coma, just her ears and two fingers on the hand that had been bitten were black.

"It's a true miracle," Rochelle said. "She was in total cardiac arrest. Her kidneys were gone. You don't come back from that?"

The doctors waited several more days to see if Rene's fingers would come back, but they didn't. Her right index and ring finger had to be amputated.

"It didn't bother me. They had to do it for me to survive," Rene said. "It's amazing what I've learned to do already."

Ironically, Rochelle Cawley had lost two fingers on her right hand in a lawn mower accident.

"My youngest daughter was joking with Rene that you start looking like your mother when you get older," Rochelle said.

Cawley was released from the hospital only 18 days later. Then came the start of the long, arduous task of rebuilding her life.

Among the challenges she faces are short-term memory loss and night terrors. She still has open wounds that take her two hours to clean and bandage. She's exhausted all the time and doesn't know how she'll pay all the medical bills.

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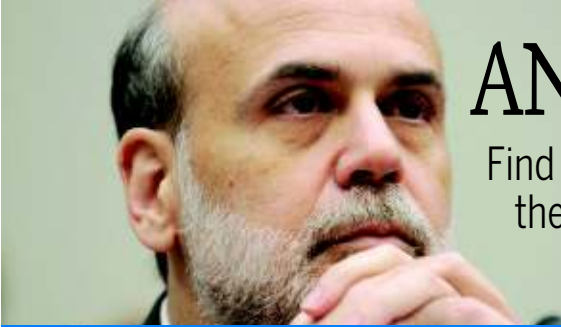
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AN UNLIKELY REVOLUTIONARY

Find out how Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has transformed the stodgy organization, invoking rarely used emergency authorities. >>> See Business 3



A 'public' fix for health care need not abandon the market

Although the national debate over health-care reform has only just begun, the first battle lines are being drawn over whether there should be a Medicare-like "public" insurance plan to compete with private insurers in a restructured market.



PEARLSTEIN
Steven Pearlstein

The public plan has already become a political litmus test for the Democratic left, which sees it as the only antidote to a private market that can't be trusted to deliver quality, affordable health care, and for the Republican right, which sees it as the Trojan horse for a government-run health-care system that will raise taxes and ration care.

The first thing to note is that this is hardly the most important issue in health-care reform. It is possible to design a system that could control costs, improve quality and increase access to care without giving everyone the chance to sign up for a government-run health-insurance plan modeled after Medicare. It's also possible to design a system that includes a public option.

The other thing to note is that if by "public option" you mean the current Medicare fee-for-service plan — a plan that makes no attempt to manage and coordinate care and pay for that care on the basis of the quality of the outcome — then a public option would be an awful idea and move the system in exactly the wrong direction.

This is not to say that a well-designed public insurance option couldn't become the model that private competitors would be forced to emulate. It could.

One thing we know about private health plans is that they spend anywhere from 12 to 30 percent of what they take in on non-medical costs: marketing, taxes, reserves, underwriting and profit. In Medicare, these "administrative expenses" run about 5 percent.

That doesn't mean that a public plan for the non-elderly would have the same cost advantage. Unlike Medicare, a new public plan hoping to attract paying customers would have to spend some amount on marketing. And like any insurer, it would probably want to invest in systems and medical staff to discourage doctors and hospitals from ordering up unnecessary tests and procedures. At the same time, under most reform scenarios, private insurers would be able to reduce administrative costs by eliminating their considerable underwriting expenses.

Bottom line: The administrative-cost advantage of a public insurance plan wouldn't be as big as Medicare's, but it could still be large enough to help drive down premiums in a competitive insurance market.

The better argument for a public option is that it could provide some serious pricing discipline for a market that suffers from runaway medical costs.

See PEARLSTEIN, Business 2

Taxpayers more frugal with refunds

Congress waits to see if refunds will help jumpstart economy **WHERE THE MONEY GOES**

By Ann Sanner
Associated Press writer

WASHINGTON — Most people say they plan to use this year's tax refund to pay bills, deciding in this sour economy to be more frugal with their annual windfall.

Fifty-four percent of those receiving refunds said they intend to pay off credit card, utility, housing and other bills, according to an Associated Press-GfK poll released Monday. That compares with 35 percent who said the same thing a year ago.

Only 5 percent, about the same as a year ago, said they planned to go on a shopping spree.

The survey found that 38 percent of those receiving a refund

said they plan to spend at least part of it. But the spending appears to be mostly on basic needs: 17 percent said they would use the money for everyday needs such as food and clothing. It was 7 percent a year ago.

The deadline for individuals to file their 2008 tax returns is Wednesday. As of last week, the Internal Revenue Service had sent out about \$200 billion in tax refunds. Commissioner Doug Shulman said the agency expects to send out about \$330 billion by the end of tax season.

The AP-GfK poll found that 57 percent of adults said they expect to receive a tax refund. The average refund this year is about \$2,700, compared with \$2,500

last year, Shulman said.

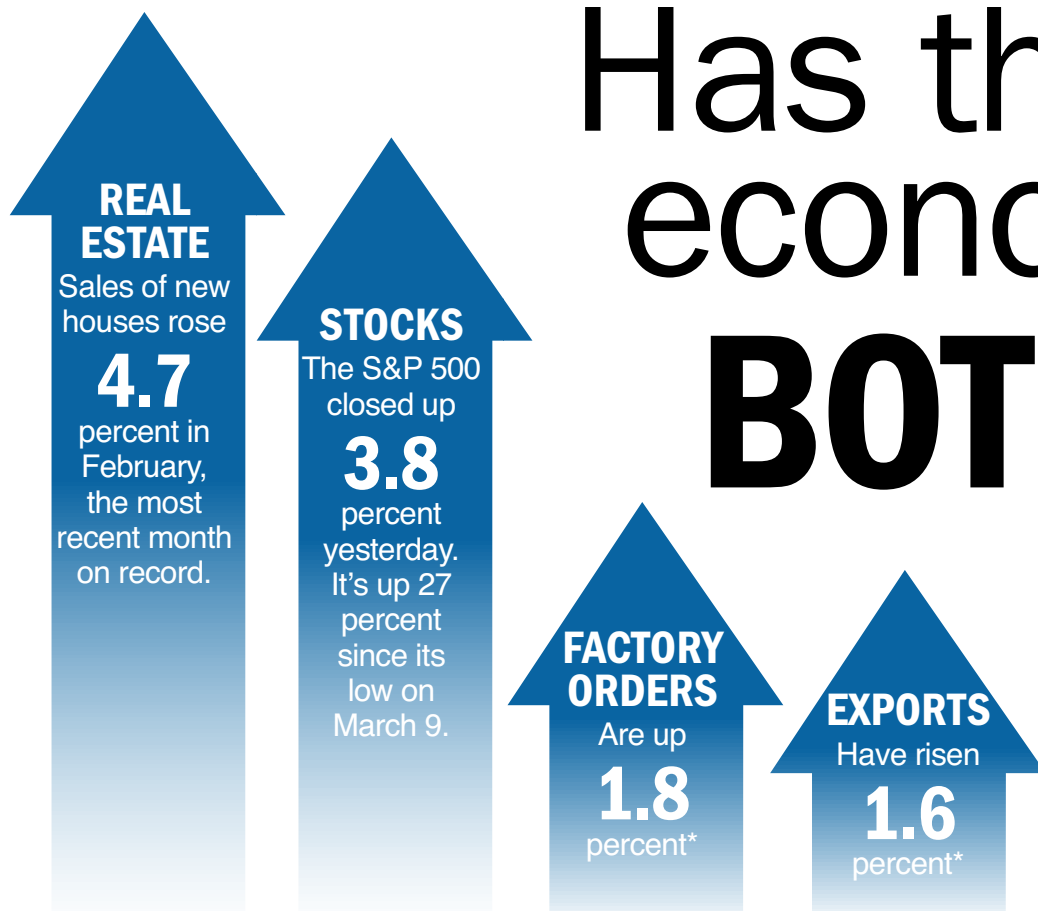
For last-minute filers, Shulman said the quickest way to get a refund is to file electronically and have the refund deposited directly into a bank account. Those refunds take about 10 days to process, he said. Refund checks from paper returns take four to six weeks to process, he said.

The Obama administration is hoping this year's refunds will help boost an economy that has shed more than 5 million jobs since December 2007. Congress passed a \$787 billion economic recovery bill in February. The package was a mixture of government spending and tax cuts

See REFUNDS, Business 2

- Among the other findings in the poll:
- **31 PERCENT** of those receiving refunds said they will use at least part of the money to pay credit card bills, compared with 17 percent a year ago.
 - **19 PERCENT** said they will use their refunds to pay utility bills, compared with 10 percent a year ago.
 - **17 PERCENT** said they will use their refunds for rent or mortgage payments, compared with 7 percent a year ago.
 - **11 PERCENT** of those receiving refunds said they would use them to go on a vacation, a slight increase from a year ago.
 - **8 PERCENT** of those who owe taxes said they were very likely or somewhat likely to use a credit card to pay their tax bill.
 - **5 PERCENT** said they planned to use their refund for a down payment on a car, also a slight increase.
 - **4 PERCENT** said they would use their refunds to buy stocks or bonds, about the same as a year ago.

Has the U.S. economy hit BOTTOM?



Signs that say "yes"

These key indicators suggested a recovery was in the works even before Wells Fargo reported record earnings and pushed stocks higher yesterday.

At last, economy leveling off — but bumps not over

By Jeannine Aversa
Associated Press writer

WASHINGTON — At last, after a nerve-racking six-month descent, the economy appears to be leveling off.

But don't assume the bumps are over.

Stock investors, shoppers and home buyers are less jittery. Once-frozen credit markets are slowly thawing. And economic indicators that had been going from bad to worse are showing signs of stabilizing — though still at distressed levels.

There were fresh signs Thursday that the full force of the recession may be petering out: a strong profit forecast from Wells Fargo, a drop in unemployment benefit filings and several retailers predicting solid April sales. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrials rose nearly 250 points.

Still, with unemployment rising, it will be at least several months before the country's economic engine pops into a growth gear. Job losses — and the fear of them — act as a headwind against consumer confidence and spending, which account for more than two-thirds of the U.S. economy.

"The sense of a ball falling off a table, which is what the economy has felt like since the middle of last fall, I think we can be reasonably confident that that is going to end within the next few months, and we will no longer have that sense of a free-fall," President Barack Obama's top economic adviser, Lawrence Summers, said Thursday.

But Summers, who spoke at the Economic Club of Washington, said it was too soon to forecast how strong the rebound would be and when it would take hold.

The economy shrank at a 6.3 percent rate in the final three months of 2008, the worst showing in a quarter-century. Some economists say it fared about as poorly in the first three months of this year, while others expect a 4 to 5 percent rate of decline. The government releases its initial estimate at the end of April.

And the economy is still shrinking in the April-June quarter — perhaps at a rate of 2 to 2.5 percent, some analysts say.

When will it grow again? Maybe the final quarter of the year.

For now, said Brian Bethune, economist at IHS Global Insight, "I think we can say we've gone through the most terrible part of the recession."

The scenarios charted by economists are con-

Signs that say "no"

There's plenty of bad news to go around, including a pessimistic—and vague—GDP forecast from the Fed.

"I think we can say we've gone through the most terrible part of the recession."

— Brian Bethune, economist at IHS Global Insight

sistent with Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke's hope that the recession, now in its second year, will end this year.

Bernanke, however, has been quick to caution that this will happen only if the government succeeds in stabilizing financial markets and getting banks to lend money more freely again to both consumers and businesses.

Even in the best-case scenario, the unemployment rate — now at a quarter-century high of 8.5 percent — is anticipated to climb to 10 percent by the end of this year.

History shows that the jobless rate moves higher well after a recession has ended. That's because companies won't want to ramp up hiring — often their single-biggest expense — until they feel confident any recovery will be lasting.

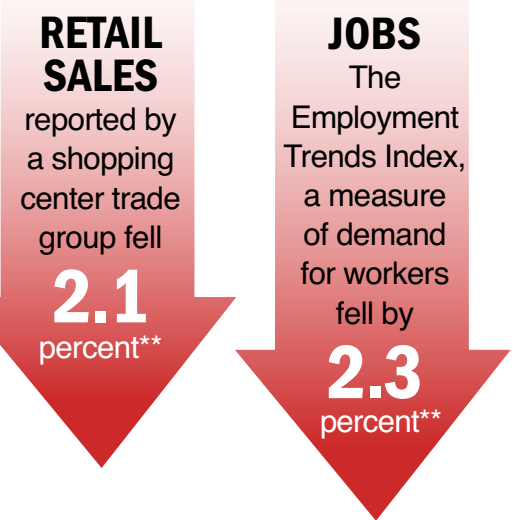
Consumers, whose sharp cutbacks in spending plunged the country into a steep economic tailspin at the end of last year, seem to be gradually spending more freely.

On Thursday, Wal-Mart Stores Inc., the world's largest retailer, said sales at stores open at least a year increased 1.4 percent in March. However, discount retailer Target Stores Inc.'s sales fell.

The government reported last month that consumer spending rose in February for the second month in a row — after a half-year of declines.

Shoppers' appetites to spend should get a lift later this year from tax cuts contained in Obama's \$787 billion economic stimulus package. Tax credits of \$400 per worker and \$800 per couple translate into about \$13 a week less withheld from paychecks starting around June.

The hope is that the added consumer spending will prompt retailers to replenish inventories, which have been cut nearly to the bone during the recession. That would require factories to boost



*Feb. data
**March data

Shailla Dani, John Sparks • AP

SOURCES: U.S. government, Thomson Reuters, Institute for Supply Management

INSIDE

The American mood: is the angst bottoming out?

See Business 4

production, creating a ripple of positive economic activity.

Thursday's \$3 billion first-quarter profit forecast from Wells Fargo was in part a reflection of the very low interest rates at which banks can borrow money from the government and then lend it out at higher rates to consumers and businesses.

Another positive flicker came Thursday from the Labor Department, which reported that the number of newly laid off Americans filing for unemployment benefits dropped by 20,000 last week to 654,000.

Although credit and financial conditions have shown some signs of improvement since the worst of the crisis last fall, they are operating far from normally, Fed officials say.

"In view of the state of the credit markets, it seems a fair bet that it will take time for momentum to build," Gary Stern, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis said in a speech Thursday. "But with the passage of time — as we get into the middle of 2010 and beyond — I would expect to see a resumption of healthy growth."

To be sure, the economy is not out of the woods yet. Another bailout of a troubled bank or other company could easily shatter already fragile confidence and send the economy reeling again. The collapse of General Motors would send many more to the unemployment lines and could jolt the economy into a major backslide.

YOUR BUSINESS

MILESTONES

NEW BUSINESS



Courtesy photo

Kelly Durrant, owner of Durrant Business Solutions, cuts the red ribbon with the Twin Falls Area Chamber's Ambassadors at a ribbon cutting held at the Twin Falls Area Chamber's office. Durrant Business Solutions is a new business to the Magic Valley as well as a new member of the Twin Falls Area Chamber of Commerce. They supply products and services to help small businesses find solutions for their business problems. Information: 543-4262 or ksduarrant@hotmail.com.

Healthcare awards go to area hospitals

Qualis Health presented its annual Awards of Excellence in Healthcare Quality, recognizing seven outstanding healthcare providers in Idaho. Idaho healthcare providers submitted nominations for the awards in January. The nominations were evaluated by a group of seven judges and each nomination was independently scored on a 100-point scale.

The Idaho Awards of Excellence in Healthcare Quality awarded two Magic Valley hospitals for the following healthcare improvement projects completed in 2008:

St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center, Ketchum: St. Luke's developed a Rapid Response Record and Rapid Response Flow Chart and Algorithm to identify and respond to potential critical changes in patients' condition events that may lead to a Code Blue, thus keeping patients safe and reducing the number of inpatient Code Blue events.

St. Luke's Magic Valley,

Twin Falls: St. Luke's reduced Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus surgical site infections by implementing the use of Chlorhexidine preoperative showers and developing patient education on the showering process and how patients themselves can reduce the risk of infection.

Firm gets 'best place to work' award

The financial-services firm Edward Jones was named the No. 1 large company on the "Best Places to Work in Idaho" ranking, according to the Idaho Business Review.

Edward Jones provides financial services for individual investors in the United States and, through its affiliates, in Canada and the United Kingdom.

Edward Jones, which ranked No. 2 on FORTUNE magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For 2009," is headquartered in St. Louis.

The Edward Jones interactive Web site is located at www.edwardjones.com.

Derryl Futrell

Derryl Futrell, formerly with Aardvark Bail Bonds, has started his own agency, AAnd D Bail Bonds.



Futrell

Futrell has five years experience in writing bonds and will be serving all of the Magic Valley. His office will be located in Filer. The office will offer loan signing and traveling notary 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Twayne Buhler

Twayne Buhler of Twin Falls has achieved membership in the prestigious Million Dollar Round Table the Premier Association of Financial Professionals.

Buhler is an eight-year MDRT member. Attaining membership in MDRT is a distinguishing career milestone achieved by less than one percent of the world's life insurance and financial services professionals. It requires Buhler to adhere to a strict Code of Ethics, focus on providing top-notch client service, and continue to grow professionally through involvement in at least one other industry association.

MDRT provides continuing education and skills improvement designed to help members provide the best in client service. It also helps members serve their community and maintain strong personal values.

Derrick Hanson

The Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce has awarded Derrick Hanson, store man-

ager of Everton Mattress and Furniture Gallery, the Extra Mile Award. The Extra Mile Award is to recognize an individual in the community that has gone the Extra Mile to make the consumers experience of shopping, dining or doing any form of business in Twin Falls a great experience.

Hanson was nominated by Catherine Novotny for providing excellent customer service, keeping the customer first and going above and beyond expectations. During Hanson's 10 years of employment he has held a variety of posts from sales associate, sales trainer, and manufacturers representative and to the current post of store manager. He resides in Twin Falls with wife Tracy, and daughters Brianna and Heather.



Hanson

Driving School announced its recent graduates.

Joseph Cottonoir graduated Feb. 26, Randy Beltz graduated March 4, James Fewkes graduated March 5, and Jeremiah Schmidt graduated March 12.

The four men each received a Class A commercial driver's license with endorsements.

Janie Knopp

Hospice Visions is delighted to announce new team member, Janie Knopp, LPN, as their new case manager assistant and crisis care nurse.

Knopp began her nursing career in 1987, and has several years of nursing experience in the Magic Valley. Some of her positions have been in ICU, physician's offices, hospice care, and as a donor specialist for the American Red Cross.

In the future, she hopes to go overseas and assist surgical teams in the correction of cleft lip and palate defects.

Frank Eckrote and Rose Ann Eckrote

Frank Eckrote and Rose Ann Eckrote, the Eckrote Team of Prudential Idaho Homes and Properties, have been named to the prestigious Leios Leading Edge Society for 2008 by Prudential Real



Frank Eckrote

Estate and Relocation Services, Inc., a Prudential Financial, Inc. company. The award recognizes the Eckrote Team for their GCI (Gross Commission Income) production level for residential and commercial sales in 2008.

They were recognized during special awards ceremonies at Prudential Real Estate's Sales Convention held in Las Vegas, Nev., March 29-31, which was attended by real estate professionals from the United States, Mexico and Canada.

They entered the real estate field and joined Prudential Idaho Homes and Properties in 2004. Prior to winning this award, they have also won Leading Edge Society for 2005 and 2006 and the President's Circle for 2007.

Cathy Reed Brown

Silver Sage Realty Inc. announces that Cathy Reed Brown has joined the company's Hagerman office at 100 North State St., Hagerman, as a salesperson.

Brown has many roots in the Magic Valley, and now resides in Hagerman with her husband and three children. She holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Clarkson College, with a recent focus on personal income taxes.



Brown



Cottonoir

Beltz



Fewkes

Schmidt

Truck driving school graduates

Professional Truck

Yelp Web site unmuzzles business owners

By Andrea Chang
Los Angeles Times

Undercooked chicken. Poor customer service. A bug in the guacamole.

For years, users on the popular review Web site Yelp have had the final — and only — word when reviewing their most-loved or most-hated local restaurants, clothing shops and beauty salons.

Now business owners are getting their chance. And talking back is sweet.

This month, Yelp will open up its site to public responses from businesses, a first for the 5-year-old San Francisco company. It's a significant victory for business owners, who have long griped that they were being shut out of the Yelp community — which boasts more than 5 million reviews to date — and were

unable to address what they perceived as unfair and unchecked posts.

For small businesses, which rely on good word of mouth, a negative review could be especially damaging.

"A lot of times you read the reviews and you read something bad and it's out of your control," said Pablo Brea, general manager at Lala's Argentine Grill in Hollywood. "If someone comes in and says, 'I don't like the food; there's nothing I can do about it.'"

Despite having a 4-star rating on Yelp, Lala's has received some complaints on the site from reviewers who were bothered by other patrons smoking on the restaurant's patio or who simply didn't like what they ordered. Opening up the site to businesses will allow the

restaurant to offer advice to disgruntled customers, such as suggesting that they sit inside next time or recommending a different dish, Brea said.

"It gives you a second chance," he said.

Other review-based Web sites, such as TripAdvisor, welcome public responses from business owners. Yelp, which is supported by advertisements from businesses, has been more reluctant to open its site, although a year ago it began letting owners privately message users and gave them the ability to update their businesses' profiles.

Some long-time Yelpers said having business owners comment publicly on their reviews would be a big adjustment.

"I'm kind of torn," said Kevin Pong, 27, a Los

Angeles television coordinator who has written more than 200 reviews on Yelp. "I think it would be good to have an open forum, but it would lose its uniqueness of being for people by people."

Striking the right balance between consumer and business owner is a concern that Yelp has "approached very cautiously," said co-founder and Chief Executive Jeremy Stoppelman.

"We are very cognizant about making sure that Yelp remains a place for users to talk about businesses candidly and openly with each other," he said. "Although we recognize the need for business owners to provide some additional context in certain situations, we also need to make sure we do that in a thoughtful way."

Pearlstein

Continued from Business 1

Rapid consolidation has given big hospital chains so much market power that they can effectively dictate prices even to the largest insurers, which know that they cannot compete for subscribers if they don't have the major hospitals in their networks. And in a similar fashion, pharmaceutical companies can virtually dictate prices to insurers for patented drugs if they are the most effective means of treating a particular ailment.

But while hospitals and drug companies often have more negotiating leverage than insurers, it is also true that insurers don't go out of their way to compete on the basis of price. The market in most regions is dominated by two or three big players that have learned they are better off raising prices in tandem than getting into

price wars from which only the customers emerge as winners. Rather than compete on price, insurers compete to attract the healthiest patients.

That's why advocates of a public option believe a government insurance plan is needed to bring more robust price competition to the market, using its size to extract lower prices from providers and passing those savings on to consumers. Medicare already effectively dictates the prices it is willing to pay to doctors and hospitals, and there are very few providers who choose to opt out of the system. A public insurance plan for the non-elderly could simply piggyback on those lower Medicare prices.

The problem with this arrangement is that Medicare is so powerful that it can get away with paying only 80 to 85 percent of

actual costs, forcing doctors and hospitals to overcharge private insurers to make up the difference. Private insurers fear that if they were forced to compete against a public plan with that kind of cost disadvantage, they would be driven out of the market. And doctors and hospitals warn that, without private insurers to overcharge, they'll wind up out of business, as well.

Uwe Reinhardt, a Princeton University economist, has a simple fix for this screwy pricing system. Reinhardt suggests that, once a year, each hospital or physician group come up with a list of prices for individual procedures, or bundles of services, that it is willing to offer to any and all insurers, regardless of size. After reviewing the offers, Medicare and private insurers can then announce what price they are willing to pay

and give providers one last chance to adjust their offers accordingly. After that, everyone would be free to do business with whomever they choose on the basis of the posted bids.

There is, of course, a name for such an arrangement. It's called a free market — in this case a market open to multiple buyers and sellers with regular bidding and transparent pricing. More to the point, it is a market that would work whether there was a public insurance option or not.

Like it or not, fixing our overpriced, under-performing health system will require substantial new government involvement in the markets for medical insurance and medical care. Beyond that, however, there remains plenty of room for healthy debate on what form that government involvement should take.

Refunds

Continued from Business 1

designed to get people to spend at a time when most are cutting back and saving more.

The poll found that 35 percent of those receiving refunds plan to save or invest at least part of the money, a slight increase from a year ago. About 37 percent said they planned to use their refunds to pay down debt, including credit cards, student loans and personal loans. A year ago, 24 percent said they would use at least part of their refunds to pay down debt.

Only 3 percent of those receiving refunds said they planned to invest at least part of the money in real estate, which has been depressed in markets across the country.

The poll found that those making less than \$50,000 a year were much more likely to use their tax refunds to pay bills or buy everyday items than those making more. People making more than \$100,000 a year were more likely to use their refunds to go on a vacation than those making less.

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Homes that use natural gas for heat could save big

Gas supplies continue to outpace demand

By Mark Williams
Associated Press writer

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The 60 million American homes that rely on natural gas for heat can expect substantially lower bills next winter thanks to a glut in supply and the weak economy.

Just as distributors start to lock in contracts for the coming winter, natural gas prices have fallen almost 75 percent. Not all of that will show up as savings on the heating bill, but it should still mean noticeable savings.

Utilities also generate about a fifth of the nation's electricity with gas, and many of their customers should notice price breaks as well.

Electric utilities burn natural gas at power turbines, so homes that use electric heat could see big price breaks, too. And barring a scorching summer or a brutal hurricane season, analysts say prices could fall even further.

The reason: New technology this decade has unlocked massive reserves of natural gas in North America, and the sudden jump in supply has collided with a recession, the worst since World War II, that has sapped demand.

The result has been a collapse even more dramatic than the drop in oil prices.

Households have yet to see those huge drops reflected in their heating bills because the companies that buy and distribute natural gas in bulk are still passing on the premium prices they paid last summer.

But lower rates are almost certainly coming. Distributors are already signing contracts for next winter that lock in today's low rates.

In addition to the 60 million homes that use natural gas for heat, about 32 million use electric heat, according to government figures. That's more than 80 percent of U.S. homes. Most of the rest use fuel oil or liquefied petroleum gases.

A 75 percent decline in the price of natural gas does not mean the heating bill will decline by that much. On average, the price of gas makes up about two-thirds of the bill with transportation, taxes and other expenses covering the remaining costs. Americans spent about \$60 billion on natural gas for heat this past winter.

Distributors don't profit from the price of gas. They typically make money from getting the gas to your home. If they want to charge more, they need approval of state regulators.

Many people switched to natural gas after a huge spike in the cost of heating oil last year. Heating oil is down this year as well, although not as much as natural gas.

The last supply glut in natural gas came to an end in 2002. Prices climbed, and producers began drilling more, finding new ways to pull natural gas from places previously considered unreachable.

For example, in the layered sedimentary rock known as shale, bountiful in a region stretching from Texas and Oklahoma into Appalachia, drillers learned how to free gas by forcing water into small boreholes and fracturing the rock.

Five straight years of record activity turned into



AP photo

The drilling rig for a natural gas well into the Marcellus Shale is seen behind a foundation for equipment that remains on site after the well is tapped in Houston, Pa. After months of paying \$2 or less for a gallon of gasoline — half the cost of what it was last summer — anyone using natural gas to heat their home may see huge savings next winter as a glut of natural gas drives prices down about 75 percent from last summer's high.

148,000 new wells, according to the American Gas Association.

Then came the recession, and the drilling rush came crashing to a halt. Rigs are still being pulled from the ground at a record rate. Active rig use in North America is at the lowest level in five years.

The government's Energy Information Association says the volume of gas in storage around the country, a staggering 1.67 trillion cubic feet, is 35 percent more than it was last year.

"Storage is full. There is no place for gas to go," said Ron Denhardt, vice president of natural gas services for Strategic Energy and Economic Research Inc.

And even as companies scale back their drilling, production is still running ahead of consumption. Businesses are cutting back on their natural gas use even more than homes. That means prices could go even lower.

But just as in the oil markets, the stage is set for prices to snap back in a big way if demand returns to prerecession levels. Most energy analysts predict serious shortages when the economy rebounds because spending has been cut so fast by producers.

How Bernanke staged a revolution

By Neil Irwin
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Every six weeks or so, around a giant mahogany table in an ornate room overlooking the National Mall, 16 people, one after another, give their take on how the U.S. economy is doing and what they, the leaders of the Federal Reserve, want to do about it.

Then there's a coffee break.

When the Federal Open Market Committee reconvenes, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke speaks from the notes he printed moments earlier. "Here's what I think I heard," he'll say, before running through the range of views.

"Did I get it right?" he says.

The answer, in recent months, has been a resounding yes. And Bernanke's ability to understand and synthesize the views of his colleagues goes a long way toward explaining how he has revolutionized the Federal Reserve, which under his leadership has deployed trillions of dollars to try to contain the worst economic downturn in 80 years.

Famously soft-spoken, Bernanke is an unlikely revolutionary. He is, after all, a career economics professor who lacks the charisma of a skilled politician. He also happens to run an organization designed for inertia: Decision-making authority is shared with four other governors in Washington appointed by the president; the heads of regional Fed banks in 12 cities who answer to their own boards of directors; and a staff of 2,000 that is led by economists who spent decades working their way through a rigid hierarchy.

Yet in the past 18 months, Bernanke has transformed that stodgy organization, invoking rarely used emergency authorities. His decision to do so has drawn criticism — he has transcended traditional limits on the role of a central bank, stretched the Fed's legal authority and to some, usurped the responsibility of political authorities in committing vast sums of taxpayer dollars.

A Patchwork of Authority

Since late 2007, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has engineered a series of changes that have remade the central bank in response to the financial crisis, despite operating in a complicated organization that is used to moving slowly and carefully. Here are the institutions he has had to work with to do it.

BANK REGULATORS

The Fed has had to coordinate with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and other bank regulators to try to stabilize the banking system.



TREASURY/WHITE HOUSE

Bernanke has collaborated closely with the Bush and Obama administrations, especially Treasury Secretaries Henry Paulson and Tim Geithner. The Fed traditionally maintains independence from politics and tends to collaborate more in times of financial crisis.

FEDERAL RESERVE BANKS

Presidents of regional Fed banks rotate sitting on the Federal Open Market Committee, which sets monetary policy. Bernanke has included these officials, who answer to their own boards of directors, in discussions over various credit facilities even where they have no formal legal role. The New York Fed in particular has vast responsibility over the financial system, and other regional banks supervise institutions based in their areas.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Fed governors, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, work closely with Bernanke in Washington and have helped develop — and approved — use of emergency lending powers to bail out AIG and Bear Stearns and to aid money market mutual funds and consumer lending.

SOURCE: Staff reports

THE WASHINGTON POST

"Everyone is encouraged to come up with ideas that are a little bit out of the ordinary, to try to encourage creative approaches and to think outside of the box, which is not the usual central bank approach. But in the current climate I think it is necessary."

— Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke

What strikes many who have worked with Bernanke, though, is that he has pulled it all off without grand speeches, arm-twisting or Machiavellian games. Rather, according to interviews with more than a dozen current and former Fed officials and others familiar with the workings of the central bank, he has enacted bold policy moves through measured debates and by making even those who are resistant to some of the new actions feel that their concerns are understood.

To many Fed veterans, his leadership style is a stark contrast with that of his predecessor, Alan Greenspan, whose tenure was characterized by tightly controlled decision-making with only rare open disagreement.

"It's not Ben's personality to pound the table and scream and say you're going to agree with me or else," said Alan Blinder, a former Fed vice chairman and longtime colleague of Bernanke's at Princeton University.

In other words, Bernanke has remade the Federal Reserve not in spite of his low-key style and proclivity for consensus-building. He has been able to remake the Fed because of it.

This is an institution that not long ago could spend the better part of a two-day policymaking meeting deciding whether its target for short-term interest rates should be 5.25 percent or 5 percent. But in this crisis, rate cuts, the most common tool for helping the economy, have lacked their usual punch. The Fed

already has dropped the rate it controls essentially to zero, meaning there is no room left to cut.

That's why Bernanke's Fed has been trying to dream up ideas out of the clear blue sky. The result has been 15 Fed lending programs, many with four-letter acronyms, most of them unthinkable before the current crisis.

Many of the programs have required legal and financial gymnastics to enact, with the central bank being forced to invoke an emergency authority that allows it to lend to most any institution in "unusual and exigent circumstances."

Bernanke has said his academic research, especially about the Great Depression, convinced him that the Fed has no choice but to move forcefully during a financial crisis, even if doing so means it crosses conventional boundaries.

"Everyone is encouraged to come up with ideas that are a little bit out of the ordinary, to try to encourage creative approaches and to think outside of the box, which is not the usual central bank approach," Bernanke said in an interview. "But in the current climate I think it is necessary."

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BSU puts profs in dorms in bid to keep more students

By Jessie L. Bonner
Associated Press writer

BOISE — On the west end of the Boise State University campus, professor Michael Humphrey lives on the third floor of a residence hall with his wife, 2-year-old daughter, the family dog — and nearly 30 college students.

Humphrey, a 35-year-old with a doctorate in special education, has lived at the state university for the past year as part of a campus housing program created four years ago to help retain students and enhance their college experience.

The basic premise: If students feel like they belong, they'll be more likely to stick around.

On a the school's riverside campus, Humphrey is one of five faculty members who live in dorms and oversee the academic and personal well-being of about 125 students between them.

"When I went to school, there was no such thing," said Humphrey, who was an undergraduate at the University of Iowa. "I'm getting to know students on a level I wouldn't normally."

The professors organize movie nights and camping trips, they give advice on classes and resumes, and they get used to knocks on their doors at all hours from students, some of whom are living away from home for the first time.

Humphrey has lent his neighbors cups of sugar — condiments are a typical request — and introduced them to his parents. He was home when a student stopped by room 302 and needed help with his tie for a formal event. He knows Michael Roberts, a 25-year-old sociology major who lives down the hall on the third floor, hasn't been feeling well.

"On the other floors, people are just complete strangers," said Roberts, a senior who moved into the residence hall last year. "I think last year, there's maybe a handful of professors who I can remember their first name."

Students in the residential college earn a credit per semester for participating in weekly activities and classroom discussions with their professors. They also com-



AP photo

Michael Humphrey, professor of special education, works in his office at Boise State University on Wednesday. Humphrey is one of five faculty members who live in residence halls to oversee the personal and academic well being of students.

"The basic concept goes to roots of Oxford and Cambridge; when they were founded the 16th century they had faculty that lived with the students."

— W. Robert Midden, a Bowling Green State University chemistry professor who helped found the first residential learning community in 1997

plete assignments, such as essays and community service.

Nationwide, about 200 colleges have developed more than 600 living-learning residential programs, such as Michigan State University, in an attempt to further engage students outside the classroom and allow them to live on campus with others who have similar interests. In some cases, faculty and academic advisers have offices in the same residence hall.

But an analysis of these programs in 2007 found only 7 percent in the United States integrate faculty into the living arrangements, said Karen Kurotsuchi Inkelas, principal investigator for the National Study of Living-Learning Programs at the Center for Student Studies in Ann Arbor, Mich.

"Faculty living alongside students in the residence halls, even in a living-learning context, is not very prevalent," said Inkelas, who is also a professor at the University of Maryland.

In Idaho, Humphrey signed a contract agreeing to live in the campus residence

hall for two years. The university pays for rent, a meal plan and parking pass. The couple lives in a university suite designed to hold four students, with 10-feet by 12-foot bedrooms, a small kitchen and a 13-feet by 24-foot kitchen and living room area.

A video game poster hangs in the hallway, next to their front door.

"I did worry about feeling out of place, with a baby, and a dog," said Marcy Humphrey, a 34-year-old therapist. "It's been much less isolating than I thought it would be."

On campus, the family has access to art openings, lectures, a recreation center and a playground for their daughter, Annelise. The Humphreys have gone cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and painted pottery with students on the third floor.

"The basic concept goes to roots of Oxford and Cambridge; when they were founded the 16th century they had faculty that lived with the students," said W. Robert Midden, a Bowling Green State University

chemistry professor who helped found the first residential learning community on the Ohio campus in 1997.

"Harvard and Yale still have residential colleges," Midden said.

Most such communities have been created in the past decade and the small number that have incorporated faculty usually include older professors rather than young families, Midden said.

Boise State, with an enrollment of more than 19,000, is now studying whether the residential college program has been successful in keeping more students compared to other housing programs.

The residential college opened in 2004 with a professor from the College of Business and Economics. The program has since grown to include faculty from arts and humanities, health professions, civic leadership and engineering.

Idaho man wants to display his toys

RATHDRUM (AP) — Mark Lehan wants to share his toys — an estimated 20,000 of them.

The Rathdrum man has spent years collecting toys from secondhand stores, antique shops and store bins across the region. Now, he's looking for help in setting up a public display.

"I'm probably the oldest kid in the world," Lehan said.

There's Bart Simpson on a skateboard, the Incredible Hulk, Shrek, Goofy, the "Got Milk" cow with the wings, Rescue Heroes, trolls, plastic fish and rubber ducks galore. That's just the start.

Lehan, 58, runs his own landscape business. But collecting toys makes him happy.

"You start collecting and it takes on a life of its own," he told The Spokesman-Review. "You find one, you get another. Yeah, it got a little bit out of hand."

He also has several vintage automobiles.

He can't say how much his toys are worth, or how much he's spent. He doesn't care. He can't even identify many of them. If he likes it, he buys it.

"They have to have a look. They have to have a feel to them. They have to appear in motion," he said. "I don't sell anything. I collect."

Our disposable society helps. People buy lots of toys for kids, and when the kids get tired of them, the toys get thrown out or sold.

For years, Lehan has housed the collection inside a rented storage facility in Rathdrum. But lately he's felt the toys have been lonesome, he said.

"People don't think toys have feelings. I think they do," he said.

He's looking for a business or organization that would work with him to put the toys on display.

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Texas wildfire conditions ease, but weather still a concern

By Danny Robbins
Associated Press writer

DALLAS — Firefighters in Texas faced calmer weather conditions Saturday while attacking deadly wind-driven wildfires, but worried that approaching thunderstorms could create new problems.

Bill Beebe, a spokesman for the Texas Forest Service, said conditions were "pretty quiet," though firefighters had yet to contain more than 122,000 burning acres, including two new fires in East Texas.

The major concern was that lightning from thunderstorms predicted for Sunday could spark additional fires, he said.

"We're bracing possibly for some difficult times," he said.

Ken Schneider, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Amarillo, said the threat of thunderstorms Sunday encompasses all of North Texas.

In neighboring Oklahoma, grass fires that have plagued the state in recent days flared up again Saturday in two counties, prompting temporary evacuations.

Midwest City firefighters battled a blaze that threatened two housing subdivisions. Authorities evacuated residents from parts of Midwest City and neighboring Choctaw until the fire was brought under control,



AP photo

Micah Raper-Ostrow, 14, pulls one of his bikes out of the burnt rubble of his home in Sunset, Texas, Friday.

said Fire Chief Randy Olsen. The fire was in an area unaffected by a massive wildfire that started Thursday and resulted in the loss of about 70 homes in Midwest City and Choctaw, said Fire Marshal Jerry Lojka.

In Carter County in southern Oklahoma, a fire threatened the small town of Tatum, and some homes were evacuated.

Meantime, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said Saturday it has authorized the use of federal funds to help fight the fire in Palo Pinto County, west of Dallas. The authorization makes FEMA funding available to pay 75 percent of eli-

gible firefighting costs.

Firefighters haven't been able to contain any of the Palo Pinto fire, Beebe said. The fire has burned 700 acres, destroyed 14 homes and threatened 198 homes, he said.

Firefighters also have had little success containing a fire covering 25,000 acres in Montague County, northwest of Dallas, Beebe said.

The two fires that developed Saturday were in Red River and Camp counties in northeast Texas.

Three people died and more than 100 homes were destroyed by the fires as they raged through western and central Oklahoma and North Texas on Thursday. Officials

suspect that at least one of the fires was intentionally set. The blazes eased Friday as wind diminished from the peak of up to 70 mph.

All three deaths were in Montague County. A couple died when fire overtook their home, and another woman died after calling for an ambulance, Sheriff Paul Cunningham said. The woman's cause of death was unclear.

The couple was identified as former television reporter Matt Quinn and his wife, Cathy. Matt Quinn joined WFAA-TV in Dallas in 1980 and retired in the early 1990s. Their son, Chris, was hospitalized with burns in Dallas.

Facing hard times, Shriners may close 6 hospitals

By Katrina A. Goggins
Associated Press writer

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Shriners hospitals, which have provided free care since before the Great Depression, are considering closing a quarter of their facilities as donations stagnate, costs increase and the charity's endowment shrivels.

The group's director says it's the only viable option.

Officials at the Florida-based organization say it is siphoning \$1 million a day from its endowment to balance the budget for 22 hospitals in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Meanwhile, they say, that fund has fallen to \$5 billion from \$8 billion in less than a year because of the sputtering stock market and a charitable giving slump that has hurt philanthropies nationwide. The fund has been declining since 2001. The group will vote this summer on the closures.

"Unless we do something, the clock is ticking and within five to seven years we'll probably be out of the hospital business and not have any hospitals," Ralph Semb, chief executive officer of Shriners Hospitals for Children, told The Associated Press.

In cities where hospitals may close, supporters and hospital staff are scheduling fundraisers and posting online messages of support on social networking Web sites.

In Greenville, S.C., Bridget Myers and her daughter are turning to churches and friends, collecting money in a bucket tagged with pictures of X-rays and Shriners patients.

"I've collected \$92 dollars in two days," said Brooklynn Myers, 14, who received scoliosis treatment at the Shriners' Greenville hospital. "Me and my mom feel like it's heartbreaking we'd have to drive all the way to Lexington (Kentucky) and we've made special bonds here."

Obama has hundreds of important positions remaining to be filled

By Nancy Benac
Associated Press writer

WASHINGTON — President Obama doesn't have time for a victory lap now that his Cabinet is finally largely in place.

One level down, he faces gaping holes in the ranks he needs to fill if there is to be any hope of turning his ambitious agenda into action on health care, the environment and much more.

After a spurt of recent activity that followed a problem-plagued start, Obama is outpacing George W. Bush and Bill Clinton on appointments. But Obama, like his two immediate predecessors, is bogged down in a system that has grown increasingly cumbersome over the years. And he's added tougher-than-ever background checks and ethics rules.

"Obama will be faster than Clinton and Bush when all is said and done, but it's still a slow process," said New York University professor Paul Light, an expert on the federal government. "A turtle is a turtle is a turtle."

The Obama administration is a pretty fast turtle, but it's no hare."

What's at stake is much more than bragging rights for how quickly Obama can fill in an organizational chart with names for undersecretary of this and deputy assistant secretary of that. These are the people Obama needs to carry out all sorts of promised initiatives and policy shifts, and to assure that the nation stays safe along the way.

At a recent congressional hearing, for example, Rep. Sue Myrick, R-N.C., lamented that Dennis Blair, the national intelligence director, doesn't have time to manage the extra responsibilities he's been given on economics and climate change.

"The ideal person for that is the principal deputy director of national intelligence," suggested Edward Maguire, the agency's outgoing inspector general.

But that's one of hundreds of seats still empty. There are similar stories all across government.

NASA is awaiting a new administrator as the space agency approaches a big

deadline about when to retire the space shuttle fleet. At the Health and Human Services Department, where Kathleen Sebelius will be the last member of Obama's Cabinet to win confirmation by the Senate, 19 of the top 20 slots are being filled by acting career employees and the 20th is empty. This at a time when Obama is calling for sweeping changes in the way people get health care coverage. Four planned HHS nominations have been announced.

At the Interior Department, Obama has yet to name a replacement to lead the Minerals Management Service, central in plans to expand renewable energy production off the nation's coasts.

Obama also has not picked someone to head the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., a quasi-government outfit that insures the pensions of 44 million workers and retirees — critical when bankruptcies are mounting. The corporation is being run by an acting director from the civil service.



AP photo

A man uses computer at an internet cafe Feb. 1 in Fuyang, central China's Anhui province. China dismissed a recent research report outlining an extensive China-based computer spy ring as lies intended to stoke anxiety over Beijing's growing influence in world affairs.

Electric utilities may be vulnerable to cyberattack

By Ellen Nakashima and R. Jeffrey Smith
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The nation's electric utilities have failed to fully survey the vulnerability of their equipment to computer-based attacks from foreign countries and hackers, a government-authorized regulatory group concluded this week. That assessment came as the senior U.S. officials renewed warnings that experts from Russia, China and other nations have been trying for years to probe and exploit those vulnerabilities.

The alert by the North American Electric Reliability Corp. on Tuesday came on the same day that a senior military official reported that the Pentagon has spent more than \$100 million in the past six months responding to cyberattacks or other network problems. Government officials have long complained that private industry, which controls almost all of the U.S. electrical supply, has taken few measures to defend itself against debilitating attacks.

The Obama administration is nearing completion of a two-month review of cybersecurity policy, which experts said is likely to urge a more robust federal role in setting security standards for utilities and other industries considered vital to the American economy. Democratic lawmakers have also introduced legislation this year supporting the creation of such standards.

So far, the federal government has tread lightly in setting computer security regulations for the power grid. The corporation, which has the authority to ensure the reliability of the electrical power supply, has been

industry-run until recently; it says its current trustees, elected by industry members, are independent. The group's principal initiative to date has been to require that companies identify their vulnerabilities to cyberwarfare attack.

But in this week's letter to industry and government officials, Michael J. Assante, the group's chief security officer, complained that the most recent self-scrutiny did not go far enough. He warned in particular that "system planners and operators" need to pay more attention to the danger of "simultaneous manipulation" of computers within power substations and the consequences of such attacks on the larger grid.

The fact that "an intelligent cyberattacker" can compromise "multiple assets at once, and from a distance" requires more protection than utilities have considered, Assante said in his letter. He said they need to take a new look at "the potential consequences ... of not only the loss of assets that they own or control, but also the potential misuse of those assets by intelligent threat actors."

Assante did not specify where the threats might originate, but several independent experts said federal authorities have detected penetrations of computer controls for the power grid emanating from Russia and China, whose war colleges and militaries have been teaching cyberwarfare techniques. Those efforts to penetrate the controls were aimed at finding computer vulnerabilities and, once detected, sometimes involved planting software so that security patches could be circumvented in the future.

The family of Marvin West

would like to thank everyone for the calls, cards, food, flowers and those that dropped by to extend their concern & sympathy of the passing of husband, father, grandfather and friend. We appreciate the reaching out to us at this time of our sorrow.

We are thankful to all of the staff of Idaho Home Health & Hospice and The Caring Place, Drs. Dan Preucil & Kemp and Nurses of St. Lukes. We would like to give a Big Thanks to Pastor John Babb for the graveside service and Farmers Funeral Chapel for taking care of the funeral arrangements and the United States Honor Guard.

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City of Twin Falls: Oregon Trail Youth Complex
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City of Hansen: City Park 11am April 25

City of Buhl: Eastman Park 3pm Friday April 24

City of Kimberly: Ballard's Sub-division
1pm Thursday April 23

City of Filer: Cedar Draw Park 11am Saturday April 18

2009 HEALTH FAIR

Schedule of Educational Events

April 18 - 7 am - 1 pm
@ Jerome Recreation District
Admission and Education is FREE!

7:00 AM	Doors Open and the health fair starts. Vendors exhibits will be open at this time as well as registration. Those who had labs drawn last week may pick them up at this time.
7:30 AM	Rhonda Robbins, M.D. - Hormone Replacement Therapy. Gain a better understanding of Hormone Replacement Therapy and the effects of menopause.
8:30 AM	Elizabeth Sugden, M.D. - What do the numbers mean? A discussion on understanding your lab results.
9:30 AM	Alice Trabert, C.N.P. - 10 Things to ask your health care provider during a Physical. A discussion about questions to ask your provider and symptoms to be aware of.
10:30 AM	Joshua Kern, M.D. - What do the numbers mean? A discussion on understanding your lab results.
11:30 AM	Lorraine Tangen, M.D. - 10 Things you should have checked annually after age 40. This is tailored to both men and women.
12:30 PM	Ann Bybee, R.N. Certified Diabetes Educator - Are you at risk for Type II Diabetes? This is an education session to discuss the risk factors and effects of Type II Diabetes.

April 18

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TWIN FALLS FORECAST

Today: Dry and mild for your Easter with increasing cloud cover. Highs lower 60s.
Tonight: Mostly cloudy skies and cool temperatures. Lows in the lower 40s.
Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy to cloudy skies and developing afternoon and overnight showers. Highs lower 60s.

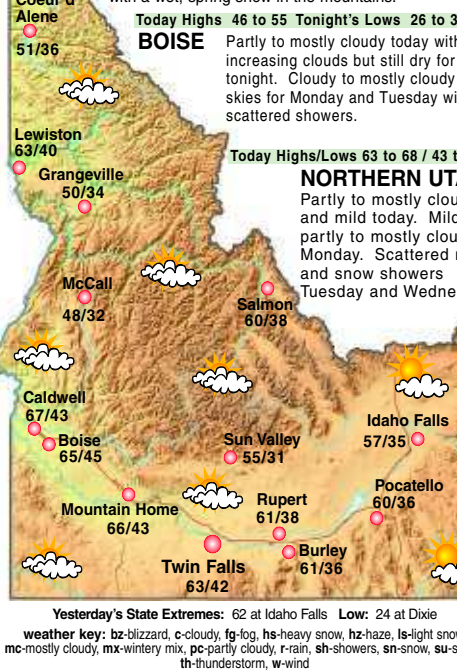
BURLEY/RUPERT FORECAST

Today: A mild and partly to mostly cloudy Easter. Highs lower 60s.
Tonight: Mostly cloudy and mostly dry. Lows in the middle 30s.
Tomorrow: Thickening clouds and developing late day and overnight showers. Highs near 60, lows lower 30s.

IDAHO'S FORECAST

SUN VALLEY, SURROUNDING MTS.

Mild and pleasant for your Easter Sunday but cloud cover and showers will be returning to the mountains for Monday and Tuesday. Valleys will see mostly rain with a wet, spring snow in the mountains.



Yesterday's State Extremes: 62 at Idaho Falls Low: 24 at Dixie
weather key: bz-blizzard, c-cloudy, fg-fog, hs-heavy snow, hz-haze, ls-light snow, mc-mostly cloudy, mx-mix, pc-partly cloudy, r-rain, sh-showers, sn-snow, su-sunny, th-thunderstorm, w-wind

TWIN FALLS FIVE-DAY FORECAST

Table with 7 columns: Today, Tonight, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Includes weather icons and temperature ranges (High/Low).

Yesterday's Weather

Table with 4 columns: City, Hi, Lo, Prcp. Lists weather for Boise, Burley, Challis, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, Jerome, Lewiston, Lowell, Malad, Malta, Pocatello, Rexburg, Salmon, Stanley.

ALMANAC - TWIN FALLS

Weather statistics including Temperature, Precipitation, Humidity, Barometric Pressure, Sunrise and Sunset, Moon Phases, and Moonrise and Moonset.

REGIONAL FORECAST

Table with 4 columns: City, Today, Tomorrow, Tuesday. Lists forecasts for Boise, Bonners Ferry, Burley, Challis, Coeur d'Alene, Elko, Eugene, Gooding, Grace, Hagerman, Halley, Idaho Falls, Kallispell, Jackpot, Jerome, Lewiston, Malad City, Malta, McCall, Missoula, Pocatello, Portland, Rupert, Rexburg, Richland, Rogerson, Salmon, Salt Lake City, Spokane, Stanley, Sun Valley, Yellowstone.

NATIONAL FORECAST

Table with 4 columns: City, Today, Tomorrow, Tuesday. Lists forecasts for Atlanta, Atlanta City, Baltimore, Billings, Birmingham, Boston, Charleston, Charleston, WV, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, El Paso, Fairbanks, Fargo, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami, Milwaukee, Nashville, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

WORLD FORECAST

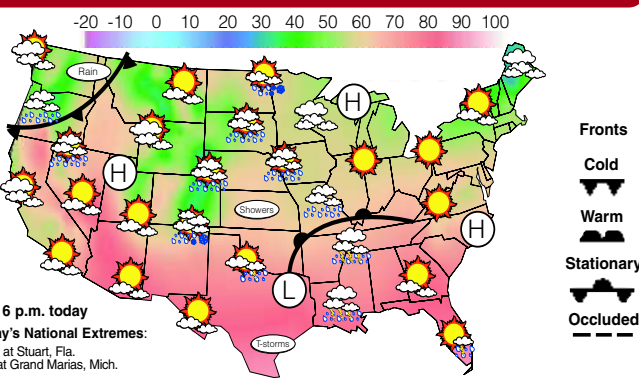
Table with 4 columns: City, Today, Tomorrow, Tuesday. Lists forecasts for Acapulco, Athens, Auckland, Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Dhahran, Geneva, Hong Kong, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kuwait City, London, Mexico City, Moscow, Nairobi, Paris, Prague, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Santiago, Seoul, Sydney, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, Vienna, Warsaw, Winnipeg, Zurich.

CANADIAN FORECAST

Table with 4 columns: City, Today, Tomorrow, Tuesday. Lists forecasts for Calgary, Cranbrook, Edmonton, Kelowna, Lethbridge, Regina, Saskatoon, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria, Winnipeg.

U. V. INDEX and DayWeather, Inc. logo with website information.

TODAY'S NATIONAL MAP



Gregg Middlekauff's Quote of the Day: 'Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential.'

More Magic Valley weather at www.magicvalley.com/weather
Get up-to-date highway information at the Idaho Transportation Department's Web site at 511.idaho.gov or call 888-432-7623.

Tornado survivor describes twister that 'sounded like 7 freight trains'

By Juanita Cousins
Associated Press writer

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The worst sound Eric Funkhouser said he has ever heard was a 10-second "voom" followed by a man's screams.

A tornado hit Funkhouser's home in Murfreesboro, about 30 miles southeast of Nashville, on Friday, part of severe storms that spawned tornadoes across the Southeast blamed for three deaths and dozens of injuries.

"It sounded like seven freight trains and 22 vacuum cleaners all going at the same time," Funkhouser said Saturday as he returned to what is left of his home and neighborhood.

Funkhouser ran outside and found his neighbor John Bryant laying in Funkhouser's front yard, covered with blood and screaming.

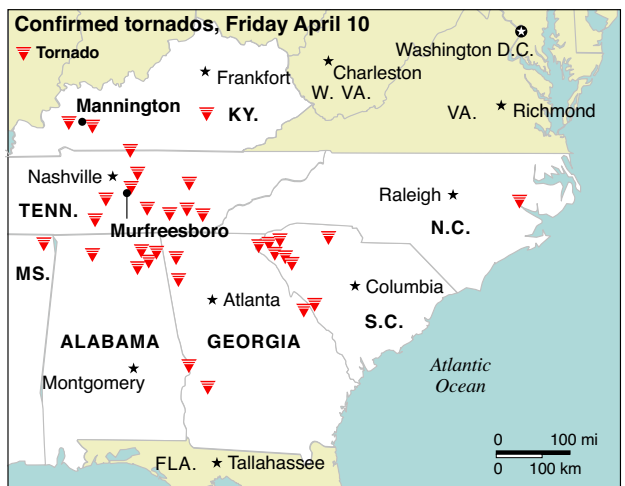
"He kept saying that his wife and baby were out there with him and he had to find them," Funkhouser said.

Twenty minutes later, Funkhouser and other survivors found Bryant's wife, Kori, dead in the gravel driveway under debris and 9-week-old Olivia Bryant was found dead buckled into her car seat, beneath carpet and a tree.

Family friend Laura Lawrence said Bryant, a self-employed construction worker, had just gotten home on his lunch break. He, his wife and daughter were seeking shelter when the

Tornados sweep the South

Reports of destruction from tornados were widespread across the South Friday. In Murfreesboro, Tenn., a young mother and her infant daughter were killed and 41 others injured when hit by the line of



tornado rolled through. National Weather Service officials say a preliminary report shows the EF3 tornado tore a 15-mile path through the university town of about 100,000 with winds as high as 165 mph.

Deputy City Manager Rob Lyons said 42 homes were destroyed, 140 were damaged and 71 were affected but habitable. Several thousand customers were still without power Saturday.

More than 40 people were injured. Seven people were in critical condition Saturday afternoon, said Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services director Randy White.

John Bryant is in critical condition with a broken back, Lawrence said Saturday, as she gathered the family's clothes and pictures from their

He then walked through the neighborhood that was hardest hit, listening to survivors share stories of how they hid in bathrooms and pantries.

Bredesen said he may request a presidential declaration of emergency after Tennessee Emergency Management Agency officials completely survey the area.

Church members and neighbors joined survivors in cleaning up debris, patching up roofs with blue tarps and sawing tree branches from cars and houses.

Community response has been overwhelming, Lyons said, with volunteers offering to remove debris and give donations.

"One of the things that makes Murfreesboro a great city is that we come together and help each other," he said.

But he said others should try and stay out of the area so they don't obstruct rescue and cleanup workers trying to do their jobs.

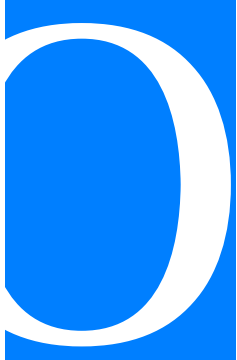
City officials have set up a hot line for people who want to volunteer and victims seeking help.



AP photo
People in Mena, Ark., look over tornado damage Friday in Mena, Ark.

GO MADISON The Ultimate Visitor's Guide to Wisconsin's Capital Region. Includes text about the Madison area and a website link.

THE RIGHT HOME LOAN FOR YOU. Financing homes the right way since 1940. Idaho Central Credit Union. Includes a photo of a family and contact information.



Opinion

Letter to the editor, Opinion 2 / Other views, Opinion 2 / Nation&World, Opinion 4-7

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2009

OPINION EDITOR STEVE CRUMP: (208) 735-3223 SCRUMP@MAGICVALLEY.COM

Chinese drywall poses headaches for homeowners

See Opinion 4



EDITORIAL

Legislature should split the difference, and go home

Leave it to Maxine Bell, the plain-talking chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee, to get to the point about the dwindling days of the first session of the 60th Idaho Legislature.

“Apparently politics is not the art of compromise, and I’m feeling very, very guilty costing the taxpayers \$30,000 a day to stay here and be stubborn,” the Jerome Republican said Wednesday after the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee voted to revise cuts in state personnel spending.

Just so. Now that the House has made clear it won’t support an increase in the gasoline tax, it’s time for the House and the Senate to cut a deal on state employee pay and adjourn.

Monday will be the 92nd day of a session marked by a lot of waiting around. JFAC couldn’t set the 2010 budget until it knew how many federal stimulus dollars it had.

But it knows now, and state personnel cuts are the only obstacle to adjournment.

Our view: There’s nothing to be gained by extending the legislative session arguing over the size of the state personnel cutbacks.

What do you think? We welcome viewpoints from our readers on this and other issues.

Last week, JFAC voted to eliminate a previously approved across-the-board salary cut for state workers. Instead, agency directors would decide how to trim 3 percent from their payroll. An additional 2 percent budget reduction — about \$6 million — would be covered by federal stimulus funding.

The revision came in response to a compromise offered by Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter, who was unhappy that JFAC’s earlier bill took away his department chiefs’ flexibility on personnel cuts.

But the House Republican leadership is adamant about a 5 percent payroll cut, setting up a standoff that could send the session into its 15th week if an agreement is not reached by Friday.

Idaho can’t afford that, and it’s a disservice to state employees to leave them in doubt about the size of their paychecks — or the security of their jobs — after July 1.

So lawmakers should split the difference — perhaps a 4 percent cutback — and go home.

If the economy improves before January, Otter always has the option of calling a one- or two-day special session to restore the personnel cuts — or take another run at a highway funding bill.

But for now, there’s no more money to spend at the Capitol Annex. It’s time to call it day.

TIMES-NEWS

Brad Hurd . . . publisher Steve Crump . . . Opinion editor

The members of the editorial board and writers of editorials are Brad Hurd, James G. Wright, Steve Crump, Bill Bitzenburg and Ruth S. Pierce.

A snapshot of poverty in south-central Idaho

Did you know?

In the Magic and Wood River valleys ...

- The average real median household income is \$1,855 less than the state’s real median household income.
- The average wage per job is \$4,774 less than Idaho’s average wage per job.
- Twenty-one percent of the residents of south-central Idaho are uninsured. That’s 4.4 percentage points higher than the rest of the state.
- The percentage of children who are low income is 8 percentage points higher than the Idaho average.



Times-News file photo

People pick up supplies at the food pantry at the First Church of God in Jerome in 2005.

- South-central Idaho has the highest percentage of child food stamp recipients in Idaho: 56.7 percent.
- Although south-central Idaho has 14 percent of the state’s school-aged children, 18 percent of Idaho’s children participating in free-lunch programs live in the Magic and Wood River valleys.

Blaine County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	6.5%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$25.29/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$35,457/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	6.5%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	13.6%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	8.6%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% of income in rent	26%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$740/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	1.4%	7.9%	8.2%
% of low-income children	29%	53%	45%

Gooding County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	4.3%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$22.57/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$27,770/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	13.2%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	22.8%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	19.7%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% of income on rent	21%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$480/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	6.9%	7.9%	7.8%
% of low-income children	59%	53%	45%

Camas County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	6.6%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$22.57/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$26,673/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	8%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	18.4%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	9.1%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% of income on rent	20%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$447/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	1.5%	7.9%	8.2%
% of low-income children	38%	53%	45%

Jerome County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	5.3%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$22.57/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$27,770/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	12.7%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	23.3%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	17.9%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% if income for rent	21%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$480/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	8.7%	7.9%	7.8%
% of low-income children	62%	53%	45%

Cassia County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	4.1%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$22.57/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$27,130/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	17.8%	12.8%	12.1%
% if uninsured	24.2%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	24.2%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% of income on rent	21%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$403/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	9%	7.9%	7.8%
% of low-income children	57%	53%	45%

Lincoln County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	8.3%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$22.57/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$27,141/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	15.1%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	23.8%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	15.8%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% of income for rent	16%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$464/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	4.4%	7.9%	7.8%
% of low-income children	57%	53%	45%

Find the averages for Minidoka and Twin Falls counties on Opinion 2

Times-News doesn’t play favorites in reporting police news

Boy was I guilty. Friday before last, I appeared in 5th District Court in Burley and was convicted of speeding. There wasn’t much chance I was going to beat the rap, but even an earnest young state trooper with a radar gun should have to work for a conviction. So I put up a weak defense and paid the nice lady at the desk downstairs.

We normally don’t report speeding tickets in the paper, but I wanted to tell you about my recent foray into lawlessness to make a point.

Sometimes people call here and ask that we not report on far more serious crimes that they or a loved one has committed. Usually, they say that the person’s boss will fire them, their elderly grandmother will die from the shock or that it’s not fair to put their name in the paper because they were really innocent no matter what the judge said.



132 FAIRFIELD ST. W. James G. Wright

One well-appointed elderly woman recently dropped by to ask us not to report that she had been arrested for shoplifting. The whole thing was a mistake, she said, and she had been assured that the case would be dismissed. Could we do an old lady a favor and help her avoid embarrassment at church next Sunday?

Trouble was, she had already been convicted. Out of curiosity we checked her criminal history — and found a long string of similar petty theft convictions over many years.

Some of those people, in disappointment that we won’t suppress their DUI or assault charge, suggest that we’d do it differently if a Times-News staffer was the

HAVE SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?

Want to give me a piece of it? I’ll be at the Bent Bean, 2101 Overland Ave. in Burley at 8 a.m. Tuesday, April 14. Join me for a cup and a chat.

defendant. They’re wrong about that.

During my time as editor here I know of only two of our 100-plus employees who have faced anything more serious than a speeding ticket. Those cases involved a repeat DUI and a lewd conduct charge. Both were rank-and-file workers in departments other than the newsroom. Their transgressions were reported just as we report those charges against anyone in the community who isn’t otherwise famous or infamous.

But I’m held to a different standard because my job puts me out front. So while we don’t normally report on speeding tickets, mine gets special treatment. It’s all a matter of transparency. It also gives me a good topic

for a column, so my \$140 fine has been put to good use. I wonder if I can claim it on my taxes as a business expense.

• • •

Three months ago today we launched the Times-News Webcast, an experiment extending our news franchise into the broadcast realm via a nightly two-minute video news report on our Web site, www.magicvalley.com.

At the time, I described it as “something of an experiment. We don’t really know how well it will work, or how it will be received. But as the economics of the news business and Internet-based delivery systems continue to evolve, we’re willing to try non-traditional ways to augment

and maintain our position as the region’s dominant news organization.”

The experiment ends next Friday, when lead anchor Andrea Jackson and producer Pat Marcantonio sign off for the weekend. Andrea and Pat, with able assists from other reporters and editors when they were busy elsewhere, delivered everything we asked — and more.

Trouble is, not enough people watched. The record viewership for the nightly report was 903 people on the day we reported the police-involving shooting death of R.J. Holler at the Dunes Motel. Even that record number wasn’t enough to call TNW a success.

In pulling the plug, we had to consider the size of our staff, the amount of resources needed to mount even a short nightly Web cast and our need to concentrate our efforts elsewhere.

We’re not totally abandoning the idea, however. We now have a studio and all of the equipment needed to crank up the TNW if there’s a big breaking story that needs broadcast-style treatment. And we’ll continue to post video reports to go with individual articles, just as we did before the Web cast.

Many thanks to Stevens Pierce & Associates, CPAs, for its sponsorship of the Web cast. Kudos as well to Pat, Andrea, Joshua Palmer, David Cooper, Nate Poppino and Ashley Smith for taking turns in front of and behind the camera.

And to that small, loyal audience of regular TNW viewers, I’ll sign off with the words of the late, great broadcaster Edward R. Murrow: Good night, and good luck.

Times-News Editor James G. Wright may be reached at 735-3255 or james.wright@lee.net.

OTHER VIEWS

What Idaho newspapers are say about ...

... gay marriage

Lewiston Tribune

State by state, the nationwide freeze denying gays and lesbians the same marriages to which other Americans are entitled is melting. And there is now little doubt the thaw will spread across the entire nation.

... the Iowa Supreme Court unanimously rejected the state's prohibition ... the Vermont House overwhelmingly passed a Senate-approved bill legalizing gay marriage. Gov. Jim Douglas vetoed it, but the Legislature overrode the veto ... making Vermont the fourth state where homosexuals may marry.

Despite what opponents of gay marriage say, these jurists and legislators are not activist ideologues who are ignoring the will of the American people. In truth, votes like the one this year to reinstate California's gay marriage ban are anachronisms. The bans are doomed.

Why? Conservative columnist George Will, whose work appears frequently on this page, put it succinctly on ABC's "This Week" recently.

"For the rising generation of Americans, being gay is like being left-handed." Will



said. "It's boring." He's right. ... young Americans ... are far more tolerant of sexual minorities than their parents They don't care whether homosexuals get married ... And they certainly don't understand why government should get in the way.

What we are seeing in courthouses and legislatures across the nation today is similar to a spring breakup on a frozen river ... it doesn't melt all at once, in every place. In some corners, cool breezes and nights will even force some already thawed ice to turn solid again ...

... in Idaho, (the) electorate stands with its Legislature, governor and judiciary against full equality for homosexuals. All that means ... is that Idaho will be one of the last states to drop its prohibition, just as states in the deep South were last to drop legal segregation of the races.

The time will come when Idaho, which foolishly solidified its ban by writing it into the state Constitution, will find itself shunned by residents of other states with more enlightened policies ... Hewlett-Packard told

Gem State legislators years ago their anti-gay policies made it harder to persuade HP employees to move to Boise. Legislators ignored that warning, but when they start hearing it from more employers, they will eventually change their ways ...

... kids, teachers suffer

Post Register, Idaho Falls

Idaho's legislators are creating this mess. They're about to cut school funding while leaving millions of dollars in the state reserves. Somebody has to clean it up.

Will it be the property taxpayer? Nope.

Bonneville School District 93 and Idaho Falls School



District 91 have supplemental levy elections (this) week. Bonneville wants \$2.5 million ... But the levy would have to provide \$4.8 million to fill in Bonneville's budget hole. Asking for that much in this economy is seen as politically suicidal.

Idaho Falls also is playing it safe. Its supplemental request is unchanged at \$6.8 million — even though that leaves the district \$3.5 million short of covering its costs.

So these budgets will be balanced on the backs of kids and teachers.

Kids can absorb some of these program cuts. Nobody has a right to drivers education, which is costing Bonneville School District \$64,000 annually ...

But kids need counselors, music classes, new textbooks and P.E. If they don't get them, students suffer ...

Budget reserves come in handy when a district has a cash flow problem or emergency crops up. But how much money should schools maintain in the bank when student programs are getting cut? ...

Kids can't emerge unscathed. To avoid cutting any program, schools would have to slash payrolls for administrators, teachers and classified workers by 9 percent across the board next year.

But in an era that is seeing state employees ... suffer through pay cuts, how can teachers expect to be held exempt? If teachers aren't willing to accept some general reductions, specific cuts will be far deeper.

Pending in the Senate is a

compromise that allows for good faith negotiations between schools and employees in the event of a financial crisis. When it's implemented, you will hear that hurting teachers by cutting their salaries hurts students.

That's undeniable. But ask any child who forfeits a counselor or gets lost in a crowded class if she sees it that way.

... desperate times, desperate measures

Idaho Press Tribune, Nampa

The Alpha Omega Services gun store (in Nampa) has found a very successful way to entice people to donate food for the Lighthouse Rescue Mission — by giving food donors raffle tickets to win an AR-15 rifle and 1,000 rounds of ammunition. It's such a successful idea that, after the AR-15 has been awarded on Wednesday, another raffle promotion to win a 1927 A1 Deluxe Tommy Gun will begin.

Meanwhile in Pocatello, Jeb Harrison, a high school

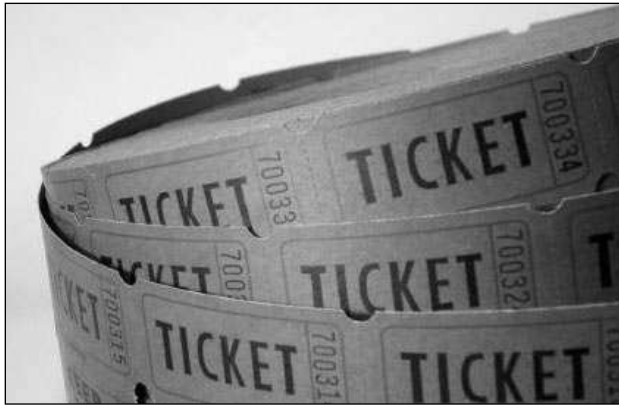
history and economics teacher, is putting advertisements for a local pizzeria on all of his handouts to students ... the pizzeria is paying for the paper Harrison needs for his five classes — about \$315 worth ...

In both cases, Idaho ingenuity is boldly on display.

The gun store is raffling off a legal product. As long as the winner meets the legal requirements to own the weapon and follows the process designated by law for gun owners, there shouldn't be a problem ...

And give credit to the teacher in Pocatello for killing two birds with one stone. First of all he's helping a school district looking at a potential shortfall of \$10 million to cover some badly needed expenses, and secondly, the economics teacher is giving his students some real-world lessons ...

These are tough times, but not so tough that charities can't get donations and schools can't get needed supplies. Sometimes all it takes is a little creative thinking ...



Poverty

Continued from Opinion 1

Minidoka County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	5.6%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$21.84/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$26,970/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	16.1%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	22.8%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	25.2%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% of income on rent	19%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$394/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	8.9%	7.9%	7.8%
% of low-income children	66%	53%	45%

Twin Falls County

Category	County	S-c Idaho	Idaho
Unemployment rate	5.3%	5.4%	7.1%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$22.67/hour	\$22.83/hour	\$22.94/hour
Average real wage per job	\$27,259/year	\$28,369/year	\$33,143/year
Poverty rate	12.8%	12.8%	12.1%
% of uninsured	17.6%	21%	16.6%
Child poverty rate	16.5%	17%	15.9%
% of renters who pay at least 35% if income for rent	26%	21%	28%
Median rent	\$489/month	\$491/month	\$515/month
% of food stamp households	8.6%	7.5%	7.8%
% of low-income children	55%	53%	45%

— Sources: Idaho Hunger Atlas, Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force, Boise State University Public Policy Center; Census Bureau

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

School going overboard on food fight

My stepson is a 13-year-old black boy who recently was involved in a food fight at school. Apparently, he was the one the school says started the food fight, although a number of other children were involved.

The school is apparently making an example of him. He has been suspended from school and charges are being pressed against him for disorderly conduct. As a 13-year-old guilty of nothing more than a food fight, he is going to have to go in front of a judge. The other children involved in the food fight were all given warnings. But none of them were either suspended nor were charges brought against any of them.

The school has informed the other children, apparently as a warning, that our son has been arrested, which is not true. His mother picked him up from

school, but he was not arrested at that time.

Today, another black boy was in the lunchroom and stood up too long before sitting at the tables. He was made to do lunch duty because he stood up too long.

As a parent, I always thought that discipline within the school, was up to

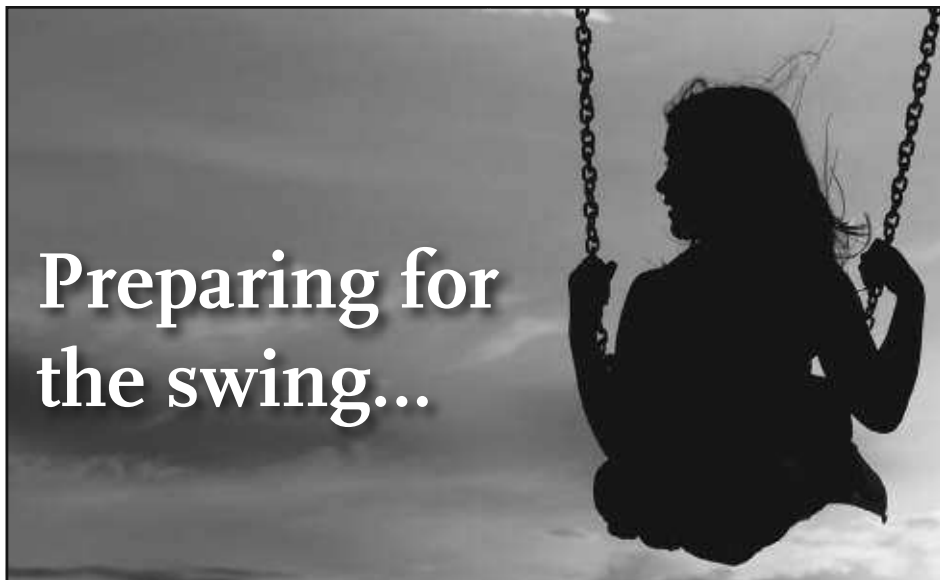
the principal, the teachers and the parents. Since when have judges become involved in a school food fight? Since when have police officers become involved in a school food fight?

How can we stop this? Is this what our children have to look forward to? Being arrested for being children instead of helped to under-

stand what they are doing is not the thing to do?

Is this how our justice system is being put to work? How our tax dollars are being spent? I always thought the justice system was for true criminals to be tried, not children in food fights!

DEBBIE BURKE
Twin Falls



Preparing for the swing...

...Is Just Good Business

Do you remember being pushed in a swing as a child?

Did you ever stop to think that in life, you never really get off that swing. Up and down, back and forth, you just took it for granted that the swing would go both ways.

That's a lesson sometimes forgotten as adults. To keep the swing moving, you had to lean back, pump your feet, and hold on for dear life. During an economic down-turn, you have to lean back a little farther, pump a little harder, and hold on a little tighter. It's the only way you can ride it back to the top.

In southern Idaho, we're lucky things are a little more stable here than other places, but that's because we keep pumping when others don't. We never stop looking for new business opportunities, we push each other to make sure everyone keeps swinging and we constantly prepare for the up-turn. Because, if you're not prepared when the swing changes direction, you're likely to fall out. And that's the best way we know of to miss out on the ride.

BUSINESSPLUS
Funding For The Future

CSI College of Southern Idaho

SIEDO SOUTHERN IDAHO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

TWIN FALLS' 2009

Relay For Life

MAY 15 - 16
7:00pm - 11:00am

RELAY FOR LIFE

FILER FAIRGROUND ARENA

American Cancer Society

This official Program Guide will include a complete schedule of events, team list, a map and much, much more.

This guide will be inserted in the Times-News as well as available at the RELAY FOR LIFE Event.

\$14⁰⁶ per column inch

PUBLISHES WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2009
(Deadline is Friday, May 1, 2009)

Also, pick up your advertisement in the Mini-Cassia "RELAY FOR LIFE" edition on Tuesday, June 9, 2009 for just **\$9.00 per column inch** (deadline is May 28, 2009).

Call today to reserve your space at 735-3270.

TIMES-NEWS
magicvalley.com

Animal rights seriously impacting agriculture

One of the historic election landmarks last year had nothing to do with race or the presidency. Rather, it had to do with pigs and chickens — and with overarching ideas about the limits of human dominion over other species.

I'm referring to the stunning passage in California, by nearly a 2-1 majority, of an animal rights ballot initiative that will ban factory farms from keeping calves, pregnant hogs or egg-laying hens in tiny pens or cages in which they can't stretch out or turn around. It was an element of a broad push in Europe and America alike to grant increasing legal protections to animals.

Spain is moving to grant basic legal rights to apes. In the United States, law schools are offering courses on animal rights, fast-food restaurants including Burger King are working with animal rights groups to ease the plight of hogs and chickens in factory farms and the Humane Society of the United States is preparing to push new legislation to extend the California protections to other states.

At one level, this movement on behalf of oppressed farm animals is emotional, driven by sympathy at photos of forlorn pigs or veal calves kept in tiny pens. Yet the movement is also the product of a deep intellectual ferment pioneered by the Princeton scholar Peter Singer.

Singer wrote a landmark article in 1973 for *The New York Review of Books* and later expanded it into a 1975 book, "Animal Liberation." That book helped yank academic philosophy back from a dreary foray into linguistics and pushed it to confront such fascinating questions of applied ethics as: What are our moral obligations to pigs?

John Maynard Keynes wrote that ideas, "both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else." This idea popularized by Singer — that we have ethical obligations that transcend our species — is one whose time appears to have come.

"There's some growth in



NICHOLAS KRISTOF

numbers of vegetarians, but the bigger thing is a broad acceptance of the idea that animals count," Singer reflected the other day.

What we're seeing now is an interesting moral moment: a grass-roots effort by members of one species to promote the welfare of others. Legislation is playing a role, with Europe scheduled to phase out bare wire cages for egg production by 2012, but consumer consciences are paramount. It's because of consumers that companies like Burger King and Hardee's are beginning to buy pork and eggs from producers that give space to their animals.

For most of history, all of this would have been unimaginable even to people of the most refined ethical sensibility (granted, for many centuries those refined ethicists were also untroubled by slavery). A distinguished philosopher, Thomas Taylor, reacted to Mary Wollstonecraft's 1792 call for "the rights of woman" by writing a mocking call for "the rights of brutes." To him, it seemed as absurd that women should have rights as that animals should have rights.

One of the few exceptions was Jeremy Bentham, the philosopher who 200 years ago also advocated for women's rights, gay rights and prison reform. He responded to Kant's lack of interest in animals by saying: "The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?"

In recent years, the issue has entered the mainstream, but even for those who accept that we should try to reduce the suffering of animals, the question remains where to draw

... however we may answer these questions, there is one profound difference from past centuries: Animal rights are now firmly on the mainstream ethical agenda.

lines. I eagerly pushed Singer to find his boundaries. "Do you have any compunctions about swatting a cockroach?" I asked him.

"Not much," he replied, citing reasons to doubt that insects are capable of much suffering. Singer is somewhat unsure about shellfish, although he mostly gives them the benefit of the doubt and tends to avoid eating them.

Free-range eggs don't seem offensive to him, but there is the awkwardness that even wholesome egg-laying operations depend on the slaughtering of males, since a male chick is executed for every female allowed to survive and lay eggs.

I asked Singer how he would weigh human lives against animal lives, and he said that he wouldn't favor executing a human to save any number of animals. But he added that he would be troubled by the idea of keeping one human alive by torturing 10,000 hogs to death.

These are vexing questions, and different people will answer them differently. For my part, I eat meat, but I would prefer that this practice not inflict gratuitous suffering.

Yet however we may answer these questions, there is one profound difference from past centuries: Animal rights are now firmly on the mainstream ethical agenda.

Nicholas Kristof is a columnist for The New York Times.

Why I said 'no' to earmarks

Several people in the media and in Idaho's political elite have taken me to task for my decision to refuse participation in the earmark process for 2009. They view this as a symbolic gesture, one not worth the money Idaho might receive if I had decided to utilize a system the vast majority of Idahoans and of Americans agree is flawed.

My response is that I am not a career politician who measures success by the dollars of pork I bring home to my district. I am a businessman who is working in Congress to make this country a better place for my children and my grandchildren, and for the state I love. That means doing what is right, and that's why I am standing firm against earmarks.

Our country is in trouble. Unemployment is climbing, the economy is stagnant, and our financial system is still not functioning properly. The recovery will be painful, and the choices we have made over the last six months to spend trillions of dollars we have to borrow from the Chinese and other foreigners on bailouts and stimulus have assured that the pain will be felt by future generations long after this recession is over. We are borrowing astonishing amounts of money for projects and programs which will do very little to create jobs in the short term. And there is no plan to pay it back. Adding onto this year's record deficit another \$50 billion or \$60 billion of special interest earmarks just makes the problem that much worse. Neither party has a real path to bring down the deficit and ultimately lead us to the balanced budgets Americans demand. We can only do that if government makes the same kinds of sacrifices Americans now make every day.

If ever there was a time to take a stand and demand changes to a system that is broken, that time is now. For us to truly and permanently cut the amount that government spends, we must reform the way the spending happens. It's not unlike someone whose credit cards are maxed out, while carrying a large car payment and living in a



READER COMMENT
Rep. Walt Minnick

reform the system so all government spending is subject to public scrutiny and debate instead of decisions being made by powerful politician in hidden back rooms.

home he cannot afford. That first step — cutting up the credit cards — is crucial.

So it is with ending earmarks. We must reduce spending, but we must also

Walt Minnick, a Democrat from Boise, is serving his first term in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 1st Congressional District.

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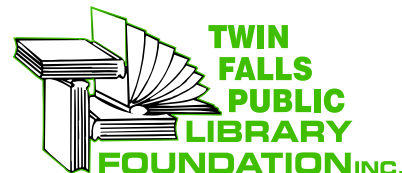
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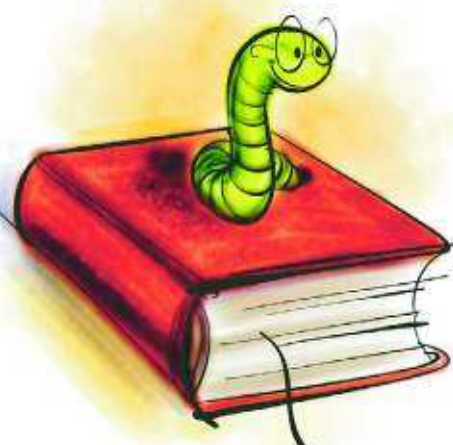
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NATION & WORLD

Calif. Sunday school teacher booked in child death

By Terry Collins
Associated Press writer

TRACY, Calif. — Police said Saturday they do not know what motivated the Sunday school teacher they arrested on suspicion of kidnapping and killing an 8-year-old girl whose body was found in a suitcase dumped in an irrigation pond.

Melissa Huckaby, 28, a local minister's granddaughter, was arrested late Friday about five hours after she drove herself to the local police station at the request of officers, said police Sgt. Tony Sheneman.

She was being held without bail in connection with the death of Sandra Cantu, the San Joaquin County

sheriff's office said.

Sandra disappeared on March 27 and hundreds of volunteers and law enforcement officials turned out to search for her. On April 6, farmworkers draining an irrigation pond found the suitcase.

Huckaby walked into the police station Friday and started a conversation with officers, Sheneman said at a news conference.

"She was calm, cool and collected, then she became very emotional She went back and forth from being calm to emotional."

Eventually, she became "resigned," Sheneman said.

"I couldn't begin to even theorize what her motive was," he said.

"Sandra was very close friends

with Melissa's daughter. They used to play together," Sheneman said.

Investigators know where the girl was killed but can't disclose the location, he said. Autopsy results are not yet available. He wouldn't say whether police believe the slaying was accidental or deliberate.

Sheneman had earlier told The Associated Press that interviews with Huckaby in The Tracy Press had revealed inconsistencies that prompted further inquiries from investigators.

He had confirmed early Saturday that the suitcase in which the body was found belonged to Huckaby.

Huckaby is on suicide watch in an observation cell, said sheriff's Deputy Les Garcia. She is refusing to

see visitors, he said. Jail records did not indicate whether she had an attorney.

Sandra's aunt, Angie Chavez, said the girl's mother, Maria Chavez, was devastated.

"It's not over. This is just the beginning of a horrible nightmare," Angie Chavez said of the arrest as she stood at the entrance to the mobile home park where Sandra lived with her mother.

Angie Chavez' husband, Joe Chavez, said Huckaby should face the death penalty.

"You eye everybody with a great deal of suspicion. We're shell-shocked here," Joe Chavez said.

See **CHILD**, Opinion 5



AP photo
This image provided by the San Joaquin County Sheriff's department shows the booking photo of Melissa Huckaby taken Saturday.



In this undated photo released Saturday, armed pirates and their hostages are seen aboard the French yacht Tanit off the coast of Somalia. The French navy freed a sailboat seized by pirates off Somalia Friday, but one of the hostages was killed.

French Defense Ministry/AP photo

U.S. ship arrives in Kenya minus hostage captain

By Elizabeth A. Kennedy
and Katherine Houreld
Associated Press writers

MOMBASA, Kenya — Nineteen American sailors who escaped a pirate hijacking off the Horn of Africa reached safe harbor on Saturday, exhilarated by freedom but mourning the absence of the captain they hailed for sacrificing his freedom to save them.

With a throng of reporters shouting questions from shore, the crew of the Maersk Alabama described an ordeal that began with Somali pirates hauling themselves onto the deck from a small boat bobbing on the surface of the Indian Ocean far below. "They came from the stern of the ship and came on with hooks and ropes and were firing in the air when they got on board," said ATM Reza, a crew member who said he was the first to see the pirates board Wednesday.

As the pirates shot in the air, Capt. Richard Phillips, 53, of Underhill, Vermont, told his crew to lock themselves in a cabin and surrendered himself to safe-guard his men, crew members said. Phillips was still held hostage in an enclosed lifeboat Saturday by four pirates being closely watched by U.S. warships in an increasingly tense

standoff. A Pentagon spokesman said negotiations were ongoing.

"He saved our lives!" second mate Ken Quinn, of Bradenton, Florida, declared from the ship as it docked in the resort and port city of Mombasa. "He's a hero."

Reza, a father of one from Hartford, Conn., said that he had led one of the pirates to the engine room, where he stabbed him in the hand with an ice pick and tied him up. Other sailors corroborated that story.

The crew did not elaborate Saturday but have told family members by phone that they took one pirate hostage before giving him up in the unfulfilled hope their captain would be released. Instead, the Somalis fled with Phillips to the lifeboat.

Some of the Alabama's crew cheered and cracked jokes as they arrived in Mombasa, others peered warily over the edge of their 17,000-ton cargo ship.

With Navy SEALs standing guard, one sailor told off the mass of journalists, saying: "Don't disrespect these men like that. They've got a man out on a lifeboat dying so we can live."

See **PIRACY**, Opinion 5

HEADACHE FOR HOMEOWNERS



AP photos

Mary Ann Schultheis tears up while talking about the problems that she is having with her Parkland, Fla., home Wednesday. Chinese drywall that was used in the house is causing problems, such as the corrosion of copper pipes and wiring, and an odor.

Chinese drywall poses potential risks

By Brian Skoloff and Cain Burdauer
Associated Press writers

PARKLAND, Fla. — At the height of the U.S. housing boom, when building materials were in short supply, American construction companies used millions of pounds of Chinese-made drywall because it was abundant and cheap.

Now that decision is haunting hundreds of homeowners and apartment dwellers who are concerned that the wallboard gives off fumes that can corrode copper pipes, blacken jewelry and silverware, and possibly sicken people.

Shipping records seen by The Associated Press indicate that imports of potentially tainted Chinese building materials exceeded 500 million pounds during a four-year period of soaring home prices. The drywall may have been used in more than 100,000 homes, according to some esti-



Schultheis shows the black dust that is covering the copper tubes in the air conditioner in her Parkland, Fla., home Wednesday. She had been trying to sell the house, but is taking it off the market until she finds a way to correct the problems.

mates, including houses rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina.

"This is a traumatic problem of extraordinary proportions," said U.S. Rep. Robert Wexler, a Florida Democrat who introduced a bill in the House calling for a temporary ban on the Chinese-made imports until

more is known about their chemical makeup. Similar legislation has been proposed in the Senate.

The drywall apparently causes a chemical reaction that gives off a rotten-egg stench, which grows worse with heat and humidity.

See **DRYWALL**, Opinion 5

Obama family settles on Portuguese water dog

By Philip Elliott
Associated Press writer

WASHINGTON — It's decided: the Obamas have chosen a 6-month-old Portuguese water dog to be the first pet.

In what was one of the White House's most tightly kept secrets, President Barack Obama's daughters, 10-year-old Malia and 7-year-old Sasha, have settled on a black and white pup, a White House official speaking on the condition of anonymity told The Associated Press Saturday night.

The dog, a gift from Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts who owns several Portuguese water dogs himself, will make his big debut Tuesday afternoon.

The Washington Post reported in its online editions Saturday night that Obama's daughters chose the name Bo for the pup because first lady Michelle Obama's father was nicknamed Diddley. The name for the dog was an apparent reference to the singer "Bo" Diddley.

White House aides told the AP that the office of the first lady arranged an exclusive deal on the dog story with the Post. The officials, who demanded anonymity because of the deal with the Post on exclusive details, said the dog was not in the White House as of Saturday evening.

Throughout the day Saturday, celebrity Web sites and bloggers had been abuzz with rumors of the first family's selection of a Portuguese water dog; one site even claimed it had pictures of the future first pet.

The president, for his part, earlier had embraced the frenzy: "Oh, man, now, that's top secret," Obama joked Friday to reporters.

Obama promised his daughters a puppy during the campaign.

"This is Washington. That was a campaign promise," Obama said when he appeared on Jay Leno's talk show last month, as the audience roared with laughter. "No, I'm teasing. The dog will be there shortly."

The president and first lady had said their choice was down to either a Portuguese Water Dog or a Labradoodle because they were considered good pets for children who have allergies, as Malia does.

U. S. uninsured have yet to flex collective muscle

By Ricardo Alonso-Zalvidar
Associated Press writer

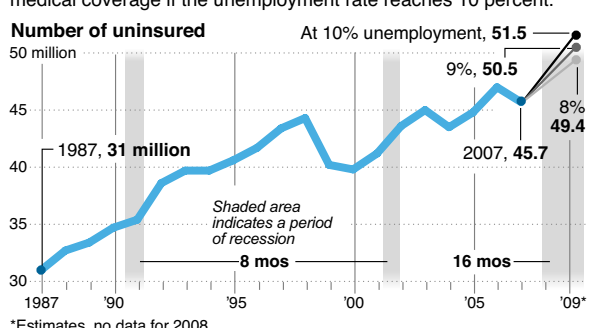
WASHINGTON — If the uninsured were a political lobbying group, they'd have more members than AARP. The National Mall couldn't hold them if they decided to march on Washington.

But going without health insurance is still seen as a personal issue, a misfortune for many and a choice for some. People who lose coverage often struggle alone instead of turning their frustration into political action.

Illegal immigrants rallied in Washington during past immigration debates, but the uninsured linger in the back-

Living without health coverage

There are some estimates that nearly 52 million will be without medical coverage if the unemployment rate reaches 10 percent.



SOURCES: Census Bureau, Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2007; Urban Institute

ground as Congress struggles with a health care overhaul that seems to have the best odds in years of passing.

That isolation could have profound repercussions.

Lawmakers already face tough choices to come up

with the hundreds of billions it would cost to guarantee coverage for all. The lack of a vocal constituency won't help. Congress might decide to cover the uninsured slowly, in stages.

The uninsured "do not provide political benefit for the aid you give them," said Robert Blendon, a professor of health policy and political analysis at the Harvard School of Public Health. "That's one of the dilemmas in getting all this money. If I'm in Congress, and I help out farmers, they'll help me out politically. But if I help out the uninsured, they are not likely to help members of Congress get re-elected."

The number of uninsured has grown to an estimated 50 million people because of the recession. But advocates in Congress are rarely the uninsured themselves. The most visible are groups that represent people who have insurance. In the last election, only 10 percent of registered voters said they were uninsured.

The grass-roots group Health Care for America Now plans to bring as many as 15,000 people to Washington this year to lobby Congress for guaranteed coverage. Campaign director Richard Kirsch expects most to have health insurance.

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"Who can you trust at this point? Who do you know?" Susan Levy of nearby Modesto, mother of slain Washington intern Chandra Levy, appeared arm-in-arm with Angie and Joe Chavez as they spoke with reporters. Levy said she was there to support the family as they, too, dealt with the tragic loss of a child. Authorities recently issued an arrest warrant in the 2001 Levy killing.

Sheneman said investigators hadn't expected that the suspect would turn out to be a woman. "It's unusual for it to be a

woman statistically and according to the FBI," he said at the news conference. Discovering it was a woman and a member of the tight knit Tracy community who knew the family was "a double blow," he said. "Today's going to be a very difficult day for everyone to digest that," Sheneman said. "This was an anomaly in the murder of a child." Sheneman said no other arrests in the case are anticipated. Neighbor Barbara Sokoloski, whose home is behind Sandra's, described Sandra on Saturday as "a friendly sweet little girl who always

went around trying to find somebody to play with." "It's too bad that kids these days can't go out and play like we did when I was a little girl," said Sokoloski, 69. Huckaby had told The Tracy Press that Sandra visited her home on the day of her disappearance to play with her 5-year-old daughter. But Huckaby said she'd turned Sandra away because her daughter needed to pick up her toys and Sandra went to another friend's home. Huckaby also said she had left her suitcase in the driveway that day, and that it was missing.

Crewman William Rios described the whole experience as a "nightmare" and said the first thing he will do back home in New York is pray. "I'm going to church," he said. Quinn told reporters the experience was "terrifying and exciting at the same time." Asked what he thought of the pirates who seized the boat, Quinn said: "They're just hungry." Maersk President John Reinhardt said from Norfolk, Va. that the ship was still a crime scene and the crewmen could not leave until the FBI investigates the

attack. He said crew members have been provided phones so they can stay in touch with family members. "When I spoke to the crew, they ... won't consider it done until the captain is back, nor will we," Reinhart said. Negotiations with the pirates were continuing on Saturday, Pentagon spokesman Maj. Stewart Upton said. But the Pentagon will not comment on any aspect of the negotiations, including who is leading them. The U.S. Navy has assumed that the pirates in the lifeboat would try to get it to shore, even though the

vessel apparently has no fuel and is drifting. Other bandits, among the hundreds who have made the Gulf of Aden the world's most dangerous waterway, seized an Italian tugboat off Somalia's north coast Saturday as it was pulling barges, said Shona Lowe, a spokeswoman at NATO's Northwood maritime command center near London. The Foreign Ministry in Rome confirmed 10 of the 16 crew members are Italian. The others are five Romanians and a Croatian, according to Micoperi, the Italian company that owns the ship.

Researchers do not know yet what causes the reaction, but possible culprits include fumigants sprayed on the drywall and material inside it. The Chinese drywall is also made with a coal byproduct called fly ash that is less refined than the form used by U.S. drywall makers. Dozens of homeowners in the Southeast have sued builders, suppliers and manufacturers, claiming the very walls around them are emitting smelly sulfur compounds that are poisoning their families and rendering their homes uninhabitable. "It's like your hopes and dreams are just gone," said Mary Ann Schultheis, who has suffered burning eyes, sinus headaches, and a general heaviness in her chest since moving into her brand-new, 4,000-square foot house in this tidy South Florida suburb a few years ago.

She has few options. Her builder is in bankruptcy, the government is not helping and her lender will not give her a break.

"I'm just going to cry," she said. "We don't know what we're going to do?" Builders have filed their own lawsuits against suppliers and manufacturers, claiming they unknowingly used the bad building materials.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is investigating, as are health departments in Virginia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Florida and Washington state.

Companies that produced some of the wallboard said they are looking into the complaints, but downplayed the possibility of health risks.

"What we're trying to do is get to the bottom of what is precisely going on," said Ken Haldin, a spokesman for Knauf Plasterboard Tianjin, a Chinese company named in many of the lawsuits.

The Chinese ministries of commerce, construction and industry and the Administration of Quality Supervision Inspection and Quarantine did not respond to repeated requests for comment. Chinese news reports have said AQSIQ, which enforces product quality standards, was investigating the complaints but people in the agency's press office said they could not confirm that.

Meanwhile, governors in Louisiana and Florida are asking for federal assistance, and experts say the problem is only now beginning to surface.

"Based on the amount of material that came in, it's possible that just in one year, 100,000 residences could be involved," said Michael Foreman, who owns a construction consulting firm. The company has performed tests on some 200 homes in the Sarasota area and has been tracking shipments of the drywall.

Federal authorities say they are investigating just how much of the wallboard was imported. Shipping records analyzed by the AP show that more than 540 million pounds of plasterboard — which includes both drywall and ceiling tile panels — was imported from China between 2004 and 2008, although it's unclear whether all of that material was problematic or only certain batches.

Most of it came into the country in 2006, following a series of Gulf Coast hurricanes and a domestic shortage brought on by the national housing boom.

The Chinese board was also cheaper. One homeowner told AP he saved \$1,000 by building his house with it instead of a domestic product.

In 2006, enough wallboard was imported from China to build some 34,000 homes of roughly 2,000 square feet each, according to AP's analysis of the shipping records and estimates supplied by the nationwide drywall supplier United States Gypsum.

Experts and advocates say many homes may have been built with a mixture of Chinese and domestic drywall, potentially raising the number of affected homes much higher.

So far, the problem appears to be concentrated in the Southeast, which blossomed with new construction during the housing boom and where the damp climate appears to cause the gypsum in the building material to degrade more quickly. In Florida alone, more than 35,000 homes may contain the product, experts said.

In Louisiana, the state health department has received complaints from at least 350 people in just a few weeks. Many of the affected homeowners rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina only to face the prospect of tearing down their houses and rebuilding again.

In another cruel twist, some of the very communities that have been hit hardest by the collapse of the housing market and skyrocketing foreclosure rates are now at the epicenter of the drywall problem.

Foreman warns of a

"sleeping beast" in the thousands of bank-owned condos and houses across the country, with no one in them to complain.

Outside the South, it's harder to pinpoint the number of affected homes. And in drier climates such as California and Nevada, it may be years before homeowners begin to see — and smell — what may be lurking inside their walls.

The drywall furor is the latest in a series of scares over potentially toxic imports from China. In 2007, Chinese authorities ratcheted up inspections and tightened restrictions on exports after manufacturers were found to have exported tainted cough syrup, toxic pet food and toys decorated with lead paint.

Scientists hope to understand the problem by studying the chemicals in the board. Drywall consists of wide, flat boards used to cover walls. It is often made from gypsum, a common mineral that can be mined or manufactured from the byproducts of coal-fired power plants.

Plaintiffs in the lawsuits, as well as U.S. wallboard manufacturers, say the tainted drywall was made with fly ash, a residue of coal combustion more commonly used in concrete mixtures.

Fly ash can be gathered before it ever reaches the smokestack, where technology is used to remove sulfur dioxide from the emissions. The process of "scrubbing" the smokestack emissions creates calcium sulfate, or gypsum, which can then be used to make wallboard, experts say.

Haldin, the Knauf Tianjin spokesman, says some domestic drywall is also made from the less-refined fly ash.

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Protesters force Thailand to cancel Asia summit

By Ambika Ahuja
Associated Press writer

PATTAYA, Thailand — Thailand evacuated Asian leaders by helicopter after hundreds of anti-government protesters stormed into their summit site Saturday, forcing the country's embattled prime minister to cancel the meeting.

The latest fiasco in Thailand's political crisis increased the threat of violence and a possible military crackdown.

More than 1,000 demonstrators broke through a wall of unarmed soldiers, smashed through the convention center's glass doors and ran through the building, blowing horns, waving Thai flags and shouting demands for Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to resign.

They declared victory after Abhisit was forced to cancel the 16-country summit, where leaders of regional powers China, Japan and India, and the U.N. secretary-general and president of the World Bank, planned to discuss the global financial crisis.

Abhisit later denounced the protesters on national television as the "enemies of Thailand."



AP photo
Anti-government demonstrators storm through the convention hall hosting the 14th ASEAN summit, Saturday in Pattaya, Thailand. The protest by more than 1,000 anti-government demonstrators forced Thai government officials to cancel the summit of Asian leaders.

The country's political tension has simmered since former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was removed by a military coup in 2006. Thaksin opponents marched last year to remove Thaksin's allies from power, even shutting down the country's main international airport for about a week in November. After a court ordered the removal of the previous government,

Abhisit was appointed by Parliament in December — sparking Thaksin supporters to take to the streets.

Their numbers grew to 100,000 in the capital, Bangkok, last week, and some in Pattaya smashed the window of a vehicle carrying the prime minister, who was unharmed.

Seizing the international spotlight of the East Asia Summit this weekend, pro-

testers converged on the seaside city of Pattaya to push for Abhisit's resignation — seeking to embarrass him in front of other Asian leaders.

"We have won. We have stopped them from holding a summit," Jakrapob Penkair, a protest leader, said in Bangkok. "But we have not achieved our goal yet. We will continue to protest in Bangkok until Abhisit resigns."



Abhisit

Abhisit imposed a state of emergency after the summit was over-run, but revoked it six hours later after regional leaders were safely airlifted to a nearby military airport.

The ongoing protests could prompt the military to intervene — a high possibility in a country that has experienced 18 military coups since the 1930s.

"The situation has gotten completely out of hand. Violence and bloodshed is very much possible" if Abhisit does not resign or dissolve Parliament, said Charnvit Kasetsiri, a histori-

an and former rector of Bangkok's Thammasat University. "If the government cannot control the situation, military intervention is not out of the question."

The incident raises questions about the government's ability to enforce law and order. Despite the presence of hundreds of soldiers in riot gear, the protesters met little resistance as they approached the summit venue. Government supporters believe elements within the police are sympathetic to the protesters, partly because Thaksin was himself an officer.

"Deep down, some government and military leaders also suspect some police have sympathy for Thaksin," said Thitinan Pongsidhirak, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University.

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Pope celebrates Easter Mass, urges Christians to 'shine'

By Frances D'Emilio
Associated Press writer

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI carried a tall, lit candle symbolizing hope into a darkened St. Peter's Basilica packed with faithful Saturday night in the traditional start of the Vatican's vigil Mass on the eve of Easter.

A chant of "Lumen Christi" (Latin for "Light of Christ") echoed in the cavernous basilica.

Then the vast space began twinkling with light as cardinals and other prelates lit their candles from the flame on the pope's Easter candle and, one by one, members of the congregation lit their neighbor's candle in a quick succession of lights.

A light switch was thrown, and the Mass began, led by Benedict, dressed in gold-and-white colored vestments.

Easter Sunday is Christianity's most important feast day, when faithful mark their belief in the resurrection of Christ after Jesus' death by crucifixion. For Christians worldwide, Easter represents God's promise of eternal life after death, of love's triumph over death.

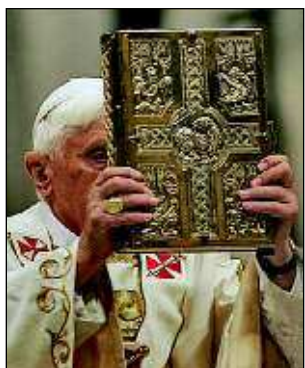
Benedict said Jesus, like a shepherd, gave guidance to his flock.

"What great compassion he must feel in our time, too, on account of all the endless talk that people hide behind, while in reality they are totally confused," the pope said.

Benedict prayed that Christians would "shine as lights in the world" amid "the confusions of this age" and amid the search for values to put "order" in our lives.

"The gravitational pull of love is stronger than that of hatred; the force of gravity of life is stronger than that of death," Benedict said in his homily reflecting on the mystery of Christian belief in the resurrection.

A motif of life overcoming difficult trials figured in



AP photo
Pope Benedict XVI holds up a gospel during the Easter vigil mass in St. Peter's Basilica, at the Vatican, Saturday.

Benedict's Good Friday homily, as he sought to encourage survivors of Italy's devastating quake to cling to hope and take solace in Easter's joy. The temblor in the central Apennine mountain region of Abruzzo claimed at least 293 lives and left 40,000 people homeless.

The endurance of the Catholic church itself through the ages was praised by Benedict in his vigil Mass homily, saying "it always seems as if she ought to be sinking, and yet she is already always saved."

The pope did not specify challenges facing the church he leads.

But recent months have seen Benedict criticized, including by prelates in his own church, over his efforts to reach out to excommunicated ultraconservative Catholic bishops who rejected modernizing reforms of the 1960s, including the move away from Latin to modern languages during Masses.

Keeping with Easter vigil traditions, Benedict baptized five adults during the Mass: two Italian men, and one woman each from Italy, China and the United States.

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51st state? American trends challenge British traditions

By Gregory Katz
Associated Press writer

LONDON — Anyone searching for a sepia-tinted rugby photo, antique cuff links or a precious piece of art deco jewelry at the Antiquarius Center had better come fast.

Blink and it will be gone. The dozens of diverse, very British shops on the chic King's Road in Chelsea face eviction to make way for Anthropologie, an American-based chain planning an American fashion emporium, much like the stores it operates in St. Louis and Miami Beach.

"There used to be three antique centers in Chelsea, soon there will be none," said Sue Norman, who has

sold hand-painted 19th-Century china here since 1972. "I think it's very sad. It seems the younger generation much prefers American-style things to English style."

The pending loss of the Antiquarius Center is part of the wider, inexorable Americanization of Britain, where rich veins of eccentricity are being snipped as American customs catch on.

Remember the dapper English gentleman? Shoes polished and dressed to the nines? He's often found in blue jeans, an open shirt, and sneakers these days.

And those bad English teeth, neglected for years? Tooth-whitening is catching on, a l'americaine. There has been a surge of cosmetic



AP photo

Sue Norman, who has sold hand-painted 19th-Century China since 1972, poses at her stand in Antiquarius shopping complex in Chelsea, central London, March 24. The dozens of diverse, very British shops in Antiquarius are being shut down to make way for an American fashion emporium.

surgeries as more women — the Hollywood ideal and teenagers — embrace have their breasts enhanced

and wrinkles Botoxed. Pillbox psychiatry is catching on too, with record numbers gobbling antidepressants, and Britons are turning to fast food at such an alarming pace that obesity among young people is reaching epidemic proportions.

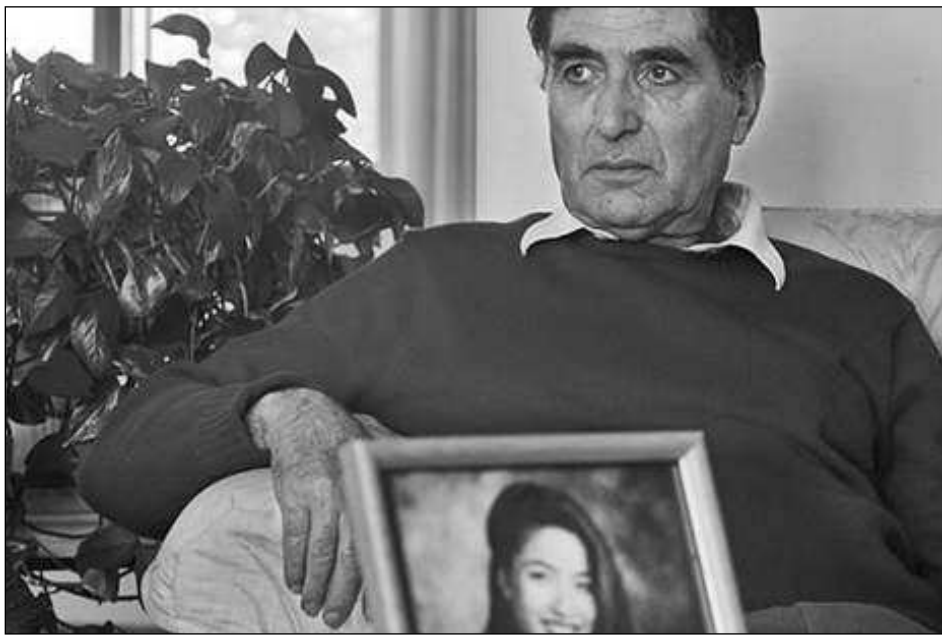
A Prozac-popping, surgically enhanced nation of overweight slobbers? Sometimes it seems dear olde England could almost be the 51st state.

The cultural mood is changing along with the physical landscape. Harried British physicians are more likely than ever to prescribe antidepressants, in part because the waiting list for individual psychological therapy under the govern-

ment-run National Health Service is so long. The mental health charity MIND reports that roughly 34 million prescriptions were written in Britain in 2007, more than a 20 percent increase over the 27 million prescribed just two years earlier.

Alison Cobb, senior policy director at MIND, said publicly from America is an important reason why growing numbers of British doctors turn to antidepressants as a first resort.

"Part of it is the literature and endorsement message we were getting from the USA," she said. "In terms of the profile, and the brand recognition, with Prozac in particular, there was an American influence in that."



AP photo

Reza Saberi, the father of American-Iranian journalist Roxana Saberi who has been in jail for two months in Iran, is shown holding her picture Feb. 28 in his Fargo, N.D., home. Reza and his wife, Akiko, arrived in Iran on March 5 to seek her release, and visited their daughter in prison Monday, their lawyer said.

Journalist imprisoned in Iran was classic overachiever

By Dave Kolpack and Patrick Condon
Associated Press writers

FARGO, N.D. — Roxana Saberi grew up as a classic overachiever, an introverted but determined young woman who excelled at piano and overcame her shyness to become Miss North Dakota and succeed in journalism.

Now the 31-year-old American reporter is the focus of international attention after Iranian authorities charged her with espionage.

A dual citizen of the U.S. and Iran, she was arrested in January and has been detained in a prison north of the capital Tehran.

Saberi has lived in Iran for the last six years. She was initially accused of working without press credentials, but a judge on Wednesday leveled the much more serious allegation: Spying for the United States.

Saberi will stand trial next week. The Obama administration and national news organizations have been pushing for her release.

The case has shocked and alarmed Saberi's friends, teachers and former colleagues in Fargo, where she grew up, attended college and started her journalism career.

"She's just a sweet, genuine person," said Cindy Larson-Casselton, whose late husband was a media studies professor at Concordia College and a mentor to Saberi. "She was a babysitter for us, and we saw in her a wonderful role model for our own daughters."

Saberi's father is Iranian and her mother Japanese, but she was born in the United States and attended grade school in Fargo. Her ninth-grade history teacher, Vic Youngs, called her "one of the brightest people I've ever had in class."

At Fargo North High School, she plowed through advanced placement courses and was active in extracurricular activities including soccer and piano — both of which she continued at Concordia College in nearby Moorhead, Minn.

Kristi Rendahl, a college classmate who stayed in touch with Saberi and now runs a St. Paul, Minn., con-

sulting business, said her friend thrived in whatever she did despite a natural introversion.

"She didn't command a lot of attention from people personality-wise, but just by way of excelling in everything, she got attention that way," Rendahl said. "She was the classic overachiever, driven."

In 1997, at the urging of a college instructor with experience in the pageant world, Saberi decided to compete in the Miss North Dakota contest.

She won, and made it to the Top 10 in that year's Miss America pageant. She played piano for the talent portion.

"It was the first time anyone could remember that North Dakota made it nearly that far," said the instructor, Merrie Sue Holtan.

By the late 1990s, Saberi had landed a job as a reporter for KVLV, Fargo's NBC affiliate. Charley Johnson, the general manager who hired her after teaching her in a class at Concordia, called her bright, inquisitive and dedicated. Though it was hard to get her to talk about herself, she said she wanted to be a foreign correspondent.

"No one ever doubted she would achieve that," Johnson said.

Mel Stone, a photojournalist who worked with Saberi at KVLV, recalled how for a time she traveled 250 miles to the Twin Cities every weekend to see a voice coach. She also studied Farsi and later attained master's degrees in broadcast journalism and international relations. She had been working on another master's in Iranian studies.

Friends said it was Saberi's curiosity about her heritage that took her to Iran in the first place.

"I think at least in part, it was an identity search," Holtan said. "She wanted that part of her history and her family to be more known to her."

Saberi has been a freelance reporter for organizations including National Public Radio and the British Broadcasting Corp. The government apparently revoked her press credentials more than a year ago, but continued to let her

work on some stories.

Cathy McMullen, a Concordia journalism instructor, said Saberi's interests as a reporter ran less to Iran's political situation and more to the lives of everyday Iranians.

"She said she liked to do stories on everyday life in Iran, so people could understand the culture," McMullen said. "That's why this espionage thing makes no sense."

She was not doing hot political stories."

Billy Bob Thornton's band cancels Canadian tour

TORONTO (AP) — Billy Bob Thornton's band has canceled the rest of its Canadian tour after the actor compared the country's fans to mashed potatoes with no gravy in a testy interview that caused a sensation online.

The Boxmasters opened for Willie Nelson on Thursday in Toronto, where they reportedly were booed and met with catcalls of "Here comes the gravy."

A note posted on Nelson's Web site Friday said the Boxmasters were canceling the rest of their Canadian dates "due to one band member and several of the crew having the flu."

The cancellation came two days after Thornton made world headlines with a belligerent appearance on CBC radio's "Q."

The actor apparently didn't like that host Jian Ghomeshi started the interview with references to Thornton's Hollywood career.

Thornton refused to answer many of



AP photo

Singer and actor Billy Bob Thornton performs at Massey Hall in Toronto on Wednesday. Billy Bob Thornton's band has scrapped the rest of its Canadian tour dates after the actor caused a stir by likening local audiences to mashed potatoes with no gravy.

Ghomeshi's questions directly, mumbling: "I don't know what you're talking about." He later said Ghomeshi's producers had been told ahead of time not to talk about his film career. Thornton also had some

unkind words for Canadian crowds.

"Canadian audiences seem to be very reserved," he told Ghomeshi. "We tend to play places where people throw things at each other. Here, they just sort of sit there. And it doesn't matter what you say to 'em. ... It's mashed potatoes but no gravy."

Before his Thursday night gig, Thornton tried to clarify those remarks, saying he loved Canada and his "mashed potatoes" comment had been aimed at Ghomeshi.

Media around the world delighted in the story. Entertainment Weekly's Web site ran the headline, "Billy Bob Thornton: What's his problem?"

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Love You Man (R) Daily 7:30 9:45
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Daily 7:00 9:20
Sat - Sun 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:00 9:20

The Knowing (13)
Daily 7:20 9:40
Sat - Sun 12:10 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

Fast & Furious 4 (13)
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Daily 7:00 7:20 9:20 9:40
Fri - Sun 12:00 12:10 2:20 2:40 4:40 5:00 7:00 7:20 9:20 9:40

Dragonball: Evolution (PG)
Daily 7:20 9:40
Fri - Sun 12:10 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG)
Daily 7:00 9:10
Fri - Sun 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:00 9:10

Taken (13) Daily 7:30 9:45
Fri - Sun 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:45

Hannah Montana the Movie (G)
Daily 7:00 9:20
Sat - Sun 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:00 9:20

The Knowing (13) Daily 7:20 9:40
Fri - Sun 1:00 4:00 7:20 9:40

Race to Witch Mountain (PG)
Daily 7:00 9:20
Fri - Sun 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:00 9:20

Haunting in Connecticut (13)
Daily 7:20 9:40
Fri - Sun 12:10 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

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Jazz try to break winless skid against Warriors. See Sports 5

Local Roundup, Sports 2 / Scoreboard, Sports 3 / MLB, Sports 4 / NBA, Sports 5

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2009

SPORTS EDITOR MIKE CHRISTENSEN: (208) 735-3239 SPORTS@MAGICVALLEY.COM

The College of Southern Idaho's Victor Spencer prepares to round first base during the Golden Eagles' doubleheader against Salt Lake Community College Saturday afternoon in Twin Falls.



JUSTIN JACKSON/Times-News

CSI slumps, ends with split

Eagles fall in second game vs. SLCC

By David Bashore
Times-News writer

In the world of clichés, the College of Southern Idaho baseball team got the bang before the whimper on Saturday.

After erupting against visiting Salt Lake Community College for a 10-0, five-inning victory in Game 1 of the teams' doubleheader at Skip Walker Field, the Golden Eagles couldn't find a way to string together the hits in the nightcap, falling

10-4 to settle for a split on the day and a 3-1 win in the weekend series.

Despite getting 10 hits in the game, CSI (23-19, 16-12 Scenic West Athletic Conference) stranded 13 runners in Game 2, including twice leaving the bases loaded. Salt Lake (19-21, 12-16), on the other hand, scored in each of the first five innings, including plating four in the third inning to break the game open.

"That was really the difference in the game," said CSI sophomore

Trent Johnson. "You try not to make it more than it is, but when you get into a big deficit the entire group probably tries to do a little too much."

The Golden Eagles also struggled on the mound, after using just four pitchers to get through the first three games. Starting pitcher Trey Mohammed lasted just two innings, and only right fielder Tyler Chism got more than three batters out the rest of the way.

The loss put a damper on what looked like a potential banner day

See **BASEBALL**, Sports 7

OUT OF THE WOODS

Cabrera, Perry tied for lead; no sign of Tiger

By Doug Ferguson
Associated Press writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Angel Cabrera and Kenny Perry have proven they can handle the pressure on golf's biggest stage. Next up is Sunday at Augusta National, a test unlike any other they have faced.

Cabrera, who won the U.S. Open two years ago at Oakmont, made three birdies on the back nine and scratched out an important par on the final hole Saturday at the Masters for a 3-under 69.

Perry, who thrived under the spotlight of a Ryder Cup in his native Kentucky last September, overcame two mistakes with his putter around Amen Corner and finished with five straight pars for a 70 to join the Argentine in the lead.

It will be the first time they've played in the final group at a major.

And not just any major.

They were at 11-under 205, the lowest 54-hole score at the Masters since the course was supersized seven years ago. The back nine at Augusta National is among the most intense in golf, and officials are expected to set up the course to allow for birdies and eagles.

"I'm lucky enough to be in a very good position," Cabrera said. "I haven't been in this position before so I'll try to make the most of it."

Perry lost in a playoff at the PGA Championship at Valhalla in 1996, when he was criticized for being in the broadcast booth instead of keeping loose on the practice range. He never would have imagined that



Tiger Woods reacts to a missed birdie putt on the No. 12 hole during the third round of the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga., Saturday.

AP photo

all these years later, he would have a chance to become golf's oldest major champion at 48.

"The first two days felt like I was on vacation," Perry said. "Today felt like a job."

They had a two-shot lead over Chad Campbell, who led briefly on the back nine until a blunder on the 16th hole when he took two shots to get out of the bunker, made double bogey and wound up with a 72.

Jim Furyk, another former U.S. Open champion, shot 68 and was three shots behind at 8-under 208.

The Masters began with

MASTERS

Third-round leaders

Angel Cabrera	-11
Kenny Perry	-11
Chad Campbell	-9
Jim Furyk	-8
Steve Stricker	-7
Rory Sabbatini	-6
Shingo Katayama	-6
Todd Hamilton	-6

Other notables

Tiger Woods	-4
-------------	----

Phil Mickelson	-4
Vijay Singh	-3
Padraig Harrington	-1
Sergio Garcia	-1



Today's final round coverage: Noon, CBS

and making double bogey. His tee shot on the par-3 sixth hit the base of the pin and tumbled off the green. He rallied with three birdies over the last six holes for a 70.

Mickelson's rally was slowed by three poor chips, and he escaped with a 71 only after hitting a big slice from the trees on the 18th hole that started down the 10th fairway and wound up on the green.

They were at 4-under 212.

"A lot of things happen on Sunday at Augusta, and I

See **MASTERS**, Sports 5

CSI softball sweeps No. Idaho

Wins keep Eagles in second place

By Bradley Guire
Times-News writer

It was almost déjà vu. Almost.

The No. 11 College of Southern Idaho softball team battled No. 19 North Idaho College at Eagle Field in Twin Falls, but instead of splitting, the Golden Eagles wrapped up the series with a Saturday sweep of the Cardinals.

The Eagles took it to the limit during Game 1, squeaking out a 1-0 shutout on last-minute heroics just as they did in Friday's opener. As for the almost déjà vu? Instead of dropping the nightcap, CSI finished strong with a 5-2 victory to win three of this four-game series.

"I told my kids I was very proud of them," CSI head coach Nick Baumert said. "It would be very easy for them to fold their tents after the way we got beat. They came in and did an amazing job."

The Game 1 scoreboard read zeros all the way across until the bottom of the seventh, when freshman second baseman Ashley Chappel belted one hard to center field, scoring Cassi Merrill. The sophomore left fielder reached base by singling to shallow right and advancing to second on a fielder's choice. The lone run, just like the Friday contest, was all the Eagles needed.

"I knew that all (NIC pitcher Karri Johnson) did was pitch me outside," Chappel said. "I kind of saw it coming. I knew I had to sit back and wait for my pitch. Once I found it, I knew I had to score Cass from second, so I took a big hack at it. Good things happen when you make the ball travel."

Once again, CSI had to wait for that key hit all game as nine runners were left stranded.

From the circle, pitcher McKensy Hillstead earned a shutout one-hitter, recording five strikeouts and one walk through seven innings, matching her Game 1 performance from Friday.

Game 2 pitcher Kyla Bryant fared better in her start against the Cardinals, striking out five and walking three in the complete game. She gave up six hits, which left her facing multiple situations with runners on base, but she was able to find her way out with minimal damage. Bryant fanned batters in

See **SOFTBALL**, Section 7

Idaho defense wins the day in spring scrimmage

Lavarias leads way with nine tackles, three sacks

For the Times-News

MOSCOW — Chalk this one up to the defense.

The statistics from Saturday's Idaho Vandal football scrimmage show an impressive 21 tackles for loss, with defensive end Aaron Lavarias and line-

backer Brad Marboe leading the way with three each. Lavarias was the team tackle leader with nine in an effort demonstrating he's at home after relocating to end from tackle.

"That spot out there at end fits him better," said Idaho coach Robb Akey in noting Lavarias' menacing presence on the cold, wet Saturday morning. "He played well — both making



Lavarias

Akey said, "the defense performed better. I am happy about that. I put them in some tough situations and they handled it well today."

On the flip side, Akey

plays and providing some leadership out there."

Lavarias and his mates led an effort that yielded only 116 rushing yards and 192 passing yards.

"As a whole," Akey said, "the defense performed better. I am happy about that. I put them in some tough situations and they handled it well today."

wasn't too happy with his offense. Early on, the Vandals struggled to move the ball. While things improved as the scrimmage progressed, the offense didn't reach Akey's expectations.

"I don't like the lack of consistency I saw in our offense today. We protected the quarterback poorly," said Akey, after Lavarias had three of the defense's 10 sacks. "I wasn't happy with our throwing game."

Akey said had it been a

real game in Saturday's conditions, he would have stayed more with the run game, but there were things he and his staff wanted to see in the passing game.

"There weren't the perfect conditions for it, but you never know," he said. "I wanted to see if we could get some receivers to make some things happen and (see) how the two quarterbacks were going to perform and how our offensive line is

See **VANDALS**, Sports 5

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

University of Kentucky, Calipari follow in 'Bama's footsteps

By John Zenor
Associated Press writer

As much as John Calipari understands the huge expectations that come with being Kentucky's new basketball coach, it's probably not possible to completely imagine all that awaits him.

If anyone could tell him how to navigate the challenge that's in store, it would be Alabama football coach Nick Saban.

His advice?

Keep it simple. Focus on "the process" and leave the national title talk to the fans and the rumors to the Internet and talk radio. Recruit and develop talented players and you have a chance to succeed whether at a powerhouse program or a smaller school.

All the rest? It's just noise.

Saban says the potential distractions are just a little louder and more pronounced at the traditional powers — like Alabama football and Kentucky basketball.

"People that have these kinds of jobs that can do that and not be affected by external factors probably have a better chance to succeed, because it can be very distracting," said Saban, who frequently refers to the process for building and maintaining a program.

Saban was handed a record-setting eight-year, \$4 million-a-year contract three years ago to restore a proud program to greatness — and put a few more championship trophies on the heavily laden shelves. The Tide went 12-2 and rose to a No. 1 ranking in his second year last season.

Now, it's Calipari's turn.

The Wildcats made the same kind of splashy, seemingly can't-miss hire when they turned to the former Memphis coach who has a gaudy won-loss record and, like Saban, a reputation as a formidable recruiter. Even the dollars added up nearly the same.

Calipari is scheduled to make \$31.65 million over eight years, a skinny 1.1 percent less than Saban's \$32 million over the same period.

Kentucky athletic director Mitch Barnhart feels the two hires are good for winning and for business.

"I know they've had obviously some really strong success on the football field, and off the field it has helped solidify the brand of Alabama football," Barnhart said. "From a revenue perspective, from a brand perspective, from recognition, it has certainly had an impact in those areas of bringing them back to the forefront of where they want to be.

"That's what we want to do with Kentucky basketball. We want to get back to the tradition and what people know us for, and that's greatness in college basketball and being a great brand name for the league and college basketball."

The impact was immediate at 'Bama. Saban's first spring game drew 92,000-plus fans — for a glorified scrimmage.

Kentucky season tickets have been sold out for years, so Calipari's immediate impact is harder to gauge. That said, highly touted recruit DeMarcus Cousins of Alabama recently pledged to join him and fans snapped up 700 Calipari T-shirts from UK's online store in the first two hours they were on sale.

All 'Bama fans needed to know was that Saban had won a share of the national title at LSU before heading to the NFL's Miami Dolphins. Wildcats fans are hoping the success Calipari had at Memphis and Massachusetts, guiding both programs to the Final Four, will transfer to Kentucky.

The Wildcats went 22-14



AP photo

John Calipari arrives for a news conference April 1, his first as the new Kentucky basketball coach in Lexington, Ky. Calipari faces lofty expectations.

last season, missing the NCAA tournament for the first time since 1991. The program hasn't been to the Final Four in 11 years, the longest drought between national semifinals in school history, and the most recent title came in 1998.

Calipari gleefully noted at his introductory news conference on April 1 that the 'Cats "don't put banners up here for anything else

except national champions. That's why you want to coach here."

And it's why Saban and Calipari were hired. To add to Alabama's six football national titles and the seven Kentucky boasts in hoops.

"As we were doing the hiring of coach Saban, I wanted a coach who had won a national championship, that could hopefully take this program back to that level or

position this program to be one of the better programs in the country," Alabama athletic director Mal Moore said. "I think that's the approach that Kentucky has taken."

The similarities go beyond the hirings and the record-setting salaries.

Both programs have icons: Adolph Rupp at Kentucky, Bear Bryant at Alabama. They have national reputa-

John Calipari gleefully noted at his introductory news conference on April 1 that the 'Cats "don't put banners up here for anything else except national champions. That's why you want to coach here."

tions and fan bases that cherish them. Their fortunes before the high-profile hirings had been up and down.

"In the case of Alabama, they are the state university," said C.M. Newton, a former Southeastern Conference basketball coach and Kentucky athletic director who now lives in Tuscaloosa, Ala. "Auburn is in the same state, but Alabama kind of rules it. The same is true with Kentucky and the Commonwealth. Louisville has a good program but Kentucky is the state university."

"There are many, many similarities. The expectations of the fans in Alabama football is that they compete on an annual basis for a national championship. That's the same expectation of a basketball

fan at Kentucky."

Saban said he doesn't know Calipari, though their coaching careers seem to have parallels.

Both have led multiple programs into national title contention — and had less-than-stellar success in the pros. Calipari, who was 137-14 over the past four years with Memphis, lasted 20 games into his third season with the New Jersey Nets. Saban spent two seasons with the Miami Dolphins.

Now, the challenge is not to buy into the hoopla or pay attention to rumors. (As an example, Saban cited a recent story on talk radio and the Internet that had him retiring.)

"I think John Calipari's probably proven he's been able to do that at several different places," Saban said. "My suspicion is that he'll do a very good job there. People who get affected by all those things probably have a more difficult time staying focused on the task and let those things affect them. At the end of the day when it doesn't work out, they end up saying, 'I really didn't do it the way I wanted to do it because I was influenced to do it some other kind of way.'"

"We may not be successful, here but we'll never say that."

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Ski trip tradition begins to wear on weary hostess



DEAR ABBY
Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: My father-in-law passed away in 2002 and had a friend I'll call "Roy," who was his skiing buddy. This "friend" now comes to Canada every winter for a 10-day vacation. He expects us to drive him to his destination two hours away, over icy roads and at times blizzard-like conditions, leave him there for a week, return the following weekend at night, stay the weekend and then host him for two to three days.

much to ask — and the bulk of the load will be off your shoulders.

Abby, this is a busy time of year for me. It is not our vacation time. My husband thinks it's no big deal, but I feel differently. I have tried to get my husband to stop this "chauffeur" duty back and forth each year, to no avail. This year, Roy will be spending an extra two nights at our home. I am too busy to entertain, cook meals, etc. Please advise!

DEAR ABBY: My parents are in their 70s. Both are generous and loving. Over the years Mom has refused to accept any act of generosity or gift, large or small, from any of her children. This includes birthdays, their anniversary and all major holidays. In the past, she would return our gifts to the mall.

— TRAPPED IN CALGARY
DEAR TRAPPED: Look at it this way. To your husband, Roy is a living link to his deceased father. That may be the reason he does not regard Roy's annual visits as an imposition.

In recent years we have resorted to giving her and Dad gift cards or food because they can't be returned. Each time we do we get a lecture from her in a reprimanding tone, telling us we "spent too much." (We're a practical clan; we do not spend a lot of money or buy anything lavish.) Following the reprimand, Mother then passes out large checks to each of us and our children.

Because you do, and you need to concentrate on your business, encourage your husband to take Roy to the slopes, spend the weekend with him and bring him home. Playing hostess for a night or two shouldn't be too

Aside from the holidays, Mom will not accept a dinner invitation at my home. When one of us hosts a family party, she insists on writing a check to cover the cost of the food. When

we're out for an occasional lunch or dinner, she grabs the check and becomes upset if one of us tries to pay for it.

We're all mature adults with good incomes. This quirk of hers has become frustrating and embarrassing. Does Mom have low self-esteem and can't accept an act of generosity, or is she a control freak? If we eliminated the gift-giving, she would still continue doling out the checks. What can we do?

— OVER IT IN RACINE, WIS.

DEAR OVER IT: Your mother is obviously well-fixed. She sees her role as matriarch of your family, and part of that role is being a provider. On some level, she may feel that anything you spend on her would be better spent on yourselves and your children.

The IRS allows a certain amount of money to be given as a gift every year, tax-free. The checks your mother is handing out may be her way of trying to transfer wealth within the family.

My advice is to graciously accept her generosity. At this point you're not going to change your mother. You can, however, change the way you are reacting to her and love her, quirk and all.

CONFIDENTIAL TO MY CHRISTIAN READERS: A happy Easter to all of you!

IF APRIL 12 IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: You feel like you are in the good graces of the zodiac this year. People appreciate your hard work and dedication to duty, and respect your wisdom. You continue to enjoy favorable reviews and good fortune through June, so use this time to interview for jobs, make crucial changes or make a love relationship permanent. Relationships resonate with trust and sincerity. This is a good time to bind an old love just a bit tighter or make a firm commitment to a new one. Benefit from someone's generosity, ask for favors or receive an unexpected chance to make huge improvements in your life in August. Anything worth having will go easily that month — but if it is wrong for you, the way will be blocked.

HOROSCOPE
Jeraldine Saunders

20): You are on a roll and it may entail more than an Easter egg in the grass. Use your imagination in the week to come and you will be able to put your most creative and innovative ideas into motion.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Spring, like hope, returns in a dependable way. There are fleeting doubts or temporary misgivings but eventually you will find your faith is restored. Depend on intuition, not experience, this week.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): It is never wise to keep all your eggs in one basket, even the Easter basket. Make sure you are financially diversified, as this isn't the time to consolidate. This is a great week to enhance romantic understanding.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Business and pleasure are like oil and water and won't mix in the week ahead. Rather than trying to play the part of the consummate professional, offer sympathy and keep the door open like a confessional.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be sure to wear your new Easter bonnet. At the very least, find something new to show off or enjoy this weekend. During the week

ahead, steer clear of intrigues and people who might have hidden agendas.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You can't play rap music during the church choir's hallelujah chorus and expect applause. Wait for an appropriate time and place to show off. You can't "do your own thing" in group settings this week.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your holiday might unfold in Beach Boys harmony, especially if you are on spring break. This week, watch out for excess spending and self-indulgence. Don't overdo the chocolate Easter candy.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You are fine unless you try to make a quick profit with investments. Then you freeze up like a deer caught in the headlights. Concentrate on long-term success and prosperity in the week ahead.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You may stage an Easter egg hunt on the computer screen rather than I the woods. You prefer to do things in a different way, but will understand your partner's need for traditions this week.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): The Easter bunny in your back yard might look more like Bugs Bunny. This week, like the "what's up, doc" character, loved ones find it difficult to take advice or direction. They seem streetwise and cynical.

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Today is Easter Sunday, April 12, the 102nd day of 2009. There are 263 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 12, 1861, the American Civil War began as Confederate forces bombarded Fort Sumter in South Carolina.

On this date:
In 1606, England's King James I decreed the design of the original Union Flag, which combined the flags of England and Scotland.

In 1877, the catcher's mask was first used in a baseball game, by James Tyng of Harvard in a game against the Lynn Live Oaks.

In 1908, fire devastated the city of Chelsea, Mass.

In 1934, "Tender Is the Night" by F. Scott Fitzgerald was first published in book form by Charles Scribner's Sons after being serialized in Scribner's Magazine.

In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Ga., at age 63; he was succeeded by Vice

TODAY IN HISTORY

President Harry S. Truman. In 1955, the Salk vaccine against polio was declared safe and effective.

In 1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first man to fly in space, orbiting the earth once before making a safe landing.

In 1981, the space shuttle Columbia blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Fla., on its first test flight.

In 1983, Chicagoans went to the polls to elect Harold Washington the city's first black mayor.

In 1989, former boxing champion Sugar Ray Robinson died in Culver City, Calif., at age 67; radical activist Abbie Hoffman was found dead at his home in New Hope, Pa., at age 52.

Ten years ago: U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright cited President Bill Clinton for contempt of court, concluding that the

president had lied about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky in a deposition in the Paula Jones case.

Five years ago: A federal judge allowed a nationwide ban on dietary supplements containing ephedra to take effect, turning aside a plea from two manufacturers. Abelardo Flores and Fatima Holloway pleaded guilty in Houston to taking part in a smuggling scheme that resulted in the deaths of 19 illegal immigrants abandoned in a sweltering truck trailer. Barry Bonds hit his 660th home run to tie godfather Willie Mays for third on baseball's career list.

One year ago: Democrat Barack Obama conceded that comments he'd made privately during a fundraiser about bitter working class voters who "cling to guns or religion" were ill chosen. Boston College won the NCAA hockey championship, 4-1, over Notre Dame. The United States won its second women's world hockey championship, upsetting Canada 4-3.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2009

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when sick babies

go home

Group advocates for transitional rooms in new T.F. hospital

By **Ariel Hansen**
Times-News writer

Imagine: Your baby has been sick, in the hospital for weeks or even months on medications and machines, with nurses and doctors hovering day and night. Tomorrow you get to take your baby home, but tonight you're terrified.

What if you make a mistake? What if you don't see a sign of trouble before it's too late?

Then the nurses take you to a "room-inn," a comfy hotel-like room right there in the hospital. They're just feet away if you have a problem, but it's up to you to spend tonight realizing you can do it, you can be the caregiver for this fragile little life.

A group of Magic Valley moms and dads who have experienced room-inns elsewhere want these transitional spaces to be available in Twin Falls, and they successfully campaigned to have two room-inns designed into the plans of the new St. Luke's medical center, scheduled to open in 2011. Now they're looking to the community to help them fund the room and its furnishings.

"It's a great idea, and to not have it is something that needs to be fixed," said Dr. Jane Scott, neonatologist and pediatrician at St. Luke's Magic Valley. "With the new hospital coming, it's a great time for us to have a little lead-time to get funds together."

She was recently approached by the group, which calls itself A Child's Whisper, to ask for her support in getting room-inns



Photos by ASHLEY SMITH/Times-News

Chad Davis, 4, talks with his mother, Stephanie, on Wednesday as she shows him a photo of the first time he smiled. Davis was born three months early, and weighed a little over two pounds.

in Twin Falls.

"It was powerful to listen to these women, and this is what they wanted, because they thought this is probably one of the most important things that can be made available to stressed-out parents," Scott said. "A lot of these mothers have had no medical training whatsoever, and it's pretty scary for them to go home with an infant like this."

See **ROOM-INNS**, FL 3

WANT TO HAVE A LITTLE FUN?

The group advocating the "room-inn" rooms at the new St. Luke's medical center in Twin Falls will hold what they are calling "A Kid Again FUNdraiser," at which they encourage adults to behave like kids — inflatable bouncy house, giant Twister board, Monster Boxing and mechanical bull. There will also be karaoke, a costume corner with photo booth, putting greens, palm reader, balloon artist and Wii challenges, and recreational items up for silent auction. The event will begin at 6 p.m. May 8 at Canyon Crest Dining and Event Center, 330 Canyon Crest Drive, Twin Falls. The 21-and-over event will also feature junk food and specialty beverages. Tickets are \$35, available at 737-2480. Monetary donations in the name of the group, A Child's Whisper, are also welcome.



Chad Davis, 4, plays with his mother, Stephanie, at their Filer home. She is a co-founder of a group called A Child's Whisper which is working with the Twin Falls hospital as it develops rooms, like a hotel, for parents to spend a couple of nights with their premature babies while they're still in the hospital with an assigned nurse.

Four babies three room-inns

Chad: The boy was born after just six months of pregnancy, and his mom, Stephanie Davis of Filer, had to be taken by air ambulance to a hospital in Boise. Chad stayed there until he was 3 months old — near his original due date — but he continued to use sensors for sleep apnea and have asthmatic spells by the time the doctors told his parents they could take him home.

"I kept telling the doctor, I don't

have the monitors at home," Stephanie said. So they spent a night in a room-inn at the Boise hospital before traveling back to Filer. "It's really simple when I look back on it now, but getting through one night with him, placing these monitors, successful feeding with no problems, were proof to me that I've got the knowledge, I've learned a lot from home."

See **BABIES**, FL 3

Introduce us to a special Magic Valley mother

Perhaps you know a particularly inspiring mother. Or one who overcame tremendous obstacles as she nurtured her children. Or one who spread her arms, opened her heart and mothered families other than her own.

If so, please tell us about her. On Mother's Day next month, we want to devote the Family Life section front to an extraordinary southern Idaho mother. But we need you to introduce us to her.

By e-mail, you can nominate a mother who lives in Blaine,

Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka or Twin Falls county. Tell us why her story would be inspiring to our readers.

Also include: Your full name; how you're connected with the mother you're nominating; con-

tact information for both you and her; and the towns where each of you live.

Please make sure all your information is correct, including name spellings.

E-mail your nomination: Send it to virginia.hutchins@lee.net

with "Mother" in the subject line.

The deadline: We must receive your nomination by Sunday, April 26.

In our Mother's Day story, we may quote from any nomination we receive.

Wise paths still lead to the library

The complaint rings like a broken record. Whether friends who are married with children, or colleagues who are still riding single on the social scene, people harp on how southern Idaho can be a high desert of boredom. Some of them say Twin



SPLIT MILK
David Cooper

Falls' nightlife is as enlightening as a night at the library.

I find that a bit insulting, especially to the Twin Falls Public Library.

Of all the landmarks, attractions, tourist traps, gin-joints and daredevil stunts this town has to offer, I'd place the public library near the top of the list. For a town of 40,000 inhabitants, it's as impressive a facility as you'll find.

I'm kind of a library nut myself. And you can climb Balanced Rock and fish Dierkes Lake only so many times in a year before you need a new creative outlet. Regardless of the season, my entire family can spend an hour in the library and discover a trove of educational resources to last weeks.

This week the Twin Falls library celebrates 100 years of existence. If you think about it, a library's centennial celebration is quite the achievement for a settlement of pioneers, irrigators and ranchers.

A short time after the town was founded, folks began gathering donated material for a reading room on Main Avenue.

Susan Ash, director of the library, says a woman known today only as Mrs. Joseph Seaver rallied the collection effort by hauling a book cart around town to pick up donated volumes. The task of collecting books lasted almost five years before the new library could make its first formal purchase.

Why spend five years bartering for books? Because, like some of us, they probably found the sage-covered desert a somewhat dreary place to call home. But they did something about it. I imagine a reading room-turned-library was a powerful connection to the outside world that offered horizons of learning beyond their homestead walls.

The same message would certainly apply today. It may be hard to believe, but in our days filled with school, baseball, gymnastics, Boy Scouts, piano lessons and Guitar Hero, my kids still love to go to the library. They literally can't leave the place without their arms full of books, and they don't spend any time on the library computers.

Over the years, I've paid more for lost books and overdue fines than I care to, but it's part of a worthwhile investment. The payoffs are bright minds, good study habits and a reliance upon the written word for valuable information.

You see, while economists may be predicting the end of newspapers, printed publications and, yes, even libraries, I tend to ignore them as silly canards. Especially when I watch my kids race into a library for something they can't get on the TV or Internet.

Sometimes, even the information superhighway can't keep up with Mrs. Seaver and her book cart.

David Cooper is a father of five. Reach him at dcoop@magicvalley.com.



AP file photo

Little Leaguers David Spinelli, left, and Sean Tait waiting their turn for batting practice before the start of the 2005 state tournament for 9- and 10-year olds in Bellefonte, Pa. Two million kids ages 5-12 play Little League, but only 240,000 kids ages 13-18 play.

Little League loses kids in teen years

By Beth J. Harpaz
Associated Press writer

NEW YORK — Nothing beats the start of baseball season, and I don't mean the big leagues. I'm talking about Little League kids picking up mitts and bats for the first time in months, getting to know new teammates and coaches, and looking sharp in clean uniforms, before the inevitable grass stains sully those white pants and their cleats get caked with mud.

Parents love the fresh start, too. There's nothing I'd rather do on a sunny spring day than watch my son play baseball. That first game in April always fills me with hope that this might be the best team ever, with the best coach ever, playing the best season ever.

There's just one problem. My son is 11, and before he even met his team this year, he announced that this would be his last season.

He's not alone in veering away from youth baseball as he nears adolescence. Two million kids ages 5-12 play Little League, but only 240,000 kids ages 13-18 play, according to Little

League Baseball spokesman Christopher Downs. Downs says the organization is working on retaining older players and on involving teenagers in other ways, as volunteer coaches and umpires. Little League has also worked with ESPN to televise teenage divisions' World Series.

But maybe it's inevitable that kids' priorities change as they mature. They have more homework and new social lives and don't always love baseball enough to put in long hours of practice and play. If they also play basketball, soccer or football, they often start specializing in one sport by middle school, rather than alternating with the seasons. My son plays basketball too, and prefers the quicker pace to baseball.

Sid Fernando, a coach in my neighborhood whose two sons play, says the game also gets more competitive as kids age. For one thing, the diamond gets bigger, with more ground to cover between bases and between the pitcher and batter.

Some kids can make the transition, but "you get a lot of kids, if they're not in the

top level, they start to get pushed out," Fernando said.

Even good players face hard choices if they want to play on a high school team. "Colleges start to scout you very early on," Fernando said. Juggling practices and games with homework and friends outside the team requires strong time-management skills. "If they're not that great at the sport, why pursue it? Even for the kids who have a shot at making it, it's a very difficult adjustment," he said.

I asked users of Kiwibox.com, a social networking site for teens and 20-somethings, why kids drop sports when they hit high school, and got this comment among others: "I played a lot of sports in lower and middle school, but they were just too competitive in high school," wrote Chelsea Doyle, 24. "I wanted to have fun, but there was all the drama over who would get picked for varsity or JV, and then this whole new hierarchy of who was 'better' because they got on the better team. Plus winning became the entire point of playing the game, and it just stopped being fun."

Still, I was surprised by how sad I felt about my son's announcement that this would be his last season. I don't follow professional sports, and I was never on a team growing up. But I see how much more kids get out of baseball than just learning to play. They learn to value fitness. They see that practice and hard work pay off with improved performance. And if they have a good coach, they can learn as much about life as they do about the game.

A few years ago, my son had a coach named Mike Colt who was especially good at giving advice that resonated beyond the field. "Cheer for your teammates, but don't dis the other guy," he'd tell the kids. "Don't just stand there, be a hitter! And when you strike out, don't blame yourself. Tip your hat to the other team's pitcher for a job well done."

I loved Mike's emphasis on honor, effort and grace. Not surprisingly, his approach inspired a lot of wins, and when the kids didn't win, they had fun anyway.

Rick McBride, who blogs about coaching at

TheLittleLeagueCoach.com, says the best thing adults can do to keep teenagers playing "is to keep the game fun and simple. Notice I didn't say 'noncompetitive,' just inviting and friendly. Kids want to be part of something, they need to belong and be accepted. It is up to us as adults to create welcoming environments where they are not chastised or ridiculed. If they are not superstars, they can be encouraged, and positive reinforcement will build character and self-confidence."

My son's new coach does all that and more. At the first game, he gave constructive advice when the kids messed up, and cheered them on, without gloating, when they succeeded. They won, 11-6, and every kid went home feeling that he'd contributed.

And guess what? My son changed his mind about quitting baseball. I think he'd forgotten, over the long winter, just how good it feels to hit the ball, steal a base or pitch a strike. This may or may not be his best season ever, but at least, he tells me, it won't be his last.

Room-inns

Continued from FL 1

Scott anticipates the rooms will be used primarily as overnight learning spaces as families prepare to bring their babies home. But they can also be used as temporary housing for parents who have come from many miles away to be near sick infants, as the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit cannot itself accommodate parents staying at their child's cribside for more than short visits.

Between these two uses, Scott anticipates there will scarcely be a night when the room-inns aren't used.

WHO IS IN THE GROUP?

The group advocating for the room-inns is called A Child's Whisper — an acronym for Actively Caring, Helping, Inspiring, Devoting, Sharing, While Healing, Involving & Supporting Each other & our Region.

The group and its supporters include parents and relatives, doctors and other medical practitioners, and members of the hospital board and foundation.

For information about the group, or to join, call Stephanie Davis at 948-0799.

Babies

Continued from FL 1

these nurses and doctors, they have prepared me. It was so comforting and gratifying, I went from fear to total excitement."

Today, Chad is 4, and his mom says he amazes her every day. He's also her inspiration to advocate in Magic Valley for the services she got in Boise. "It's the kids who are the heroes of our stories; they're the ones who inspired us," she said.

Kyndal: Born at 27 weeks, the little girl lost her twin brother within 12 hours of his birth, and she weighed just 1 pound, 6 ounces. In some of the first photos of her, she's covered in tape and tubes, her tiny ribs poking through her chest. Over the next 80 days, Kyndal gained 3 pounds and was finally ready to go home. Mom and dad Nicole and David Hults of Wendell spent a night in a room-inn to help them prepare.

"There were so many setbacks at the hospital, you're afraid those same things will happen at home," Nicole said. "It's more than the first-time mom jitters. It's just a transitional place, it's basically your first night alone with your baby, and knowing the nurses are there if you need them."

Nicole said she wants every local parent

To help parents feel it's more like home and less like the sleek, sterile NICU, A Child's Whisper is holding a fundraiser in May to both build and furnish the room-inns. The event is

billed as a time for adults to act like kids, complete with all the fun activities usually found at children's birthday parties — plus a few drinks to loosen things up.

to have access to all the tools they might need, in the hospital and out, and room-inns are a great place to start.

Connor and Hallie: Born 14 weeks before term, the twins were quickly assessed with medical difficulties. Connor was released after 89 days and now has just a small speech delay, but Hallie spent 143 days in a hospital and now is blind, with cerebral palsy. It was as parents Marni and Cody Porath of Twin Falls were preparing to bring her home to her brother that they used a room-inn.

"It was very comforting to know that we could be responsible for her while we were still in the facility and they were still able to monitor her," Marni said. "Anytime that you take a child home, whether they've been in that situation or not, you come up with questions you haven't had before. When you add medical complications to that scenario, you come up with a ton more questions in the middle of the night."

Particularly important to Marni — who said she's had a variety of hospital experiences, from the sterile and stiff to almost like home — was the comfort she felt in the room-inn.

— Ariel Hansen

"Kids always have a special place in everyone's heart."

— **Stephanie Davis, co-founder of A Child's Whisper**

And A Child's Whisper won't stop there. Once the room-inns are complete, the group will continue advocating and fundraising for other needed items in the infants' and children's wards, and they plan to involve everyone they can.

"Some people say this is a moms' group, but it isn't, it's a community group for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. The dads are just as important in this whole picture," said Stephanie Davis, one of the group's founders. "Once we are known to the community, it will even surprise me, the response we'll get. ... Kids always have a special place in everyone's heart."

Ariel Hansen may be reached at 208-788-3475 or ahansen@magicvalley.com.

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New crop of Earth Day books inspire, empower kids

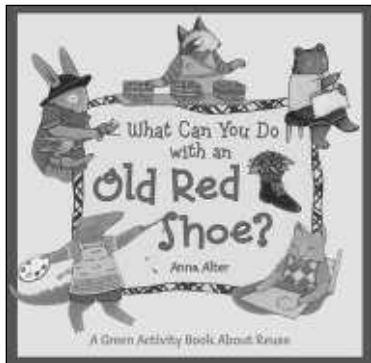
By Leanne Italie
Associated Press writer

Endangered species, energy hogs and mountains of garbage may sound like insurmountable grown-up problems to little people looking to make a difference on Earth Day, April 22.

Fear not. With save-the-planet buzz filling up their worlds, kids have a fresh crop of books that break down eco-issues into bite-size vocabulary lessons, simple reuse and recycle projects and easy ways to get inspired.

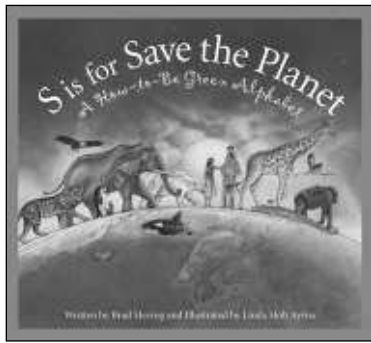
"The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle" (Simon & Schuster, \$3.99, ages 4-6) by Alison Inches and illustrated by Pete Whitehead.

A very, very happy glob of crude oil keeps a diary of his journey through the manufacturing chain. He becomes a bottle of water then gets shredded, heated and extruded at a recycling plant to be reborn as synthetic fleece fit for an astronaut. An age-appropriate glossary is included.



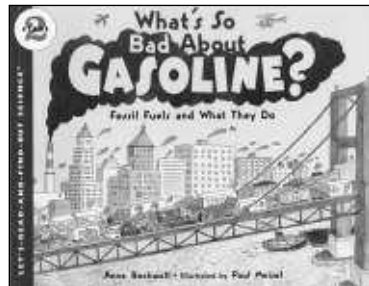
"What Can You Do with an Old Red Shoe?" (Henry Holt, \$16.95, ages 4-7) by Anna Alter.

With sweet rhymes about everyday discards, children learn from animal kids how to turn a worn-out shoe into a planter, an orphaned flip-flop into an art stamp and a torn T-shirt into a pillow. The craft, storage and decorative projects have numbered steps. Some adult nail-pounding, sewing and cutting required.



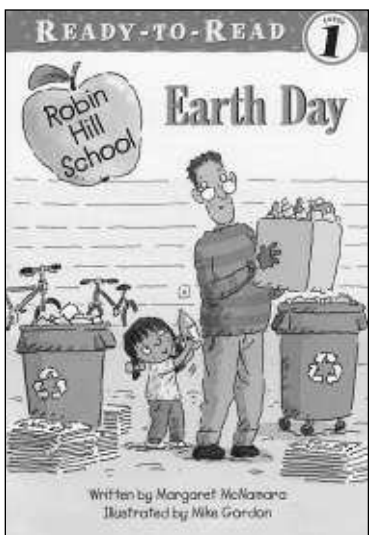
"S is for Save the Planet" (Sleeping Bear Press, \$17.95, ages 6-10) written by Brad Herzog and illustrated by Linda Holt Ayriss.

A how-to-be-green alphabet book that offers up C for carpooling, V for vermicomposting and X for xeriscaping — all adequately explained. Each letter is also accompanied by chunkier text for older kids on how the planet came to be in shambles and how they can help save it.



"What's So Bad About Gasoline?" (HarperCollins, \$5.99, ages 5-9) by Anne Rockwell and illustrated by Paul Meisel.

A stage two reader, the story of petroleum is told from a scientific standpoint. One point is made crystal clear to kids who may need a climate change primer: gasoline is made from petroleum. Petroleum is a fossil fuel. Once it's gone, it'll take millions of years before even the promise of more can surface.



"Earth Day, Ready-to-Read" (Simon & Schuster, \$3.99, ages 4-6) by Margaret McNamara and illustrated by Mike Gordon.

This level one reader focuses on a first-grader up against some big ideas on how to save the earth. Eigen says he'll rescue polar bears, Katie vows to plant a forest and Michael declares he'll save the dolphins, but little Emma chooses to pick up trash, ride her bike and brush her teeth without running the water.



"Earth in the Hot Seat, Bulletins from a Warming World" (National Geographic, \$19.95, ages 9-12) by Marfe Ferguson Delano.

You can't go wrong with a cover featuring a desperate polar bear clinging to a tiny chunk of ice in a vast and lonely sea. Ravaged rain forest in Borneo. A once-flat bike path left buckled and bumpy by melting permafrost near Fairbanks, Alaska. Huge white blankets spread over a depleted glacier in Austria. This is a sweeping look at climate change for kids, yet not too technical.



"101 Ways You Can Help Save the Planet Before You're 12!" (Sterling, \$14.95, ages 6-up) by Joanne O'Sullivan.

Save dryer lint to stuff a pillow, or put it out for the birds to use for nests. Find an eco-warrior hero, read up and allow yourself to be inspired. Throw a swap meet with friends to reuse what you'd normally throw away. A lively, nicely illustrated how-to on making a difference.



"Insiders: Rain Forests" (Simon & Schuster, \$16.99, ages 8-12) by Richard C. Vogt.

Latest in the popular Insiders picture encyclopedia series, no rain forest plant or animal life form is left uninvestigated. It's stunningly illustrated and exhaustively researched but not terribly playful (big-eyed frog cover art to the contrary) for kids who might need to be drawn into the subject.



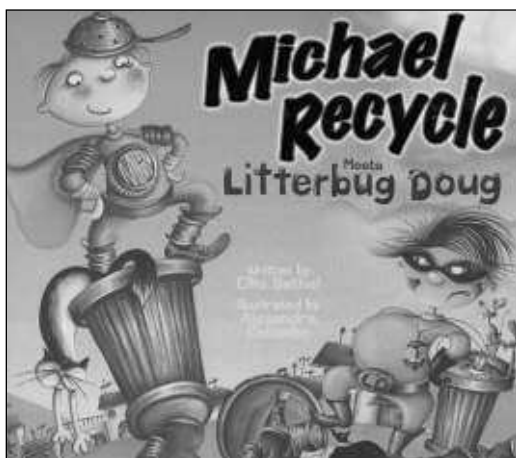
"The Butterfly Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast" (Candlewick Press, \$22.99, all ages) by William Plomer and illustrated by Alan Aldridge.

A richly colored reissue of a 1973 British classic. Inspired by an 1807 poem from William Roscoe, Plomer's verse is perfectly wed to Aldridge's detailed fantasy world of small animals and insects as they prepare to party. "When the guests began to dance/Even those who had no wings/Flew around, as if in a dream,/On feet like enchanted things!" Nature notes by Richard Fitter.



"We are Extremely Very Good Recyclers" (Penguin, \$16.99, ages 6-9) based on characters created by Lauren Child.

Fans of the quirky "Charlie and Lola" books and cartoon series on Playhouse Disney won't be disappointed as the brother-sister twosome and their friends try to win a recycling contest. Little Lola's charm shines through, as does the collage-style illustrations. Poster for would-be recyclers included.



"Michael Recycle Meets Litterbug Doug" (Worthwhile Books, \$15.99, ages 4-8) by Ellie Bethel and illustrated by Alexandra Colombo.

Last year's green-caped crusader is back and the eco-war is on. This time, the villain is a slovenly boy with a gnawed apple necklace and only rats as friends. Litterbug Doug lives on a mountain of garbage on the edge of town until Michael works his magic. Large, colorful illustrations perfect for readalouds.

"Earth in the Hot Seat, Bulletins from

Does being smart make it harder to find a date?

By Ellen McCarthy
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Alex Benzer, a Harvard grad and author of "The Tao of Dating" books, created a stir by declaring that the smart people of the world have the toughest time dating.

His reasons make sense: In adolescence, intelligent folks spent more time trying to tick off college application-worth achievements than developing real relationships; they feel entitled to an easy dating life because of all they've achieved; for years they've valued smarts over sexuality; they discount potential

candidates for not being up to their brainiac standards; and most damning of all, they over-think everything.

So, is it true? We decided to talk to a few experts — smart ones, of course.

"They may over-analyze things. They come in with very high expectations. They want the person to have the same level of education they do," agrees Amy Schoen, author of several books on dating and marriage.

She especially hears this complaint from women: "They don't want to date me because I'm smart!"

"The more education you have, the fussier you are,"

says Ann Wood, the grande dame of Washington matchmakers, who also agrees with Benzer. "What I find is that smart people have more interests, more activities. As a result, when they try to find somebody who likes to do the same things, it's harder for them because they have a smaller pool."

Toni Coleman, a McLean, Va., dating coach, thinks the problem isn't too much

intellectual prowess but rather, too little emotional intelligence. "Some folks don't have a good groundedness in how they're coming across and how they're reading people," she says.

The key, Schoen says, is to manage expectations. "Learn to see what's really important — looking at people's values, rather than what their diploma looks like or what's on their resume."

**Happy 70th
Wedding Anniversary**

Fred and Milly
Webster
April 12, 1939

Love,
Your Family

Mr. and Mrs. Luther R. Sipe
of Twin Falls will celebrate their
50th Wedding Anniversary on April 19th

by renewing their vows during the 9:30am Worship Service at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 464 Carriage Lane N, Twin Falls. Refreshments will be served after the service.

IMAGINATIVE INDUSTRY
Entrepreneurs mine the fairy tale party niche.
NEXT WEEK IN FAMILY LIFE

Join us in Celebrating
Catherine Thomason's
90th Birthday!

Saturday
April 18, 2009
Shoshone Senior
Citizen Center
N. Rail St. West
2:00-4:00 pm
(No gifts, please)

CLEANING CORNER

Question:
I hear so much talk these days about becoming more aware of the environment and "going green". How can I change my cleaning procedures to help save the planet?
"Going Green as I Clean!"

Answer:
What a great question! Thank you for caring about using products that are environmentally friendly. There are several products I can recommend, but for today let me start with "TUB 'N' TILE", Don Aslett's Environmentally Responsible Bathroom Cleaner. Fortunately it doesn't contain harsh chemicals that are harmful to waterways and make the air dangerous to breathe, but it is still bullish on the toughest dirt and grime typically found in bathrooms. There is so much more to tell you! Call me when you have time to chit chat and I'll fill you in on some more amazing "planet-saving" cleaning tid bits.

Frustrated with a stubborn cleaning problem? Write or e-mail your questions to:
lchandler@cleaningcenters.com
483 Washington St. N. Twin Falls, ID
(Corner of Washington St. N. and Filer Ave.)

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Twin Falls High School Show Choir

Jive

Friday, April 17 at 7:30pm
Saturday, April 18 at 1:00pm & 7:30pm
General Admission \$5
TFHS Roper Auditorium

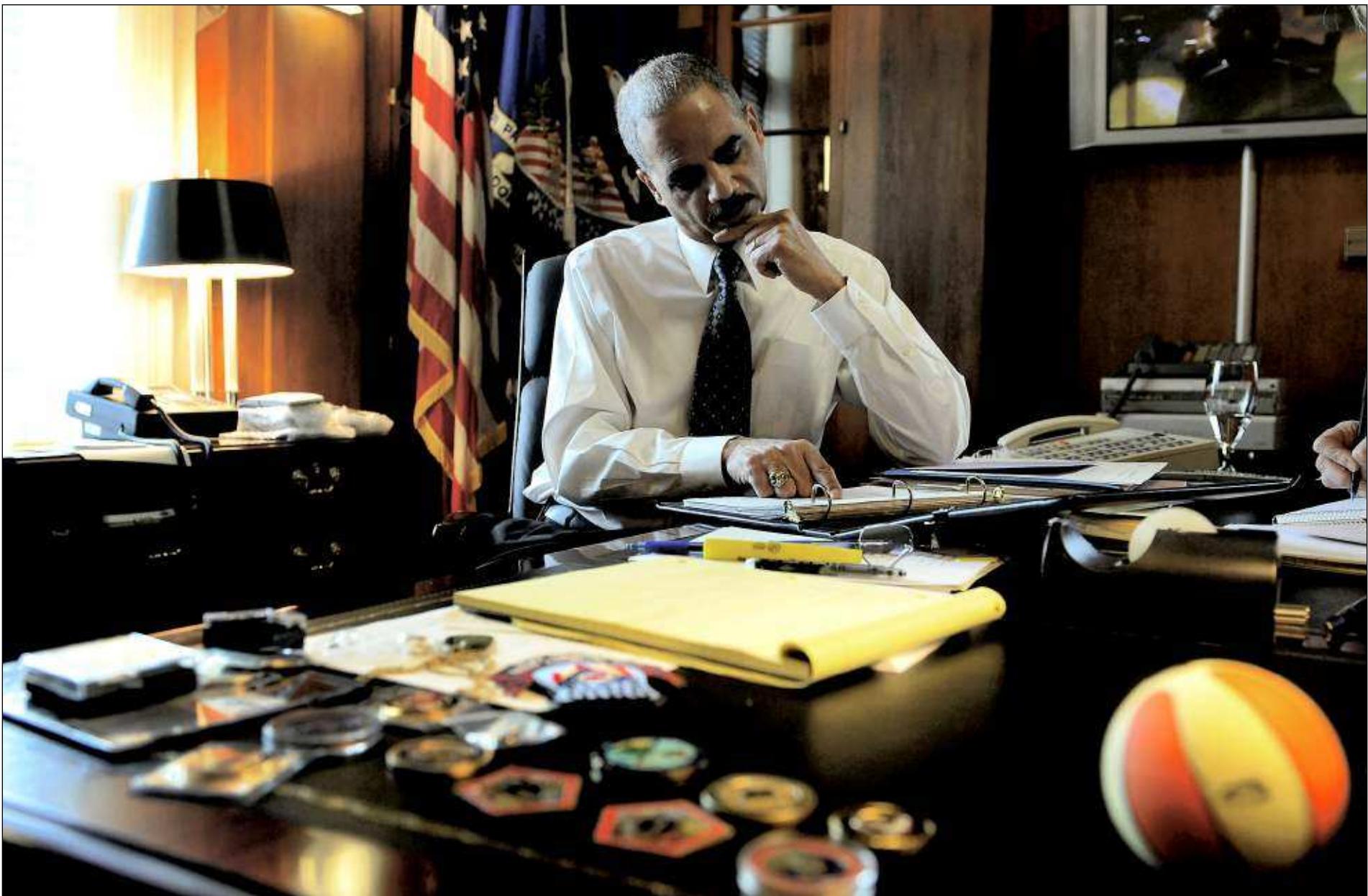
Tickets available at
Crowley's (Magic Valley Mall), Crowley's
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Jive Members, and at the Door

Featuring songs from
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Kids Only

MEET AMERICA'S TOP LAWYER



Photos by RICHARD A. LIPSKI/Washington Post

Attorney General Eric Holder says that kids can play a big role in helping to improve their communities. 'Young people can be a positive influence to their peers,' says Holder, pictured in his office on Capitol Hill.

Attorney General oversees 100,000 workers, but he's still often late for pizza at home

By Valerie Strauss
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Lots of kids like to play cops and robbers. Eric H. Holder Jr. doesn't have to pretend: He is the nation's top cop — and its chief lawyer, too!

Holder is the 82nd U.S. attorney general in the nation's history. But he is the first black to hold the job.

His selection by our first black president, Barack Obama, shows the racial progress the country has made since the end of slavery, Holder said.

"It's very cool," he said. "We have fundamentally changed."

As head of the Department of Justice, Holder has a huge job. He is in charge of about 100,000 people. They work to enforce the nation's laws, prevent and control crime, and take to court people who violate U.S. law.

Among the agencies in the department are the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Prisons and the FBI, or Federal Bureau of Investigation. (Can you figure out what they each do by their titles? Learn more at www.usdoj.gov/usao/eousa/kidspage.)

Holder, 58, starts every workday with an 8:15 a.m. meeting at the FBI headquarters downtown. There, he and other top officials talk about things that could affect the country's security.

He then usually goes to his very big office nearby at the Justice Department's headquarters, checks a black book packed with information about his daily schedule, and stays busy all day and into the night.

His desk boasts a collection of medallions from police departments and other places he has visited. There is, too, a small basketball, a gift from the



On his desk, Attorney General Eric Holder has a collection of medallions from police departments and other places he has visited. The small basketball was a gift from the president of the Women's National Basketball Association.



A carving in a conference room has holes from BB gun pellets, five holes just to the right of center. Attorney General Eric Holder says the room was Robert F. Kennedy's when he was attorney general, and his kids shot at the artwork.

president of the Women's National Basketball Association.

Holder, like President Obama, loves basketball but said he doesn't think playing Obama would be a great idea. "He's a little younger than I am," he said, laughing. Obama, in fact, is 11 years younger! Holder grew up in New

York City, went to public schools and has served as a judge, a U.S. attorney (a federal official who prosecutes people in court), a deputy attorney general and a private lawyer.

He lives in Washington, D.C., with his wife, Sharon Malone, a doctor, and their three children, Maya, 15, Brooke, 13, and Buddy, 11.

Friday night is pizza night at their house, but he is often late.

"By the time I get home, there usually is not much pizza left, and what's left is pretty cold," he said with a smile.

Holder said that kids can play a big role in helping to improve their communities, in part by being good role models to other kids. "Young people have a way of talking to other young people that older people don't," he said.

"They can break through barriers with words and music. Young people can be a positive influence to their peers."

The attorney general is a member of what is called the president's Cabinet. It is made up of the vice president and people the president has chosen to run top government departments.

The attorney general is special (and not only because all the other department heads are

given the title of "secretary," as in Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton).

The job of other department heads is to put into place the president's policies. Holder advises the president on law enforcement policy, but the attorney general's job is to uphold the laws, even laws that the president may not like.

The fact that the U.S. was created to run on laws and not on the whims of a dictator has set this country apart from many others.

That, Holder said, is something he never forgets: "Ours is a nation of laws, guided by principles that reflect the essential goodness of the American people. ... The true test of our nation's greatness is whether we uphold our most cherished principles, not when it is easy, but when it is hard. Our nation ... has met this test in times past. We will do so again."



Meet Eric Holder, U.S. Attorney General

Born: New York City
Schools: Columbia University, Columbia Law School

What's on his iPod: The Temptations, Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald ("I guess I'm not very cool.")

Favorite Song: "So Amazing" by Luther Vandross

Nickname as a Kid: Ricky

Favorite Subject in School: American history

Worst Subject in School: Calculus ("not even close")

Favorite Pizza Topping: Cheese or sausage

Favorite Ice Cream: Chocolate chip

Least Favorite Foods: Brussels sprouts, raw spinach

Favorite Sport: Basketball

Favorite Teams: The Knicks and the Lakers

Loves to Do With His Kids: Watch movies

Who's in the president's Cabinet?

The Cabinet includes the vice president and the heads of 15 executive departments. The president gets to choose the people for these jobs, but the Senate votes to approve or reject his choices.

Here are those departments and who is leading them:

Agriculture: Tom Vilsack

Commerce: Gary Locke

Defense: Robert Gates

Education: Arne Duncan

Energy: Steven Chu

Health and Human Services: Kathleen Sebelius*

Homeland Security: Janet Napolitano

Housing and Urban Development: Shaun Donovan

Interior: Ken Salazar

Justice: Eric Holder

Labor: Hilda Solis

State: Hillary Rodham Clinton

Transportation: Ray LaHood

Treasury: Timothy Geithner

Veterans Affairs: Eric Shinseki

*Not yet sworn in.

Source: www.whitehouse.gov