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Teachers ready to negotiate their pay

Public has option to comment on union's concerns tonight

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Special to the Daily Press

Unhappy with a loss in pay, the teachers union will begin the arduous process of renegotiating its contract at tonight's school board meeting.

The Santa Monica Malibu Classroom Teachers Association filed its initial proposal for 2001-2002 negotiations in October. According to state law, the union must publicly present the issues they want to discuss and allow residents to make comments.

The school district must then post a similar proposal and submit to a public hearing. When completed, the two sides go into private negotiations for a multi-year contract. Only after both sides come to an agreement is the new contract shown to the public.

"The specifics of negotiations take place at the table. I don't believe negotiations should take place at a school board meeting and I'm highly critical of anyone who tries to do that," said Harry Keiley, president of the teachers' union. "By law, our proposal and the district's proposal need to be (open to the public). But the specifics (of the negotiations) take place at the table."

In its proposal, the union asks for higher teacher salaries, class size reductions, better safety and working conditions, more child development teachers, adult education teachers, increasing health and welfare benefits, and a discussion of assigned days and work hours.

"Unions have traditionally negotiated issues that pertain to salary and working conditions. Those are historically what unions negotiate," said Keiley. "At the same time the union is now trying to become more involved in negotiating teacher quality and student achievement so we can begin to look at professional issues. Only then, I believe, we can

See TEACHERS, page 3

Santa Monica credit rated best in country

By Daily Press staff

Even though the city is facing a \$7 million budget shortfall this year, its credit is still good.

The City of Santa Monica has once again been awarded the highest possible credit rating by the nation's three preeminent credit rating agencies. This makes Santa Monica one of only seven cities in the United States to hold AAA credit ratings for general obligation bonds.

As a result of the rating, the city was able to sell its bonds Tuesday at the lowest possible rate, saving taxpayers thousands of dollars.

"These three bond ratings reflect a tremendous vote of confidence by the national financial community in the city of Santa Monica," said city finance director Mike Dennis. "As a result of these ratings, the city was able to sell public safety facility lease and revenue bonds at the lowest possible rate, which will save the city and the tax-

payers more than \$40,000 annually in debt repayment."

The credit rating agencies cited the city's strong financial performance, as well as a strong and diverse local economy coupled with high income levels, low debt burden, strong financial reserves and financial flexibility, and careful financial forecasting as factors in their rating decisions.

However, the city lost millions last year on revenue from hotel rooms and retail sales, creating a projected \$7 million shortfall for this year alone. Municipal services will not be affected for this fiscal year due to the city's large current budget surplus.

Senior city officials have warned the Santa Monica City Council that revenue shortfalls will continue over the next five years. Depending on the severity of the recession, by 2005 there potentially could be a nearly \$14 million difference between the amount of money the city makes in taxes and what it spends on services.

Catching air



Del Pastrana/Daily Press

12-year-old Sante Bentivoglio cranks up his skills as he gets air off a ramp at the Santa Monica's Boys and Girls Club skatepark. The program is held Monday through Saturday for kids ages 7-18.

California airports expect few delays with new security rules

BY LEON DROUIN KEITH
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Airline passengers in California may not need more time to catch flights when new federal security rules take effect Friday, but some will need more patience.

The rules require airlines to check all baggage in one of four ways: with explosives-detection machines, bomb-sniffing dogs, hand searches or by matching every piece of luggage to a passenger on board a plane.

Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta said Wednesday that all air-

lines would use at least the last measure, known as bag matching. Some airports will combine that with more expensive options. By the end of the year, all baggage will have to be screened by an explosive detection device.

Representatives for California's airports say they are still recommending that passengers arrive between one and two hours before a plane's scheduled departure. But many expect at least some delays.

"I think the potential for confusion and delays is at the gate where

See AIRPORTS, page 3

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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Keep your own counsel right now, especially if you feel negative. Verbalizing these feelings will only add to the problem. Brainstorm with a family member, and you'll find solutions. You might need to change your approach. Try to lighten up, if possible. Tonight: Get extra sleep while you can.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Deal with someone on a one-on-one level. Together you'll discover many solutions and ideas, if you don't get stuck in negativity. When you get uptight about money, you can be very touchy. Create opportunities rather than slam doors shut. Network away. Tonight: Join a friend.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Pressure builds. You might be racing around from one project to another. You're tired; know that you can make mistakes more easily. Be careful with details. Spend a little to make your day easier. Cancel a meeting or change plans based on your needs. Tonight: It could be a late night.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ You could be feeling more negative than usual. Buy donuts on your way to work, or do something special not only for you, but also those you work with. Don't allow someone to trigger you, especially later in the day. Detach and you'll gain. Tonight: Relax the mind as well as the body.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Someone easily could rain on your parade if you let him or her. Your instinctual reactions direct you properly. Follow them. Risk-taking and creative matters could backfire right now. Stay with the tried and true, if possible. Someone's mood is only a phase. Tonight: Make nice.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Responsibility weighs on your shoulders. Think about taking a risk or doing something a lot different. Your priorities need to be examined. How important is perfection? Work? Relationships? Respond accordingly, following your priorities. Tonight: Accept an invitation.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Focus on work, especially as communication might waiver. Do what you can by yourself. Concentrate on each item you do. You accomplish a lot more if you work with your strengths and not your present weakness. Avoid misunderstandings. Tonight: Work late.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Your playfulness delights others. Follow your innate intuition and intellectual perspective. You know what is right for you. Be more playful with a child or loved one. Your lightness provides a refreshing break for those around you. Tonight: Do what comes naturally.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You easily could be out of sorts. At best, you're subdued. To make yourself feel better, talk to a trusted friend or loved one. This person has that magic touch that puts a smile on your face. Be careful with your temper as well. Tonight: Head on home.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Others seek you out to ask questions. Carefully listen to someone who does care. You might not be pleased by his or her observation, but know this person's heart is in the right place. You don't have to push so hard. Give yourself a break. You certainly need it! Tonight: You don't have to go far!



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Deal with strength and direction financially. If you're having a problem, it certainly isn't that you're not willing to work hard. Perhaps you need to cut back or network more. Remain optimistic. You'll find a solution because you want to. Tonight: Make a favorite meal.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ As far as tension involving either work or home, you can smile all you want, but walk out of your Neptunian fog. Use your ingenuity. Honor what is positive, but still deal with the problem at hand. Brainstorm with a trusted adviser. Tonight: Do something fun on your way home.

CORRECTION — A story in the Jan. 16 edition about business on the Promenade contained an error. The Santa Monica City Council voted to not allow restaurants to be converted into retail shops. New retail stores are still allowed to set up shop on the outdoor mall.



QUOTE of the DAY

“A liberated woman is one who has sex before marriage and a job after.”

— Gloria Steinem

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That's a stretch



Coach Stephen Barnes (center), of Saint Monica's High School, leads his track team in routine stretch exercises before practice at Reed Park on Wednesday.

Del Pastrana/Daily Press

Security may help lost luggage

AIRPORTS, from page 1

passengers are a no show," said Oakland International Airport spokeswoman Cyndy Johnson. "Patience is definitely required."

"We're doing everything we can to meet the baggage screening requirement by the deadline."

— WHITNEY BREWER
Southwest spokeswoman

Passengers generally support increased security, but some believe more delays will eliminate the convenience of air travel.

"If you have to spend three to four hours in line to get somewhere for a two-hour meeting, the cost-benefit analysis will shift," said John Dossett, 37, who was on his way back to Portland, Ore., after a business meeting in San Diego. He said the check-in time was reasonable at San Diego

International Airport, but added that he'll re-evaluate his trips if the waits get longer.

Others said the changes are not only overdue, but probably still inadequate.

"I think they have the appearance of enhanced security but people get through," said Bob Downey, 31, who frequently flies out of San Diego on business. Last month, he said, he had to open his bags for security personnel hours before the a woman slipped through security with a fake hand grenade.

Airline officials have revealed little about their security plans, but say they're trying to make the changes as unnoticeable as possible for passengers.

There may be delays, he said, if passengers with checked luggage fail to board flights or if passengers respond to the rules by trying to carry on more bags.

United has been conducting test programs to screen baggage in 11 U.S. airports, including Los Angeles International Airport, Brathwaite said. It and other overseas carriers are a step ahead because passengers on international flights already must be matched with their baggage, he said.

The changes will require more of an adjustment from domestic-only carriers such as Southwest Airlines, which does not assign seats to passengers.

"We're doing everything we can to meet the baggage screening requirement by the

Teachers want more pay and smaller class sizes

TEACHERS, from page 1

start to look at true educational reform."

School district officials said they are looking forward to working with the union on setting a schedule for negotiations. Officials could not say when exactly the school district would present its own negotiations proposal.

"I can assure you that the relationship between the school district and the union has not always been cordial. In fact it's well known that relations in the past have not been good."

— HARRY KEILEY
Teachers' union, president

"I think our hope and intention over the course of the next few weeks is to establish a schedule for those talks," said Julia Brownley, school board president. "In the past, in terms of reflection, when this item is on the agenda nobody shows up, so we typically end up opening the discussion and closing it."

Brownley said proposals are a simple process, but negotiations are never easy.

"Clearly our negotiations in the past have become more public and people certainly have strong opinions about it," she said. "We've had some very tough issues to deliberate on and deal on."

Long known for their contentious relationship, union officials and school district administrators both hope this year's negotiations will go much smoother than in the past.

"I can assure you that the relationship between the school district and the union has not always been cordial. In fact it's well known that relations in the past have not been good," Keiley said. "The current administration has begun to forge better relations, but that doesn't happen over night. It takes a lot of trust."

This year the Santa Monica Malibu Classroom Teachers Association will have entirely new faces on the other side of the bargaining table. Since the last contract signing, the school district has hired a new superintendent and two new assistant superintendents, all of whom will be essential in the negotiations.

The new administration has worked hard to mend relations with the teachers' union. The union and the administration recently launched an ambitious program to pool any state funds received for improved academic performance at individual schools into a general account to be redistributed based on need.

The landmark arrangement may be the first of its kind in California. It demonstrates a close working relationship between the district and the union, a feat almost unimaginable just a few years ago.

Now the union wants pay raises for its teachers to remain competitive with surrounding communities. During the 1990s, the union asserts, teachers' salaries declined by 4 percent when adjusted for inflation in the state.

The union officials also said the school district ranks among the highest in the state in pay to administrators and non-classroom personnel but not on teacher salaries. Teacher salaries have decreased because of increased inflation and general work place conditions.

"We cannot allow that to happen again," wrote Keiley in the union's negotiation proposal. "Teachers deserve a professional wage, one that at a minimum keeps up with the increased cost of living."

deadline," Southwest spokeswoman Whitney Brewer said.

The new rules may have one major advantage, suggested Mineta San Jose International Airport Steve Luckenbach. Some airlines figure it will lead to fewer problems with lost luggage.

Air safety advocates said the changes will do little to eliminate the potential for terror in the skies.

"This doesn't do anything for the sui-

cide bombers we know are out there," said Jon Russell, a Los Angeles-based United pilot and regional safety chairman of the Airline Pilots Association.

"We cannot afford the cheapest airline security anymore," said Gail Dunham, president of the Washington, D.C.-based National Air Disaster Alliance/Foundation, an air safety group she formed after her pilot ex-husband died in a 1991 crash.

Poll: Riordan and Davis in virtual tie in governor's race

BY ALEXA HAUSSLER

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Democratic Gov. Gray Davis and potential Republican rival Richard Riordan are locked in a virtual tie in a hypothetical matchup, according to a new independent statewide poll.

The Public Policy Institute of California survey found Riordan leading Davis by a 41 percent to 37 percent margin in a potential race, and Riordan holds a firm lead over his GOP opponents for the March 5 primary.

The results mirror those in a similar PPIC poll a month ago.

In the three-way race for the GOP gubernatorial nomination, 41 percent likely voters said they prefer Riordan, compared to 13 percent for Secretary of State Bill Jones and 4 percent for businessman Bill Simon. Forty-two

percent said they were still undecided.

According to the poll, Jones leads Riordan and Simon among voters in the conservative Central Valley, home to his hometown Fresno, but Riordan holds a substantial advantage elsewhere in the state. The primary winner will face Davis in November.

Meanwhile, four in 10 voters said they support Davis' re-election.

"The governor continues to be weighed down," said survey director Mark Baldassare.

Davis has consistently trailed Riordan slightly in surveys for several months. Overall, Davis' job performance rating is about 52 percent, virtually the same as it was in November and December and slightly up from its low point in July.

But he received weak performance ratings in areas

that residents said were the state's most pressing — including schools, electricity and the economy. Seven in 10 voters blame Davis at least in part for the state's electricity woes and budget deficit.

"Most people are telling us that they really aren't seeing the improvement that they expected," Baldassare said.

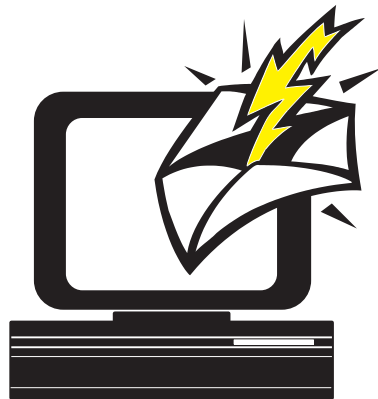
Californians listed public schools as the most important issue facing Davis and the Legislature this year, followed by electricity prices, the economy and the budget. Republicans and Democrats said they prefer spending cuts over tax hikes to deal with an expected \$12.5 billion budget shortfall.

The PPIC surveyed 2,023 adult California residents by telephone between Dec. 26 and Jan. 10. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

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NATIONAL

Enron begins damage control; concerns mount

BY DAVE CARPENTER
AP Business Writer

CHICAGO — Arthur Andersen LLP accelerated damage-control efforts Wednesday, running full-page ads in national newspapers to try to limit blame in the Enron debacle to its Houston office and promising an overhaul of its practices.

But as Andersen's lead auditor in the case met with congressional investigators in Washington, questions remained about whether involvement in the document-shredding scandal extended to executives at Chicago headquarters.

"It's one of two things," said Ramy Elitzur, professor of accounting and head of the MBA program at the University of Toronto. "They had a central review and they're trying to shift the blame, or they didn't have a central review and their procedure is lacking. Either way, it doesn't look good for them."

A series of disclosures involving Andersen's role in Enron's demise has hurt the accounting giant's stellar reputation, raising speculation it may not survive the controversy as an independent company.

Experts say the company's short-term future may depend on what investigators discover in probing what top managers knew and when they knew it.

In the full-page advertisement published Wednesday, Andersen CEO Joseph Berardino touted actions taken by the

company Tuesday: Andersen's lead partner on the Enron account, David Duncan, was fired; three partners who worked on the assignment were put on leave; new leadership was put in charge of the Houston office; and four partners were stripped of management responsibilities.

The efforts at damage control appeared designed to isolate the problems to the Houston office, which handled the audit of the collapsed energy-trading company. The office employs about 1,400 of Andersen's 85,000 employees.

But Berardino left open the possibility that executives at headquarters might be implicated, saying Tuesday that "we're not quite sure yet" whether wrongdoing reached higher into the accounting firm than the auditors now being disciplined.

Accounting industry experts differ on whether Andersen's Houston office would have told headquarters of key decisions in the Enron case as long ago as last August, when an Enron finance executive wrote CEO Kenneth Lay of a concern the company could "implode in a wave of accounting scandals." That was two months before Enron confessed its profits had been overstated and federal investigators became involved.

Particularly at issue are special partnerships formed by Enron that enabled it to add several hundred million dollars from off-the-books transactions to publicly stated earnings, and at the same time hide big debts.

Panty thief on the loose

By The Associated Press

EL SEGUNDO — Police want South Bay women to check their drawers for their drawers.

There are apparently more victims of a burglary suspect and admitted panty thief arrested last weekend, police Lt. Craig Cleary said Tuesday.

"We are looking for any other victims that are out there that had their property stolen from their residences," Cleary said, adding, "Usually the underwear has been worn."

Carlos Echevarria, 34, of Hawthorne was arrested Saturday night when a police

officer allegedly saw him burglarizing an apartment, the lieutenant said. Echevarria left the apartment through a window and tossed three pairs of panties on the ground.

Nothing else but a potted plant was taken.

Echevarria, who was booked for investigation of burglary, told investigators that he had burglarized homes in Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Westchester in recent years, Cleary said. Detectives found 28 panties in a bag in his closet at home, Cleary said.

"He says he usually steals about 50 a year," the lieutenant said.

Waitress' death may kill lawsuit against Rodman

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — A lawyer said Wednesday that the sudden death of a Las Vegas Hilton cocktail waitress could make moot her battery lawsuit against former NBA star Dennis Rodman.

Gloria Chapa, 62, was found dead at her Henderson home on Sunday, and an autopsy determined that she died of a heart attack, the Clark County Coroner's Office said.

Rodman's lawyer, Corey Eschweiler, said U.S. District Judge Philip Pro has scheduled a Feb. 4 hearing at which he could dismiss the case.

Chapa's lawyer, David Pancoast, told the Las Vegas Review-Journal that he may try to pursue Chapa's claim for her

estate. Pancoast could not be reached for comment on Wednesday.

Chapa's lawsuit, filed in July 1999, alleges that Rodman pinched and grabbed her breasts in June 1998 and that the hotel tolerated his behavior. She originally sought more than \$1 million in damages.

She was the fourth woman to make similar accusations against Rodman at the Hilton in 1998.

The case is scheduled to go to trial Feb. 25.

"This is an unfortunate situation," said Eschweiler, who offered condolences to Chapa's family.

Rodman's lawyer said Chapa's death may mean Rodman won't have a chance to clear his name and Chapa won't be able to tell her story in court.



Taliban financial backer shows up at U.S. base

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER
Associated Press Writer

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — U.S. investigators on Wednesday questioned a man who describes himself as a financial supporter of the Taliban and showed up voluntarily at the biggest U.S. base in Afghanistan offering information.

Pentagon officials said the man had given money to the Taliban but had not been a member of the Islamic regime that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. It was not known what information he has about the complex web of support of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network, which was sheltered by the Taliban.

Marine spokesman Lt. James Jarvis said the man showed up Tuesday at the Kandahar airport, where thousands of U.S. troops are based and a detention center holds hundreds of al-Qaida and Taliban fighters.

The man remained on the base Wednesday but was not being detained, Jarvis said. A Pentagon official said on condition of anonymity that he was not on the U.S. list of wanted men, but Jarvis said investigators were "jumping with joy."

At the Pentagon, Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the man was being questioned. But Myers would not give details on the man's identity or say how he came to the base.

U.S. officials initially said the man was an al-Qaida finance official but later Pentagon officials said he was a Taliban backer.

The nature of the man's purported donations were unclear. However, during the years the Taliban was in power, a major source of income for the Islamic militia purportedly came from kickbacks from big-time smugglers, including drug dealers, who were willing to pay in order to be allowed to continue their operations.

Also Wednesday, a Marine color guard saluted as a flag-draped coffin holding the

remains of the last of seven Marines killed in a crash a week ago was loaded onto a C-17 at Kandahar and flown to Germany en route to Dover Air Force Base. The crash of the refueling plane in Pakistan was the most deadly single incident for U.S. forces in the Afghanistan campaign.

The runway at Kandahar airport was darkened to prevent the C-17 from becoming a target for attackers.

The fourth planeload of detainees in less than a week left Kandahar on Wednesday for a U.S. Navy detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where they will be interrogated. There were 30 prisoners aboard the flight; bringing the total flown out to 110 and about 320 remaining at Kandahar.

Ahead of a planned visit to Afghanistan by Secretary of State Colin Powell, a U.S. congressional delegation met Afghan Prime Minister Hamid Karzai in the capital, Kabul, and pledged that American involvement in Afghanistan would not end with the winding down of the conflict.

"While our effort began as a war against terrorism, it continues now as an effort to rebuild this country," said Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, a Democrat from South Dakota and the delegation's leader.

But another top U.S. congressman said the United States won't take the lead in rebuilding Afghanistan and urged other countries to "step up to the plate" ahead of a Tokyo aid summit for the war-torn nation.

"We carried the bulk of the military load. We are not going to carry the bulk of the reconstruction load," Democratic Rep. Tom Lantos of California said in Tokyo.

The struggle to restore services in the capital took a step forward with the reopening of Kabul's international airport, which closed three months ago because of heavy bombing. The control tower is still a shattered hulk, and bomb

craters dot the taxiways, but a Boeing 727 belonging to the national carrier, Ariana Afghan Airlines, took off on a symbolic test flight, circling over the airport before landing again.

In another sign of Afghanistan's attempts to regain normalcy and good international relations, Karzai on Wednesday issued a decree prohibiting poppy production and the production and trafficking in narcotics, including opium and heroin.

Narcotics have been a major source of illicit income for Afghanistan, which produces much of the opium and heroin used in Europe and Karzai's administration has been under pressure to launch a full-scale crackdown against the trade.

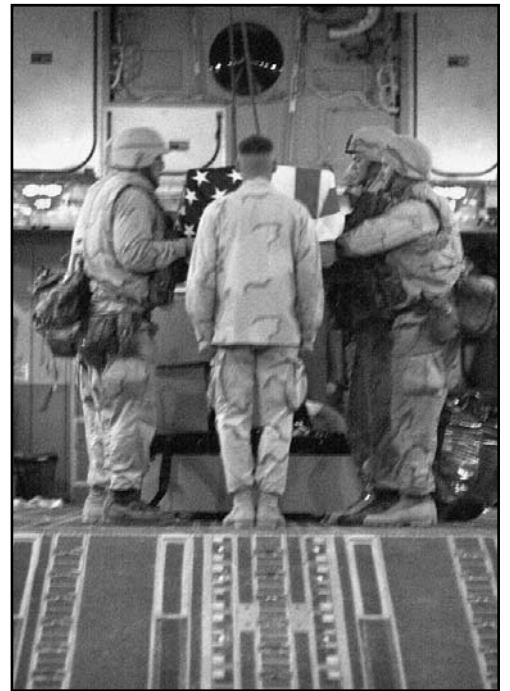
In October, the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics estimated the Taliban collected at least \$40 million from kickbacks and fees from the opium trade before the militia's leader Mullah Mohammed Omar banned poppy cultivation.

The U.N. refugee agency said Wednesday that authorities in neighboring Pakistan had let hundreds of vulnerable Afghan refugees move from a border area, but that thousands more remain blocked there.

Pakistan acted after "weeks of appeals," said the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. The agency was allowed to relocate 600 people from Chaman, near the border with Afghanistan, but UNHCR said more than 13,000 Afghans were stuck near Kili Faizo camp, close to Chaman.

In other developments:

— An official at the Yemeni Foreign Ministry said his government had received information that al-Qaida was considering an attack on the U.S. Embassy there. The official said the information came from interrogation of a senior al-Qaida figure now in U.S. custody. The U.S. Embassy in the Yemeni capital suspended most consular services



Marco Di Lauro/Associated Press

U.S. Marines transfer the flag-draped coffin holding the remains of the last of seven Marines killed in a crash a week ago onto a C-17 at Kandahar airport Wednesday. The remains were flown to Germany en route to Dover Air Force Base.

Monday, citing what it said were credible security threats.

— The State Department said it is looking into a report that a man was kidnapped during a humanitarian mission in Afghanistan and is being held by a tribal warlord for \$25,000 ransom. Amanda Bowers of Haven, Ala., said her husband, Clark, was kidnapped while on a private mission to deliver medical supplies and other humanitarian aid.

— A group of 92 German troops set off for Afghanistan, the second part of the country's contribution to the British-led stabilization force in Kabul. Ten Italian officers landed at the Bagram airport north of Kabul.

Shoe bomb passenger charged of being trained terrorist

BY DENISE LAVOIE
Associated Press Writer

BOSTON — The airline passenger accused of trying to ignite explosives in his shoes was indicted Wednesday on charges of being an al-Qaida-trained terrorist whose goal was to blow up the plane and kill the nearly 200 people aboard.

Richard Reid, a 28-year-old British citizen and convert to Islam, could get five life sentences if convicted.

The indictment, issued by a federal grand jury in Boston, alleges Reid attempted to kill the 197 passengers and crew aboard a Paris-to-Miami American Airlines flight Dec. 22 before he was tackled and the jetliner was diverted to Boston.

Reid did "attempt to use a weapon of mass destruction ... consisting of an explosive bomb placed in each of his shoes," the indictment said.

The indictment said Reid "received training from al-Qaida in Afghanistan."

In a statement, Tamar Birkhead, one of Reid's court-appointed attorneys, noted that her client is considered innocent until proven guilty. She added that "the indictment does not allege that any of the crimes charged were committed on behalf of or to further the cause of al-Qaida or any other terrorist organization. We are aware of no basis for such an allegation."

A U.S. official said Reid may be an al-Qaida target scout, an Israeli official said it was possible Reid was gathering intelligence for large-scale terrorist attacks in Tel Aviv and other cities. Both spoke on condition of anonymity.

Attorney General John Ashcroft said in Washington that the charges "alert us to a clear, unmistakable threat that al-Qaida could attack the United States again."

"The charges contained in the indictment are exceptionally serious and reflective of our intention to prosecute Richard Reid to the fullest extent of the law."

— MICHAEL J. SULLIVAN
U.S. attorney for Massachusetts

"We must be prepared. We must be ready. We must be vigilant," he said.

The charges against Reid include attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction, attempted murder and attempted destruction of an aircraft. He also was charged with attempted wrecking of a mass transportation vehicle, a new charge created by Congress in an anti-terrorism bill enacted in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Reid had been held since his arrest on the lesser charge of interfering with a flight crew.

"The charges contained in the indictment are exceptionally serious and reflective of our intention to prosecute Richard Reid to the fullest extent of the law," said Michael J. Sullivan, U.S. attorney for Massachusetts.

Ashcroft credited passengers and crew on that flight with stopping Reid from detonating the shoe bomb and bringing down the plane. He was overpowered by flight attendants and passengers as he allegedly tried to light a fuse protruding from his sneakers.

"Our trust in the common sense of people who act in the face of terrorism was vindicated," the attorney general said.

Reid converted to Islam while in prison for petty crimes. He later worshipped at the same London mosque as Zacarias Moussaoui, charged with conspiracy in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Reid's travels match those of an al-Qaida operative known as Abdul Ra'uff, which are listed in a computer obtained in Afghanistan by The Wall Street Journal. The similarities in the two's movements in Europe and the Middle East have led investigators to suspect they are the same person.

Reid boarded an El Al flight to Tel Aviv on July 7. He spent five days in Israel, before traveling to Egypt via the Rafah border crossing at the southern end of the Gaza Strip. From Egypt, Reid apparently returned to Europe on a commercial flight, Israeli reports said.

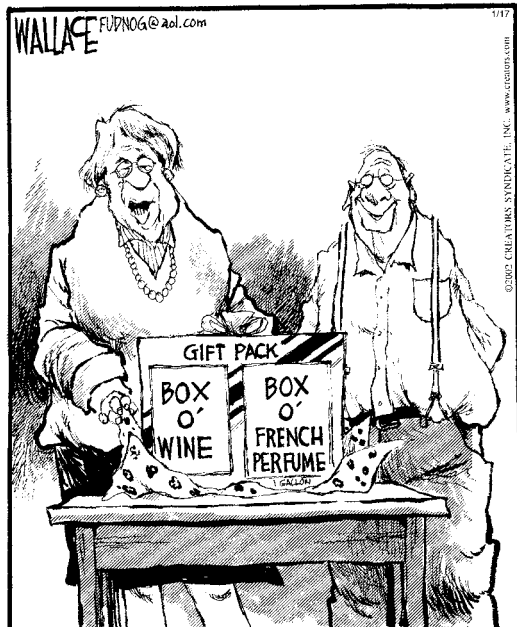
Earlier this week, a U.S. military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said one of the al-Qaida prisoners at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, had identified Reid as someone he had trained with at a camp run by al-Qaida.

COMICS

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"Ohhh, Ed! A Box o' Wine and Perfume gift box. You, uh ... shouldn't have."

edge city

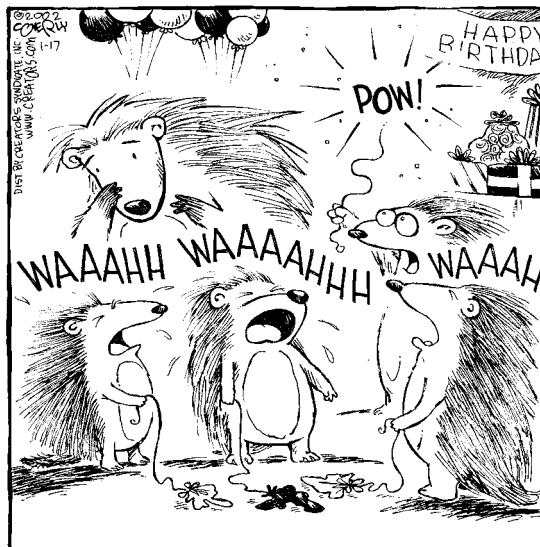
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P	A	N	A	M	A	A	B	E	L
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Yesterday's answer

ACROSS

- 1 Boxing moves
- 5 Setting items
- 10 Oscar, e.g.
- 12 Foolish
- 13 Out of style
- 14 Dike
- 15 Jackie's second
- 16 More spirited
- 18 Drink of the gods
- 20 Bullfight call
- 21 Trick takers, often
- 23 Went ahead
- 24 Buyer's proof: Abbr.
- 26 Corrosive stuff
- 28 Mermaid's home
- 29 Director Preminger
- 31 Sort
- 32 Imitated a pig
- 36 More intense
- 39 Corn unit
- 40 Conical home
- 41 Thrill
- 43 Steer clear of

44 Trig

- functions
- 45 Tears
- 46 Bits of wordplay

DOWN

- 1 "Shogun" setting
- 2 Not oblivious
- 3 Funda-mental
- 4 Fourth-yr. students
- 5 Computer document
- 6 Rare bird
- 7 Trattoria order
- 8 Prepared to propose
- 9 Fume
- 11 Real
- 17 Fury
- 19 Spigot
- 22 Swift stories
- 24 Fill in for
- 25 Baking item
- 27 Dupe
- 28 Flour worker
- 30 Low digit
- 33 Reeves of film
- 34 Consumed
- 35 Attire
- 37 Funny Foxx
- 38 Middling grades
- 42 Sassiness

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36			37	38				39	
40					41	42			
43					44				
45							46		

1-17

STUMPED?

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Man dies after woman sits on him

- Firefighters in Argo, Ala., found a well-preserved (but dead) 6-foot-long brown shark lying on the side of Micklewright Road just off U.S. 11 and disposed of it after no one called to claim it.
- A 53-year-old man was hospitalized after two of the four homemade bombs he was carrying around in case he got mugged exploded (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.).
- A fired postal worker pleaded guilty to splattering former colleagues with a mixture of worms and porcupine feces in a vengeful return visit to the workplace (Grand Rapids, Mich.).
- A large woman was convicted of involuntary manslaughter after the 49-year-old man she was sitting on (attempting to persuade him to pay for the sex act he had allegedly purchased from her) died (Peoria, Ill.).

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BACK PAGE
ODDS & ENDS

Town forgets to hold election

By The Associated Press

BRINSON, Ga. — This tiny town in southwestern Georgia has just one full-time employee, so it's understandable when something slips through the cracks — like an election.

Brinson was supposed to elect two town council members last November, but officials mistakenly thought the terms expired later this year. Now there's no one to replace the outgoing members.

"Our faces are red, but it was an honest mistake," said Sharon Foulk, clerk for the town of 225. "We are very, very small. We're just doing the best we can in a small town."

Foulk said a combination of factors led to the missed election: a 1997 change of the town charter that staggered the council terms, the death of a council member that led to a special election, and an ad published in a local newspaper with the wrong dates.

Town attorney Paul Fryer got a court order authorizing a special election, to take place on March 19. The order also allows the two outgoing councilmen to stay on the job until then.

It's not the first time a town in this part of the state has forgotten about an election — it happened in 1997 in Baconton, about 60 miles away.

Rat has no room in millionaire's life

By The Associated Press

EVERETT, Wash. — Among the top priorities for Washington state's newest millionaire: Get rid of the rat-infested car.

Donna McCoy hasn't gotten around to disposing of a rat she exterminated in her car, but now that she's won \$2.2 million in the Washington State Lottery, she's planning to get a whole new set of wheels.

McCoy, 39, a single mother working two jobs, also plans to buy her church a new building with the Lotto winnings she received Tuesday.

Rather than 25 annual payments totaling \$6 million, she chose to take a lump-sum payment of \$2.2 million, after taxes.

"My whole life, I thought I would some day come into money. I just knew it," McCoy told The Herald of Everett, "and now it really happened."

She said a rat set up housekeeping in her old Subaru and she couldn't get it to leave, so she poisoned it but hadn't gotten around to removing the carcass.

"I'm a millionaire, and I'm getting into a car with a dead rat," McCoy said.

Besides a new car, McCoy plans to buy a new house.

"The other night I was asking God for \$10,000 to make my house payments and saying to him, 'It's not a big deal for you, but for me it's huge,'" she said, "and this is what God gives me — not \$10,000 but \$6 million."

PR twist on president's pretzel problem

By The Associated Press

BLUFFTON, Ind. — An Indiana pretzel maker is putting a positive twist on President Bush's pretzel-induced fainting spell, seeing it as a product endorsement of sorts.

"Well, we're happy that the president likes pretzels," said Bill Huggins, a spokesman for Bluffton-based Pretzels Inc., whose pretzels are distributed under several brand names.

Bush fainted briefly while watching football on television in the White House residence Sunday, an attack apparently brought on by a drop in heart rate during a coughing spell caused by choking on a pretzel.

The Alexandria, Va.-based Snack Food Association sees a silver lining in the president's pretzel plight.

"First, let me say that we're grateful that the president is all right," spokeswoman Ann Wilkes said. "But we're also glad to know that he enjoys savory snacks."

The association is fielding so many journalists' inquiries that a receptionist responded to a call Monday from The News-Sentinel of Fort Wayne by saying, "Is this about a pretzel?"

A detector to detect the detector

By The Associated Press

MESQUITE, Texas — First there was radar. Then came radar detectors. And now, radar detector detectors.

The Texas Department of Public Safety announced Tuesday that it is equipping some troopers with the devices. The troopers will focus on ticketing truck drivers for traveling with a radar detector.

"It's a game, that's what it is," said truck driver Joe Fiorello, 32, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., at a truck stop in this east Dallas suburb. "They get radar, we get a radar detector. They upgrade theirs, we upgrade ours."

Federal law prohibits commercial vehicles from using radar detectors.

Grant money from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration helped pay for the 101 new radar detector detectors, which cost about \$1,500 each. Forty-three more could be purchased by June, said Col. Thomas Davis Jr., director of the Department of Public Safety.

"Because of their vehicle's sheer mass, truck drivers have a special responsibility to drive safely. Hopefully, this additional enforcement tool will make them think twice about violating the speed limit," Davis said.

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