DOD's Absentee Voting Week urges troops to cast ballots Page 4

STARS AND STRIPES®

Guardsmen adapt to unfamiliar roles in Iraq

Page 4

Lawsuit planned over military policy on gays

Page 5

Astros' Carlos Beltran, left, and Lance Berkman

Win over Braves launches Astros into NLCS

Back page

Volume 2, No. 186 © EPSS 2004 MIDEAST EDITION WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2004

Bush, Kerry trade barbs ahead of final debate

New national poll finds candidates in dead heat

Page 6

AP photos

U.S. targets Sunni strongholds in Fallujah, Ramadi

Page 3

Above: Residents try to extinguish a fire in the center of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, early Tuesday morning following a U.S. airstrike. A U.S. warplane destroyed a popular restaurant that was reportedly a meeting place for members of the Tawhid and Jihad terror network, led by Jordanian-born extremist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Left: Iraqis clean up debris in a Ramadi mosque. U.S. troops raided seven mosques in and outside Ramadi suspected of harboring terrorists, storing illegal weapons caches, promoting violence and encouraging insurgent recruitment, the U.S. command said.

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STARS AND STRIPES
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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Russia's terror fight: President Vladimir Putin appointed a former security service officer and diplomat to be his envoy dealing with the fight against terrorism and trans-border crime, the Interfax news agency reported.

Putin named as his anti-terrorism envoy Anatoly Safonov, who served in both the Soviet-era KGB and its successor, the Federal Security Service, where he rose to be first deputy director. He also served as a deputy foreign minister beginning in 2001.

Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov, meanwhile, announced that the government would devote $103 million this year to urgent anti-terrorism measures, Interfax said.

N. Korea nuke talks: A senior U.S. diplomat on Tuesday accused North Korea of deliberately stalling six-nation negotiations aimed at getting Pyongyang to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs, as he met Japanese diplomats in an effort to find a breakthrough in the talks.

The United States, North and South Korea, Japan, China and Russia have met for three rounds of six-nation talks, but little progress has been made. A fourth round slated for September never took place because the North refused to attend.

"Unfortunately, I don't have a good crystal ball regarding North Korea," U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said in Tokyo. "But it appears that since we've only got 22 days until our election, the North Koreans don't have much interest in holding talks before then. I think this is a miscalculation on their part."

Milosevic trial: The defense of Slobodan Milosevic resumed Tuesday, even as an appeals panel of the U.N. war crimes tribunal considered the former Yugoslav president's request to fire his court-appointed lawyer and let him represent himself again.

Milosevic

Defense counsel Steven Kay questioned a German journalist who testified that the Kosovo Liberation Army, or KLA, provoked Serb forces into excessive responses during fighting in the late 1990s.

Milosevic mostly sat quietly on the defendant's bench. At one point, he again asked the judges to let him lead his own defense, but was quickly silenced by Presiding Judge Patrick Robinson.

Later, he angrily accused the witness of "distorting" events, but Robinson again cut him off.

Philippines ferry attack: A Muslim militant accused of planting a bomb that killed more than 100 people on a Philippine ferry wanted an even bigger blast but couldn't fit more explosives into the TV set that he used, a key witness has told investigators.

After initially downplaying the possibility of a terrorist attack, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on Monday linked the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group to the Feb. 27 explosion and fire that gutted the Superferry 14.

Among those charged with multiple counts of murder are Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khaddafy Janjalani and alleged bomber Habil Dellosa. Janjalani remains at large, while Dellosa was arrested in March.

Haitian riots: Gunfire crackled around Haiti's capital as hundreds of mourners gathered to bury five police officers killed in a week of violence pitting supporters of the U.S.-backed government and ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Diana memorial closure: The Princess Diana memorial fountain in London's Hyde Park is to close again within the next few weeks to replace grass that has become worn out and sodden with water splashed from the fountain. Workers also will install steel bars below bridges over the fountain to prevent children from climbing under and becoming trapped.

Photographs of three officers who were beheaded sat beside their cremated remains in a police academy where the funerals were held Monday, while the open caskets of two others shot to death were prepared for burial as mourners sang hymns.

States

WTC insurance trial: World Trade Center leaseholder Larry Silverstein suffered a financial blow earlier this year when a federal jury ruled that for insurance purposes, the planes hitting the twin towers on Sept. 11, 2001, constituted one event — not two.

His lawyers were hoping that in the second round of the legal battle, a jury could be convinced otherwise. Jury selection was scheduled to begin Tuesday.

Silverstein argued in the first trial, which ended in May, that he should receive $7 billion, or twice the $3.5 billion insurance policy on the trade center. That trial focused on whether 13 insurers that provided the bulk of the trade center's coverage were bound by a brokers contract.

In the second phase, involving nine insurers, Silverstein stands to collect $1.1 billion more if his lawyers are successful in arguing the attack was two events. Opening statements are scheduled to begin next Monday.

Tour bus crash: A federal investigator said the driver of a tour bus involved in a deadly crash apparently had been driving all night without backup.

"We need to look at hours of service," said National Transportation Safety Board investigator Gary Van Etten. "What he did during the daytime hours would be of great interest to us so we could evaluate any possible fatigue that he might have had."

The crash Saturday along Interstate 55 north of Marion, Arkansas, killed driver Herbert Walters and 13 Chicago-area passengers on their semiannual trek to a Tunica, Mississippi, casino. The wreck occurred just before dawn, in a light mist, when the bus failed to follow a left-hand curve, left the roadway and flipped.

Sex toy arrest: The case against an adult novelty store employee accused of displaying sex toys was dismissed on Monday by an El Paso County Criminal Court judge.

Judge Alma Trejo granted a defense motion to dismiss the case against Sergio Acosta, manager of Tres Equis in El Paso, Texas. A spokesman for the El Paso County District Attorney's Office said the ruling will be appealed.

Acosta was arrested on Sept. 25 as part of an El Paso Police Department sting operation after he had allegedly displayed and described the use of a sex toy to a female police officer. The ruling could be the first step in a challenge of a state law prohibiting the sale or display of such items.

Mount St. Helens volcano: More steam rose Tuesday from the blistering hot lava dome growing in the crater of Mount St. Helens as geologists kept up their close watch on the Washington volcano.

Thermal imaging showed part of a bulge on the south side of the dome-shaped rock formation had heated to 932 to 1,112 degrees Fahrenheit, scientists said. The surface of that part of the dome also appeared to be broken up.

Although there's little chance of a large eruption like the May 18, 1980, blast that killed 57 people, scientists said the most likely scenario is a far less spectacular eruption that could spread a few inches of gritty volcanic ash up to 10 miles from the crater.

Brain damaged woman: The husband of a severely brain-damaged woman at the center of a bitter right-to-die dispute asked the Florida Supreme Court on Monday to reject Gov. Jeb Bush's effort to seek another hearing on a law designed to keep her alive.

Florida's high court unanimously ruled last month that Bush and state lawmakers overstepped their authority with a law ordering the reinsertion of a feeding tube that helped keep Terri Schiavo alive.

Bush then asked for a rehearing.

"The governor's motion represents simply another attempt to delay effectuation of Mrs. Schiavo's right to decide her own medical treatment," according to the filing by George Felos, an attorney for Schiavo's husband, Michael.

Gay marriage: The U.S. Capitol at their backs, supporters of gay marriage pleaded, demanded and sang out for equal rights Monday, hoping they will succeed in the long term but mindful of the hostile political environment they face today.

Opponents of gay marriage, led by President George W. Bush, are trying to amend the U.S. Constitution to outlaw gay and lesbian marriages. Voters in 11 states will consider such amendments to state constitutions in November, and most, if not all, are expected to pass. Even many politicians friendly to gay rights say they oppose same-sex marriage.

Washington was the final stop for the eight-day bus tour, organized by Marriage Equality California, that traveled from Oakland, California, stopping in 10 cities along the way.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

Iraqi forces, backed by U.S., raid mosques

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — U.S. forces stepped up operations Tuesday across a wide swath of the Sunni insurgent strongholds northwest of the capital, pounding targets in two cities from the air and supporting Iraqi troops in raids on mosques suspected of harboring insurgents.

The increased military activity coincided with the approach of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan and appeared intended to avoid a repeat of the upsurge in rebel attacks that took place last year.

U.S. warplanes struck twice early Tuesday in insurgent-held Fallujah, destroying a popular restaurant and a house which the U.S. command said were used by members of Iraq's most feared terrorist organization. At least five people were killed and two wounded, the city hospital said.

More air strikes were reported in Hit, where the city hospital received two bodies. U.S. officials had no immediate comment on the reported strike.

Between 15 and 20 people were reported killed in an attack on an Iraqi National Guard outpost near the Syrian border. Residents claimed an American plane fired on the compound, but the U.S. Marines said insurgents staged the attack.

A 12:01 a.m. blast flattened the Haj Hussein restaurant in Fallujah as well as nearby shops, residents said. The restaurant was closed, but two night guards were killed said Dr. Ahmed Thaer of Fallujah General Hospital.

The U.S. military command in Baghdad made no mention of the restaurant but said the target was used as a meeting place for the Tawhid and Jihad terror network, led by Jordanian-born extremist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

The second blast occurred at 4:02 a.m. and flattened a building in northeastern Fallujah which the military said was a known terrorist safehouse. Intelligence sources confirmed that al-Zarqawi associates were using the building at the time of the strike, a military statement said.

At least three people were killed and two wounded in that blast, Thaer said.

Residents reported hearing more explosions Tuesday evening on the eastern side of the city.

Al-Zarqawi's network has claimed responsibility for numerous car bombings, kidnappings and beheadings of foreign hostages.

Tuesday's strikes were the first in four days. The Iraqi government has reported progress in negotiations to restore control over the city 40 miles west of Baghdad.

American warplanes and helicopters struck in two parts of Hit on Tuesday morning, killing two people and injuring five, the hospital said. Residents went to the town hall to demand local authorities negotiate a cease-fire. The military had no immediate information on the incident.

The previous day, U.S. aircraft attacked a town mosque and set it on fire after insurgents hiding in the shrine opened fire on American Marines, the U.S. military said. Sporadic clashes continued through the night, killing at least two Iraqis and wounding 15, according to Hit General Hospital.

The Iraqi National Guard outpost east of Qaim was attacked in the early hours of the morning. Residents said U.S. warplanes were in action over the area, but the U.S. Marines said there were no American operations there and insurgents staged the attack.

Between 15 and 20 people were killed in the attack, according to Hamid Ahmed Ali, a city hospital official.

The Marines sent a team to the National Guard outpost to assess the situation and see whether any assistance was needed.

Later Tuesday morning, a Marine patrol took fire, but there were no American casualties, they said. No further details were provided.

In nearby Ramadi, Iraqi forces backed by U.S. soldiers and Marines raided seven mosques in suspected of harboring terrorists, storing illegal weapons caches, promoting violence and encouraging insurgent recruitment, the U.S. command said.

Sheikh Abdul-Aleim Saadi, the provincial leader of the influential Association of Muslim Scholars, was detained at Mohammed Aref Mosque, his relatives and followers said.

Angry residents accused Americans of breaking down doors and violating the sanctity of city mosques.

The 1st Marine Division said the raids followed a pattern of insurgent activity in and around Ramadi mosques in recent weeks.

The city 70 miles west of Baghdad has seen fierce clashes between U.S. and insurgent forces in recent days.

"The 1st Marine Division respects the religious and cultural significance represented by mosques," it said in a statement.

"However, when insurgents violate the sanctity of the mosque by using the structure for military purposes, the site loses its protective status."

AP

Iraqi security forces carry weapons turned in by militia loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al Sadr in the Sadr City neighborhood of Baghdad on Monday. Militia members began turning in weapons and ammunition as part of a deal with the Iraqi government to end the violence between insurgents and U.S. forces in Sadr City.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, 1,064 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to the Defense Department. Of those, 809 died as a result of hostile action and 255 died of nonhostile causes. The figures include three military civilians. There was no update over the holiday weekend.

The British military has reported 67 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, six; Ukraine, eight; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; the Netherlands, two; and Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 926 U.S. military members have died — 700 as a result of hostile action and 226 of nonhostile causes, according to the military's numbers as of Friday.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ Two soldiers were killed Monday in a rocket attack in Baghdad.

■ A soldier was killed Monday when a car bomb detonated near a convoy in Mosul, Iraq.

■ A Marine was killed Saturday in Anbar province, Iraq.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Pvt. Jeungjin Na Kim, 23, Honolulu; killed Wednesday in Ramadi, Iraq, when his patrol was attacked; assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Hovey, South Korea.

■ Army Pfc. James E. Prevete, 22, Whitestone, N.Y.; killed Sunday in Habbaniya, Iraq, in a vehicle accident; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, Camp Greaves, South Korea.

■ Army Pvt. Carson J. Ramsey, 22, Winkelman, Ariz.; killed Sunday when a car bomb exploded in Baghdad, Iraq; assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

NATO considers how to raise forces faster

BY PAUL AMES
The Associated Press

POIANA BRASOV, Romania — Struggling to muster more troops for Afghanistan and take on an expanded training mission in Iraq, NATO defense ministers will aim this week to advance reforms that would let the alliance mobilize faster for far-flung operations.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld is expected to take a lead in urging more speed, particularly to get extra European troops into Afghanistan. He will huddle Wednesday and Thursday with the other ministers for NATO's first meeting in one of the seven eastern European nations that joined the alliance in April.

"NATO, in our view needs to move faster, with a greater degree of commitment and political will to help the Afghan government," Nicholas Burns, the U.S. ambassador to NATO said ahead of the meeting at alliance headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

Before flying by helicopter to the NATO meeting site, Rumsfeld met with Romanian government leaders in Bucharest. At a news conference there, he deflected a reporter's question on whether NATO would get military trainers to Iraq in time to make a difference in providing security for the elections.

"Whatever they do will be helpful," he said.

After much prodding, NATO allies reinforced their peacekeeping mission from 6,500 troops to over 9,000 for the Afghan elections held at the weekend. Ministers in this Transylvanian resort are expected to express satisfaction with NATO' role in ensuring the election was largely peaceful.

Despite that temporary deployment, the alliance is slipping behind with plans to expand its longer term peacekeeping operation from its bases in the Afghan capital, Kabul, and five northern cities, and into the troubled western provinces.

Ministers also will examine the lessons of the presidential elections, in preparation for a follow-up mission for parliamentary polls scheduled for the early next year.

Washington wants to discuss an eventual integration of the NATO peacekeepers with the larger U.S.-led combat force in Afghanistan, but acknowledges substantive debate on that is likely only next year.

On Iraq, the 26 allies agreed last week on the outline of plans to send about 300 instructors — and up to 10 times more guards and support staff — to help train the Iraqi armed forces.

Alliance military experts aim to finalize the plans within two weeks, but U.S. officials have expressed concern that the mission won't be fully up and running by next year and are pushing for the allies to move faster.

Looking further ahead, the ministers will review plans to the prevent shortfalls and delays that have dogged the Afghan mission in any future operations now that the alliance has shifted its focus well beyond the defense of Europe from Soviet attack.

Pentagon urges troops overseas to vote absentee

From wire reports

As part of a top-level policy aimed at getting active servicemembers to the polls, the Pentagon has designated this week, Oct. 11-15, as "Absentee Voting Week." Every military unit has been assigned a "voting assistance officer" to help would-be military voters in the process.

Demand for overseas absentee ballots is up more than 60 percent from the last presidential election, according to the Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program. While it's not known how much of that increase is for military personnel, the election is a hot topic in the bases and on the front.

"We've had discussions about it on shift, on post, all the time — fairly heated discussions," said Ben Therriault, 22, an Air Force Senior Airman in Sacramento, Calif. "We're not supposed to do that, but it's definitely happening."

All told, there are 2.3 million members of the active and reserve armed services, and they vote — 69 percent participated in the 2000 election, according to Defense Department numbers, compared with 51 percent of the overall eligible population.

Significant numbers of uniformed voters are registered in swing states such as Florida, which has more than 159,000 people in military service.

That's a large enough number to decide an election, as in 2000, when absentee military voters helped George W. Bush win a recount in Florida that was marked by Republican charges that the Democrats were trying to keep out military ballots, a charge the Democrats denied.

With a push from Congress, the Pentagon is going to great lengths to ensure that U.S. servicemembers can vote this year, wherever they are. And with foreign policy, the Iraq war and terrorism among the top campaign issues, more fighting men and women are expected to have their say in who will be commander in chief.

But whether a significant number of military votes will go uncounted, as they did in Florida in the 2000 election, remains an open question.

That's because despite the Pentagon's effort to inform troops about how to vote, the military remains hitched to a cumbersome, mostly paper-based system for voting across the globe.

Plans for all-electronic, Internet-based voting were scrapped earlier this year because of security concerns, and the Defense Department has scrambled to assemble a system for expanded balloting by fax and e-mail.

But not all states have signed onto all parts of the plan, leaving a complex mishmash of electoral regulations, procedures and deadlines outlined in a 379-page voter assistance guide for military personnel.

Eighteen states missed a deadline recommended by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to mail overseas absentee ballots at least 45 days before the election.

The delays result from late primaries, disputes over whether candidate Ralph Nader should be on the ballot and fights over initiatives such as a same-sex marriage ban.

That has put even more pressure on military voters to cast ballots quickly to ensure they arrive in time to be counted.

The supervisor of the voter registration process in Iraq says all but a few dozen of the more than 134,000 troops stationed there have been handed absentee ballot applications.

"We had a goal of 100 percent contact," said Army Capt. Ken DeCelle of Alameda, Calif. "We got to 99.98 percent."

"People are more confident that their vote will count this time," he said. "Everybody is so worried about what happened in 2000, that if there is the smallest hint of something going bad, they squash it immediately."

But whether a soldier mails in a ballot application, receives a ballot, fills it in correctly and sends it to the right place with a timely postmark is something beyond DeCelle's control. "We do not take it to the mailbox for them," he said.

Ballots that do make it to the mailbox probably will have a relatively quick trip home. Within the Military Postal Service Agency, ballots have priority for overseas shipment, according to Assistant Deputy Director Mark DeDomenic. "If any mail moves, this stuff will move first," he said.

On the domestic side, the U.S. Postal Service has promised to ship outgoing and incoming ballots via overnight mail between military overseas shipping stations in New York, San Francisco and Miami and more than 5,700 local elections boards, spokesman Jim Quirk said.

Republicans predict that their traditional advantage among military voters will hold for a candidate who has declared himself a war president. Democrats see the casualties and hardships of Iraq turning average enlisted troops, and even some junior officers, against Bush.

The Chicago Tribune and San Francisco Chronicle contributed to this story.

JULIANA GITTLER/Stars and Stripes

Spc. Orlando Mendez, with the 1st Battalion, 185th Armored Regiment of the California National Guard, talks to locals last week during a patrol stop in Ash-Shumali near Camp Scania, Iraq. His normal Army job, a tank loader, didn't prepare him to be a local cop. Estimates are that one in 10 Guard members are in jobs they weren't originally trained for, many from armor and artillery units.

California guardsmen fill shortage of police officers on streets of Iraq

BY JULIANA GITTLER
Stars and Stripes

CONVOY SUPPORT CENTER SCANIA, Iraq — Spc. Orlando Mendez was trained as a tank loader for the 1st Battalion, 185th Armored Regiment of the California National Guard.

On a dusty road in southern Iraq, the Anaheim, Calif., resident instead sits behind the wheel of a much smaller Humvee with his M-16 rifle and eyes on the horizon.

"I call this the mini M1 [Abrams tank]," he said, nodding toward the Humvee.

Mendez, like several thousand other guardsmen in Iraq, is doing a job outside his military occupational specialty, military-speak for job classification.

He is serving a military police role, patrolling the streets in a town 100 miles south of Baghdad.

"I wasn't surprised," he said of his job change. "I don't think there's too much for the M1 out here to do."

Across the guard, soldiers are being tapped for high-demand jobs such as military police and civil affairs to fill Army shortages. As of Oct. 6, there are 173,000 National Guard and Reserve members on active duty, according to the Department of Defense.

The National Guard Bureau reports that more than 4,000 guardsmen are being trained to do policing. They are often taken from combat units such as artillery and armor.

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, the bureau's chief, told reporters earlier this year that an estimated one in 10 guardsmen is deployed in a job not part of his original training.

Capt. Gary Bonanno turned the 1-185th headquarters company he commands into an infantry unit in charge of policing.

"A lot of it is a whole new mind-set," he said. "Instead of assaulting a village, we go out and shake hands and meet people."

For soldiers, not doing their trained mission can be a letdown. It's also hard to get a fine-tuned squad to learn a new skill as a team.

"You train for 10 to 15 years doing one thing and you're here in combat doing another thing. Certainly it affects some people," said Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Hines, with the 1-185th.

> *"You train for 10 to 15 years doing one thing and you're here in combat doing another thing. Certainly it affects some people."*
>
> **Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Hines**
> 1st Battalion, 185th Armored Regiment of the California National Guard

All soldiers have the basic skills necessary for most jobs, he adds: shooting, moving and communicating.

At a remote relay point along the road to Baghdad, artillerymen from the South Carolina National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 178th Field Artillery forgo launching rockets to monitor radios for convoys in trouble.

They use communications in artillery, so the job is not a big stretch.

"We're used to running radios," said Spc. Rodney Hammett, a fire direct launcher. It's just not as much fun as firing rockets, he adds.

Members say the guard is uniquely qualified for the adaptation. Guardsmen have less time to train and so learn quickly, Bonanno said.

They're also older. The average age in the 1-185th is at least 30, which provides a level of maturity and flexibility a younger soldier might not yet possess.

"Age gives us the patience to handle certain situations without having to manhandle everything," Hines said.

Guardsmen also have civilian backgrounds to draw on. Staff Sgt. Michael Lattus, a former county sheriff's deputy, can impart skills to the new military police soldiers working with him in the 1-185th.

Spc. Justin Smith, an infantryman fresh from boot camp, helped the artillerymen from the 3-178th relearn crew-served weapons when he was attached to the unit.

"We're in Iraq. We're prepared for anything," he said.

It's too early to tell whether the change is taking a toll on retention. Some guardsmen think that a medic, for example, who spent the war in a guard tower might not want to stay in. Others say they like the diversion, but know they soon will return to their normal military functions.

"My guys aren't mad they're not rolling around in launchers," said Capt. Randall Burch with the 3-178th. "I don't think that affects retention."

Soldiers might miss their old jobs but the new jobs feature their own rewards, they said.

"I'm not getting on a tank, so why not do something I enjoy?" said Capt. Scott Moreland, currently working on civil-military operations with the 1-185th. "I have a real feeling of accomplishment here."

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Republican group to sue over DOD policy on gays

BY GENARO C. ARMAS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A pro-gay Republican group plans to file a lawsuit asking a federal court to overturn the U.S. government's "don't ask, don't tell" policy covering gays in the military.

Leaders of the Log Cabin Republicans said the suit would be filed Tuesday in federal district court in Los Angeles. The "don't ask, don't tell" policy, put into place in 1993 during former President Bill Clinton's administration, allows gays and lesbians to serve so long as they do not disclose their sexual orientation and do not engage in homosexual acts.

The group's attorney, Marty Meekins, denied there were political motivations behind the announcement, which came a day before a debate over domestic issues between President Bush and Democratic challenger Sen. John Kerry, and three weeks before the presidential election.

The Pentagon under Bush has maintained the policy, while Kerry has said he would let gays serve openly in the military.

Log Cabin members serving in the military asked the group's leaders over the past four months to take legal action, Meekins said Tuesday. They did not come forward because of a specific incident, but simply because "of fear of the military finding out their sexual orientation if they are gay and lesbian," he said.

"This case is fundamentally about correcting a misguided governmental policy based on prejudice toward gay and lesbian Americans," he added.

The lawsuit against the government and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld would have been filed sooner had the group and its lawyers been prepared, Meekins said.

"The decision to file the lawsuit doesn't have anything to do with any election," said Log Cabin political director Christopher Barron. "We are a nation fighting a war on terror and we need a policy that protects our national security."

While it's not the first challenge of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, Log Cabin officials say they are encouraged by a historic Supreme Court decision in 2003 that struck down a Texas law that made homosexual sex a crime.

The court, in the ruling, said that what gay men and women do in the privacy of their bedrooms is their business and not the domain of government.

> *"This case is fundamentally about correcting a misguided governmental policy based on prejudice toward gay and lesbian Americans."*
>
> **Marty Meekins**
> Log Cabin Republicans' lawyer

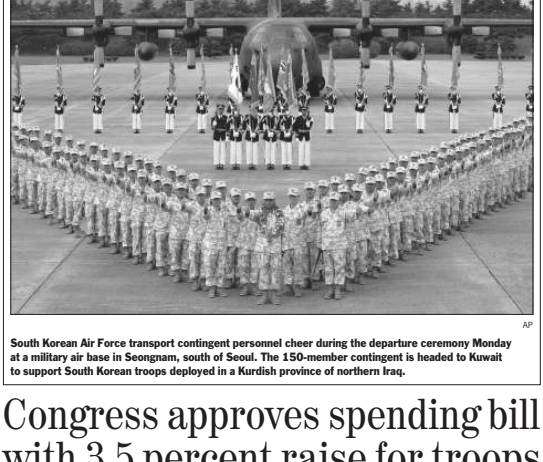
In response to the Log Cabin suit, Pentagon spokeswoman Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke said in a statement that the military implemented "don't ask, don't tell" because of a federal law that "would need to be changed to affect the department's policy."

Log Cabin backed Bush in 2000 but has withheld an endorsement this year, saying the president was disloyal to the 1 million gays and lesbians who voted for him four years ago because he supported a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage.

A report earlier this year from the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network found that 787 gays and lesbians were dismissed from the military over "don't ask, don't tell" in 2003, down 39 percent from 2001. The advocacy group said the decline was due mainly to U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The military has discharged nearly 10,000 people for violations of the policy since it first took effect, according to that report.

South Korean troops heading to Kuwait



AP

South Korean Air Force transport contingent personnel cheer during the departure ceremony Monday at a military air base in Seongnam, south of Seoul. The 150-member contingent is headed to Kuwait to support South Korean troops deployed in a Kurdish province of northern Iraq.

Congress approves spending bill with 3.5 percent raise for troops

BY LISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Democrats and Republicans came together over the weekend to iron out their differences over the National Defense Authorization Bill, resulting in a $445.6 billion piece of legislation that will now go to President Bush for signing.

The bill includes an across-the-board 3.5 percent pay raise for all men and women in uniform, rather than the targeted raises suggested by Pentagon officials.

And worried about servicemembers stretched thin by repeated deployments in Iraq and elsewhere, Congress also boosted the Army's end strength by 20,000 and the Marine Corps' by 3,000 by the end of October 2005, the end of the government's fiscal year.

Other key provisions include:

- Making permanent the increased rate for imminent danger pay from $150 to $225 per month.
- Making permanent the increased rate for family separation allowance from $100 to $250 per month.
- Extending several special pays and bonuses for active-duty members and reservists.
- Elimination of out-of-pocket housing expenses.
- $10 billion for military construction and housing.
- Enhanced Tricare benefits for reservists and family members.
- Six months of coverage made permanent for all personnel separating from active duty.
- Elimination of Social Security offsets to the Survivor Benefit Plan, a decades-old law that reduces benefits under the military's Survivor Benefit Plan by one-third for military widows after they attain age 62.
- More than $2 billion for force protection measures, including armor, munitions, communications and surveillance programs.
- The legislation contains provisions to eliminate procurement obstacles and field commercially available technology as quickly as possible — the goal is no more than 15 days from a combatant commander's request to the contract award.
- An increase of $572 million to produce up-armored Humvees at a rate of 450 per month.
- An additional $100 million for Vehicle Add-On Armor Kits.
- An additional $40.8 million for night-vision rifle sights.
- Authorizes $8.9 million for the Advanced Mine Detector, a lightweight, handheld, ground-penetrating radar.
- A provision that will reimburse families who purchased body armor for servicemembers not issued the equipment during combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Authorizes a multiyear procurement of 100 new aerial refueling tankers, replacing an Air Force leasing deal with Boeing that has caused enormous controversy both within the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill.
- Requires a Stabilization Strategy on Iraq — President Bush must produce a report on his strategy for stabilizing Iraq, including his strategy for standing up professional Iraqi security forces.

The legislation sets policies, programs and funding levels for the nation's military, as well as the national security programs of the Department of Energy.

When Bush will sign the document into law has yet to be determined, White House spokeswoman Maria Tamburri said Tuesday.

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgessl@stripes.osd.mil

Senate OKs tax relief for employers of guardsmen, reservists

BY SANDRA JONTZ
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — A congressional amendment that would offer tax relief to small companies that continue to pay employees who also are National Guard members and reservists was removed from one congressional bill and added to another as lawmakers jockeyed to keep the measure alive.

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., struck a deal with Republican lawmakers over the holiday weekend that they would sponsor her amendment, now affixed to another bill, in exchange for her promise not to filibuster a $136 billion package that cuts taxes for businesses.

The Guard and Reserve Pay Protection amendment, estimated to cost about $2.5 billion over 10 years, would give a 50 percent tax credit to employers who pay up to $30,000 in lost wages for those employees who take a pay cut when activated.

Senators voted in favor of the measure as part of HR 1779, the Guard and Reserve Finance Relief Act. which already has passed the House of Representatives, and now must return there because it was altered.

HR 1779 would allow activated guard members and reservists to access their IRA funds early without having to pay penalties.

Landrieu wants to have the measure worked in the House's November lame duck session; however, it might not be acted on until a new Congress is seated in January, said Christin Tinsworth, a spokeswoman at the House Ways and Means Committee.

"I simply don't know. When this came up, the House had completed all its business for the foreseeable future," she said.

The proposed measures are available at: http://thomas.loc.gov
E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontzs@stripes.osd.mil

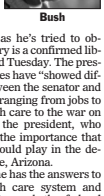
IN THE STATES

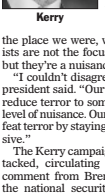
Bush, Kerry trade barbs in run-up to final debate

BY PETE YOST
The Associated Press

DENVER — In a last-minute flurry of accusations before their final debate, President Bush told supporters that Democratic challenger Sen. John Kerry cannot pay for his proposed domestic programs without a tax increase. Kerry, meanwhile, tried to tie Bush to record oil prices.

Bush campaigned Tuesday in the conservative heart of Colorado.


Bush


Kerry

Kerry had no public appearances planned Tuesday, using the day to prepare for the candidates' final debate on Wednesday in Arizona.

"As much as he's tried to obscure it," Kerry is a confirmed liberal, Bush said Tuesday. The presidential debates have "showed differences between the senator and me on issues ranging from jobs to taxes to health care to the war on terror," said the president, who underscored the importance that health care could play in the debate in Tempe, Arizona.

Bush said he has the answers to fix the health care system and that he won't wreck the federal budget in doing so.

He stressed the need for growth of community health centers to serve the poor and said the newly enacted legislation to revamp Medicare is helping senior citizens. He said Kerry's proposed changes would put millions of people looking for health care into "a government program."

On Monday, Kerry lashed out at a president who has taken to calling the Democrat a tax-and-spend liberal with a 20-year Senate record of voting in favor of tax increases.

The record price of oil "means a lot more profit for this president's friends in the oil industry. But for most middle class Americans, the Bush tax increase is a tax increase that they can't afford," Kerry said in New Mexico.

Bush, also campaigning in New Mexico, ridiculed Kerry for saying in an interview published Sunday in The New York Times Magazine, "We have to get back to the place we were, where terrorists are not the focus of our lives but they're a nuisance."

"I couldn't disagree more," the president said. "Our goal is to reduce terror to some acceptable level of nuisance. Our goal is to defeat terror by staying on the offensive."

The Kerry campaign counterattacked, circulating a 2-year-old comment from Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser in the first Bush administration, who said the United States can break the back of terrorism "so that it is a horrible nuisance, and not a paralyzing influence."

It is a difficult time for Colorado Springs, where 7,000 troops stationed at nearby Fort Carson are returning to Iraq in the coming months for a second tour of duty. During the first deployment of 12,000 troops last year, more than 40 were killed and more than 500 were wounded.

Nationally, a CNN-USA Today-Gallup poll taken Saturday and Sunday showed Bush and Kerry in a statistical dead heat, with 49 percent for the Democrat and 48 percent for Bush among likely voters. The poll's margin of error was 4 percentage points.

AFN debate schedule

AFN-Europe will provide live coverage Thursday of the third presidential debate from Arizona State University in Tempe beginning at 3 a.m. Central European Time on the AFN-News TV channel and Power Network Radio.

The debates will be re-aired Thursday on AFN television at the following times:

- 11 a.m. — AFN-News
- 3:30 p.m.— AFN-Pacific and Korea
- 7 p.m. - AFN-News
- 10:30 p.m. — AFN-Atlantic

- Viewers in the Middle East will be able to watch the third presidential debate from Arizona State University in Tempe live at 5 a.m. on any of the feeds they receive from AFN.
- Different locations in Iraq receive different stations, but replays of the debate will be shown on all AFN stations, including the Navy's Direct-To-Sailor service, at 9 p.m. Thursday.
- Another reply will be shown on AFN Prime at 12:30 a.m. on Friday.

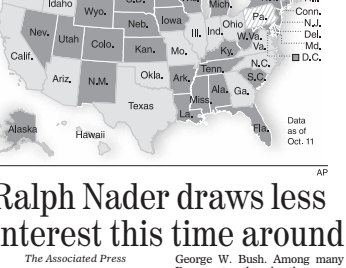
From staff reports

ELECTION 2004

Nader on the ballot in about 34 states

In 2000, presidential candidate Ralph Nader was on the ballot in 43 states and won 2.9 million votes. This election year, when legal challenges settle, he will likely be on the ballot in about 34 states.

Ballot status of Ralph Nader- Peter Camejo ticket



AP

Ralph Nader draws less interest this time around

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Four years ago, Ralph Nader had a seat on the Sunday talk shows, a spot on 43 state ballots and a gutsy low-budget campaign that was packing in supporters. Unbowed at age 70, he's back this year sounding the same pox-on-both-your-houses message. But this time he stands at just 1 percent in the polls and former allies are trying to get him to sit down.

"Welcome to the politics of joy and justice," Nader called out to 15,000 noisy fans who crammed Madison Square Garden four years ago this week to hear celebrities like Susan Sarandon, Michael Moore and Bill Murray extol him as a clarion voice of democracy.

When the fog of Election Day cleared, Nader had 2.9 million votes — 2.7 percent of all ballots cast — and no regrets that his outsider candidacy just might have tilted the election in favor of George W. Bush. Among many Democrats, though, there was anger that he hadn't dropped out of the race. And even among some Nader voters, there was a sinking sense of buyer's remorse.

His message hasn't changed. "We're all held hostage to this two-party, winner-takes-all dictatorship," he said last week in Portland, Maine, accusing both the Republican and Democratic parties of being captive to corporate interests and deaf to ordinary citizens.

But Nader has had to claw his way onto ballots around the country in the face of an aggressive anti-Nader campaign spearheaded by some of his former allies. When the dust settles on various legal challenges, Nader, who complains of Democratic "dirty tricks" to keep him off state ballots, probably will appear on about 35. His name will be absent in three of his top four vote-getting states from 2000: California, Massachusetts and Texas.

Dems decry broadcaster's plan to run anti-Kerry film

BY LIZ SIDOTI
The Associated Press

> *"In this election cycle, they have put their money where their right-wing mouths are. Sinclair's owners aren't interested in news. They're interested in pro-Bush propaganda."*
>
> **Terry McAuliffe**
> Democratic National Committee chairman

WASHINGTON — The Democratic Party and 18 senators are objecting to a broadcasting company's plan to air on 62 TV stations a critical documentary about John Kerry's anti-war activities after he returned home from Vietnam three decades ago.

Sinclair Broadcast Group has asked its television stations — many of them in competitive states in the presidential election — to pre-empt regular programming to run the documentary as part of an hour-long program two weeks before the Nov. 2 election.

Based near Baltimore, the company owns or manages affiliates of major broadcast networks in several states, including Ohio, Florida and Pennsylvania.

Mark Hyman, a vice president of corporate relations for Sinclair who also is a conservative commentator for the company, said Monday the show would contain some or all of the 42-minute film as well as a panel discussion of some sort. He said final details had not been worked out.

The documentary, called "Stolen Honor: Wounds That Never Heal," chronicles Kerry's 1971 testimony before Congress and links him to activist and actress Jane Fonda. The film includes interviews with Vietnam prisoners of war and their wives who claim that Kerry's testimony — filled with "lurid fantasies of butchery in Vietnam" on the part of U.S. troops — demeaned them and led their captors to hold them longer.

The Democratic National Committee planned to file a complaint with the Federal Election Commission on Tuesday contending that Sinclair's airing of the film should be considered an illegal in-kind contribution to President Bush's campaign. Also, 18 Democratic senators sent a letter to the Federal Communication Commission asking that it investigate whether Sinclair's plan was an improper use of public airwaves.

"To allow a broadcasting company to air such a blatantly partisan attack in lieu of regular programming, and to classify that attack as 'news programming' as has been suggested, would violate the spirit, and we think the text, of current law and regulation," the letter said.

Sinclair's Hyman said, "The documentary is just a part of a special news event that we're putting together. We've invited one person to be a guest. That's Sen. John Kerry." The company posted a note on its Web site Monday afternoon urging people to call Kerry's headquarters to urge his participation.

Chad Clanton, a Kerry campaign spokesman, said, "Everything is on the table but it's hard to take an offer seriously from a group with such a fierce partisan agenda, a group that's clearly not interested in the truth."

Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe said the company was acting as a mouthpiece for the Republican Party rather than a legitimate news outlet.

"In this election cycle, they have put their money where their right-wing mouths are," he said. "Sinclair's owners aren't interested in news. They're interested in pro-Bush propaganda."

Specialist **LaAndrea LaMarque.** 54B Chemical Specialist. **U.S. Army Reserve**

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Spinal cord research loses a hero

Doctors, scientists praise Christopher Reeve's efforts

BY MARILYNN MARCHIONE
The Associated Press

By the time he died, Christopher Reeve had at last "escaped the cape" — he had become bigger than the Superman character he portrayed on screen.

Reeve championed cutting-edge research into spinal cord injuries, offering himself as a guinea pig for new therapies and vowing he would one day walk again. He never did. But his dream is now a plausible one for thousands of others who are paralyzed.

"The biggest hope is in biological research to allow the spinal cord to heal itself and even regenerate. That's just over the horizon but closer than ever before. Most people feel within the next 10 to 15 years, somewhere within our lifetimes," said Dr. Jack Ziegler, president of the American Spinal Injury Association.

Some even thought it would come in time for Reeve.

"I thought it was going to happen," said Dr. Doug Kerr, a Johns Hopkins University neurologist who works with stem cells — controversial research that Reeve advocated with superhuman strength even as he wheezed through a respirator from his wheelchair.

"It was Star Wars science fiction, this concept of rewiring the nervous system," but Reeve "thrust this field forward by leaps and bounds," Kerr said.

Reeve died Sunday after developing a serious bloodstream infection from a bedsore, a common problem for paralyzed people. He went into cardiac arrest Saturday at his home in Pound Ridge, N.Y., then fell into a coma, dying the next day at a hospital.

Reeve embodied strength and athleticism and performed his own movie stunts, including his 1978 starring role as Superman. It made him famous but he longed to, as he often put it, "escape the cape" and take on other characters. He played a lovestruck time-traveler in the movie "Somewhere in Time," and an aspiring playwright in the suspense "Deathtrap."

But real life gave him the best opportunity to shed the cape and show extraordinary human powers. Reeve suffered one of the most severe spinal injuries possible when he was thrown from his horse and broke his neck during an equestrian competition in May 1995.

He sparked hope even in many skeptics in 2000, when he was able to move an index finger. Motivated by success, he thrust himself even harder into workouts to strengthen his legs and arms.

As Reeve transformed his body, he morphed into an advocate, first for better benefits for people with long-term disabilities, and then for science to help the 250,000 Americans who suffer paralysis. The Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation has given $40 million to spinal cord research since he merged it with the American Paralysis Foundation in 1999.

Some of that has been for embryonic stem cell research, a promising but contentious field of medicine that the Bush administration has severely restricted because it involves destroying embryos.

Reeve "appropriately brought a sense of urgency to this issue," said Daniel Perry, president of the Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research, a stem cell advocacy organization.

"On Capitol Hill he was such a highly regarded figure and was so focused on the message."

But Reeve's real legacy is more than dollars and advocacy, many said. It's the hope that fewer diseases in the future will be called incurable.

Before Reeve, if someone had a spinal cord injury, "there was really no hope," said Dr. John McDonald, director of the Spinal Cord Injury Program at Washington University in St. Louis where Reeve was treated.

"He's changed all that. He's demonstrated that there is hope and that there are things that can be done."

AP photos

Above: "Superman" memorabilia is displayed Monday at the Superman Museum in Metropolis, Ill. Below: "Superman" star Christopher Reeve became a real hero for some as a force for spinal cord research.

Rash of suicides at NYU draws attention to problem, counseling

BY STEVENSON SWANSON
Chicago Tribune

NEW YORK — Diana Chien, 19, had lived in New York for only a month, having transferred here to be close to her boyfriend.

John Skolnik, 20, was a junior from Evanston, Ill., who had just returned from a summer study trip to Cuba.

Michelle Gluckman, 19, was at a party when she suddenly yelled, "I just can't take it anymore," and headed toward a kitchen window.

These three young people and three others like them have at least two things in common. They were all students at New York University.

And they all fell to their deaths within the last year.

The most publicized spate of student suicides at one university in recent years has left the students and staff at NYU struggling to make sense of the senseless. Why would so many young people, with seemingly everything to live for, choose death over life? "We never really suspected there was anything wrong," said Robert Skolnik, John's father, reflecting an all-too-common reality. In more than 80 percent of college student suicides, the student was not in treatment or known to be suicidal.

Beyond NYU's Greenwich Village environs, the deaths are drawing new attention to a problem that experts say accounts for an estimated 1,100 deaths a year. Suicide is second only to accidents as the cause of death among college students.

Universities are experimenting with a new set of aggressive techniques that seek to identify potentially suicidal students early and to provide counseling or other treatment before students can act on their impulses.

Most programs are voluntary, but at least one school — the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign — requires students who have attempted or threatened suicide to receive counseling or face expulsion.

After tripling between the 1950s and the early 1990s, the national suicide rate in all age groups has decreased in recent years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Mental-health experts point to the dramatic increase in the use of antidepressant medications as one possible explanation.

Despite the drop in suicides nationwide, depression and suicidal thoughts remain major problems among college students. A survey released last month by the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill found that one in three students reported experiencing prolonged bouts of depression, and one in four students had considered suicide.

"It's a very fluid environment, which is good for a lot of people," said professor Tony Jurich, a suicide expert at Kansas State University, referring to college life. "But it's almost a matter of having too many choices. The world tells college students that the world is their oyster, then the world leaves them alone. When the world leaves college students alone, they feel isolated."

That could be especially true at NYU, one of the nation's largest private universities, with an enrollment of 38,000 students. Spread out in buildings across Greenwich Village, the university lacks a cohesive campus, and many students live in apartments or commute.

Following John Skolnik's death, friends were quoted as saying they had noticed swings in his mood, especially after he returned from Cuba to begin classes last fall. One Friday in September 2003, he jumped from the 10th floor of the atrium inside the university library.

The New York medical examiner ruled the death a suicide, the first at NYU since 1996. Five other jumping deaths involving NYU students followed in less than a year.

Of the six, four have been ruled suicides. One was deemed accidental because the student's blood contained traces of a hallucinogenic drug, and the most recent death — a graduate student who apparently jumped from the top of a 12-story campus building last month — is under investigation.

In an effort to prevent future suicides, NYU started a highly publicized "wellness exchange," a 24-hour service that students can call for information about physical- or mental-health services on campus.

Private spaceflight investment lags behind public's enthusiasm

BY JOHN ANTCZAK
The Associated Press

LONG BEACH, Calif. — The first privately financed manned rocket to reach space was mostly fueled by a billionaire. In Oklahoma, a state tax credit helped get a reusable launch vehicle started. In California, entrepreneurs are looking to government contracts for help.

Such different approaches to funding the new small-scale commercial space race emerged as one of the themes at a weekend conference hosted by the Space Frontier Foundation, a group that hopes to expand space access beyond government programs.

SpaceShipOne's three dramatic spaceflights in recent weeks, its capture of the $10 million Ansari X Prize and the global attention it gave the budding industry infused the conference with optimism.

But with investment still a question mark, notes of caution accompanied enthusiasm.

"There isn't anything that is typical," said Jeff Greason, president of Xcor Aerospace, which seeks government contracts to develop technologies that can be adapted to its goal of developing a passenger rocket. "Every participant in the industry has gone down a very different path."

In a conference session on investing in what are being called "alternative space companies," the role of billionaires backing projects — like Paul Allen's $20 million for SpaceShipOne — was seen as useful in attracting other investors.

Walt Anderson, chief executive officer of the aerospace technology company Orbital Recovery Corp. and founder of the venture capital company Gold & Appel, said he saw reasons for optimism and pessimism.

"It's been a pretty good month for this group because if all your friends thought you were nuts and commercial space wasn't real, you could watch the evening news and find out that there was some reality here," he said.

Skeleton found in suspected mob graveyard

NEW YORK — Authorities discovered part of a human skeleton in a vacant lot believed for years to be a graveyard for people ordered killed by the late mob boss John Gotti and other gangsters.

FBI spokesman James Margolin said the bones discovered Monday in Queens included a pelvic bone, a piece of a jawbone, ribs and leg bones. Also found were a watch and a pair of glasses. A forensic anthropologist was to examine the bones Tuesday.

In 1981, the body of Bonanno crime family captain Alphonse "Sonny Red" Indelicato was discovered at the lot. No other bodies were found, but some officials believed mob burials at the lot continued.

From The Associated Press

Human rights report rips U.S. procedures

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — At least 11 al-Qaida suspects have "disappeared" in U.S. custody and some have allegedly been tortured in their undisclosed locations, according to a report released Monday by Human Rights Watch.

The prisoners are likely being held outside the United States without access to the Red Cross or any oversight of their treatment, the report states. In some cases, the U.S. will not even acknowledge the prisoners are in custody.

The prisoners include the alleged architect of the Sept. 11 attacks, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, as well as Abu Zubaydah, who is believed to be a close aide to Osama bin Laden. Other prisoners profiled are Ramzi Binalshibh, who allegedly could have been a Sept. 11 hijacker had he succeeded in obtaining a U.S. visa, and Riduan Isamuddin, known as Hambali, an alleged al-Qaida ally in Southeast Asia.

> *"I think the U.S. demeans itself when it adopts the philosophy that the ends justify the means in the fight against terror."*
>
> **Reedy Brody**, Human Rights Watch special counsel

In refusing to disclose the prisoners' whereabouts or acknowledge the detentions, Human Rights Watch claims, the U.S. government has violated international law, international treaties and the Geneva Convention. The group calls on the government to bring all the prisoners "under the protection of the law."

"I think the U.S. demeans itself when it adopts the philosophy that the ends justify the means in the fight against terror," said Reed Brody, special counsel with Human Rights Watch.

CIA spokesman Mark Mansfield declined to comment on the report, given that the agency has not seen its contents.

A U.S. counterterrorism official, speaking to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity, said CIA policies and procedures on detention and debriefings have been the subject of "very careful" scrutiny.

"Close attention has been paid to ensuring that these policies are lawful," the official said.

The report — titled "The United States' 'Disappeared:' The CIA's Long-term 'Ghost Detainees' " — acknowledges that many of the prisoners have provided valuable intelligence to U.S. officials.

But it also cites reports that some detainees have lied under pressure to please their interrogators.

Human Rights Watch has no firsthand knowledge of the treatment of these detainees. Much of the report stems from press accounts that have cited unnamed government sources acknowledging the torture or mistreatment of detainees.

The report provides a brief sketch of 11 detainees believed to be currently incommunicado in undisclosed locations. They hail from countries across the Arab world, including Libya, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. U.S. authorities have confirmed detention of six of them, the report states.

There may be more suspects being held secretly, according to the report.

Poll: Allies say war has increased terrorism

BY WILL LESTER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than two-thirds of the people living in Australia, Britain and Italy — three countries allied with the United States in the Iraq war — believe the war has increased the threat of terrorism.

Leaders of those countries — prime ministers Tony Blair of Britain and John Howard of Australia and Premier Silvio Berlusconi of Italy — all get low marks from their people for their handling of the war on terrorism, an Associated Press-Ipsos poll shows.

More than half of those in the United States, 52 percent, believe the Iraq war has increased the threat of terrorism, while three in 10 in the United States think it has decreased the threat — a view promoted by President Bush.

"In the context of the presidential campaign in the United States, this is undeniably a blow for George W. Bush, since it shows that a majority of Americans don't agree with the main justification for his policy in Iraq," said Gilles Corman, research director at Ipsos-Inra of Belgium, who studies public opinion trends across Europe.

In Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain, a majority thought last winter that the Iraq war was increasing the threat of terrorism. That number has increased in each of the countries.

Australians were not polled in the AP-Ipsos project last winter.

In Australia and each of five European countries polled, only about one in 20 believe the Iraq war decreased the terror threat.

Leaders of several countries that opposed the Iraq war get strong ratings from their citizens on how they are handling terrorism.

Political leaders in the Iraq war coalition have faced domestic political pressure because of their stance on Iraq:

■ Howard won re-election Saturday despite criticism in Australia of his support for the Iraq war. The public was evenly divided on Howard's handling of terrorism, with only 44 percent approving, but he apparently was helped by Australia's strong economy.

■ Bush faces the voters again in early November in a campaign that is increasingly focused on Iraq, with public doubts about the impact of the Iraq war on the terrorism fight.

■ In Britain, the poll found only one-third approve of Blair's handling of the war on terror. Friday's announcement of the beheading in Iraq of British hostage Kenneth Bigley is likely to increase pressure on Blair.

■ Berlusconi has seen Italians' fears of terrorism increase sharply since last winter — from seven in 10 worried about terrorism in February to almost nine in 10 now. Just over one-third of Italians approve of Berlusconi's handling of terrorism. Two Italian women taken hostage in Iraq were freed last month, and an Iraqi who lived in Italy was executed by kidnappers in Iraq early this month. Berlusconi has pledged to lead the country until the end of his term in 2006.

In contrast, the leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Mexico and Spain all get high marks for their handling of terrorism, with a majority in each country saying they approve, according to polls conducted for the AP by Ipsos, an international polling firm.

French President Jacques Chirac, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, Mexican President Vicente Fox and Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero have all publicly opposed the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin has been less outspoken in his criticism of the war than some of the European leaders, but Canada didn't send troops to Iraq.

AP POLL

Countries doubting handling of terror

President Bush and other world leaders are facing doubts about their handling of the war on terror from their compatriots.

About this poll: Telephone poll taken between Sept. 23 and Oct. 2 and have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

SOURCE: Ipsos-Public Affairs for AP

AP

High court takes on sensitive subject

Ten Commandments displays to be covered

BY GINA HOLLAND
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court said Tuesday it will take up the constitutionality of Ten Commandments displays on government land and buildings, a surprise announcement that puts justices in the middle of a politically sensitive issue.

Justices have repeatedly refused to revisit issues raised by their 1980 decision that banned the posting of copies of the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms.

In the meantime, lower courts have reached a hodgepodge of conflicting rulings that allow displays in some instances but not in others.

The high court will hear appeals early next year involving displays in Kentucky and Texas.

In the Texas case, the justices will decide if a Ten Commandments monument on the state Capitol grounds is an unconstitutional attempt to establish state-sponsored religion.

A homeless man, Thomas Van Orden, lost his lawsuit to have the 6-foot tall red granite removed. The Fraternal Order of Eagles donated the monument to the state in 1961. The group gave scores of similar monuments to American towns during the 1950s and '60s, and those have been the subject of multiple court fights.

Separately, the justices will consider whether a lower court wrongly barred the posting of the Ten Commandments in Kentucky courthouses.

FDA defends itself in wake of flu vaccine shortage

BY DENISE GELLENE
Los Angeles Times

The head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration defended the embattled agency Monday, saying it had received no warning from British regulators or from Chiron Corp. that the company's flu vaccine factory in Liverpool was in danger of being shut down.

Acting FDA Commissioner Lester Crawford said that the closure of the factory by British authorities showed the need for better communication with European regulators.

Last Tuesday, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, the British counterpart to the FDA, shuttered the Chiron factory in Liverpool for three months, citing manufacturing problems that could lead to bacterial contamination. The action meant that Chiron, based in Emeryille, Calif., couldn't deliver more than 40 million doses of flu vaccine, nearly half the supply for the United States.

Because of the shortage, public health officials in the United States are rationing vaccine supplies. Healthy people are being asked to skip shots so that people who are at greater risk if they contract the flu — the elderly, young children and those with chronic medical conditions — can get them.

Crawford said at a news conference Monday that the unexpected action by British authorities was a "test case" for better information-sharing with European drug industry regulators.

He said an agency such as the World Health Organization might hash out rules for swapping details on regulatory matters that are typically considered proprietary.

"We intend to pursue that," he said.

Crawford acknowledged that the FDA had not made an effort to talk with British regulators about the Chiron factory since Aug. 25, when the company reported it had discovered 4 million doses of contaminated vaccine.

Schools battered by Ivan welcome return of students

BY BILL KACZOR
The Associated Press

GULF BREEZE, Fla. — Forced out of their Florida Panhandle home by Hurricane Ivan, Monette Hodges and her family now live 90 minutes away in Mobile, Ala.

But instead of putting her three kids in school there, Hodges managed to get them back to Florida on Monday, the first day of school in four weeks for 92,000 students in two of the hardest-hit counties.

"I just don't want to uproot them," Hodges said after dropping 15-year-old Lacie at her high school and 8-year-old Cate and 5-year-old Patrick at a Methodist Lifeguard Center, the temporary home of Pensacola Beach Elementary School.

On Santa Rosa Island, where many houses were destroyed and utilities have not yet been restored, Hodges and other parents were looking forward to restoring some normalcy to their children's lives.

"They didn't want to come back [to school], but I think it will be good for them to be able to talk to the other kids, their friends, and see how they did, and kind of get some comfort from them," said Karen Crockford, who brought her children William, 7, and Maylee, 11, from nearby Pensacola, where they are staying until their home can be repaired.

The schools in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties were the last to reopen after the state was slammed by four hurricanes.

The return has been particularly difficult in Bagdad, a small town about 10 miles northeast of Pensacola, where two second-graders were killed during the storm and its aftermath.

Roxanne DeLoach, 7, was crushed when a tree fell on her house, and 8-year-old Robert Qualls died in a house fire unconnected to the hurricane.

The school district dispatched a crisis team to the school Monday to help counsel students.

"It's a tragic event for the entire area. I've never seen anything like this," Bagdad Elementary Principal Will Nowling said.

Joy McLauren, the counselor at Pensacola Beach Elementary, handed out crisis intervention packets to teachers and parents to help identify children who might be suffering from stress. Nearly all of the school's children have been displaced from their homes.

The school is one of two in Escambia County that had to set up quarters elsewhere. Pupils at Longleaf Elementary are attending a school in Pensacola.

The Pensacola Beach Elementary building was so damaged when Ivan swept over Santa Rosa Island that students may be unable to get back in until after spring break at the earliest, Principal Jeff Castleberry said.

"I know that most of our families have relocated. We wanted to offer them a home base," McLauren said, noting that temporary classrooms have been made to look as close as possible to those in the damaged building. The Army Corps of Engineers is installing four portable classrooms.

Although many teachers and staff members also have had to deal with personal loss, Nowling said, "We all know what our job is: It's taking care of those smiling faces that are coming in the door."

PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL/AP

Pensacola Beach Elementary School secretary Ada Baughn welcomes children back to school Monday at the school's temporary quarters in Gulf Breeze, Fla. The school had to relocate to Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church's youth center because Pensacola Beach still lacks utilities and the school building needs repairs due to damage from Hurricane Ivan.

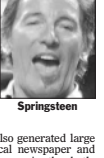
Pro-Kerry concerts culminate in capital

BY RONALD BROWNSTEIN
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — A dozen high-profile rock stars capped a spirited campaign blitz with a nationally televised joint concert Monday night that brought their drive to unseat President Bush within a few blocks of the White House.

The sold-out show at the MCI Center followed more than a week of barnstorming across battleground states by prominent artists such as Bruce Springsteen, Dave Matthews, Pearl Jam, R.E.M., John Mellencamp and the Dixie Chicks that represented one of the most ambitious efforts by entertainers to influence an election.

In all, sponsors said the 33-city, 11-state Vote for Change concert tour raised $15 million for America Coming Together, a group organizing get-out-the-vote drives for Democrats.



Springsteen

The shows also generated large amounts of local newspaper and television coverage in the hotly contested states. And perhaps just as importantly for the tour's sponsors, the entertainers made it through their shows with no incendiary quotes that would have sparked a backlash from the Bush campaign or its allies.

"Everybody talked about [the tour] being Bush-hating or Bush-bashing, but that wasn't the way it unfolded," said Bertis Downs, the manager for R.E.M. "I don't think anybody was overbearing on the politics."

Jim Dyke, communications director for the Republican National Committee, agreed that the artists appeared to avoid controversy during the tour, but he doubted the effect of the tour.

"When you are talking about the war on terrorism ... and our economy and these important social issues, it's no disrespect to them, but I'm just not sure that musicians are going to sway the general population in either direction," Dyke said.

The Vote for Change tour sent the artists through major battleground states for a coordinated series of 37 shows intended as much to attract publicity as collect cash. On Oct. 1, the artists descended on Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Florida for six shows in different cities on a single night; they then dispersed for shows in other states, including Minnesota and Iowa.

The Monday show had been intended to conclude the tour, but Springsteen will lead several of the artists in an additional show Wednesday in his home state of New Jersey. Springsteen decided to add the show after polls in the state showed Bush running surprisingly close to Kerry.

Calif. clergy abuse cases gaining momentum

BY GILLIAN FLACCUS
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Hundreds of sexual abuse claims targeting the Roman Catholic Church in California have converged into one of the most complex civil litigation cases the state's judicial system has ever faced.

More than 850 alleged victims are suing dioceses throughout the state, with millions of dollars in potential settlements at stake in a legal battle that involves more than 300 attorneys and dozens of church insurers. The scope is so vast that the lawsuits have been lumped geographically into three consolidated cases, known simply as Clergy I, Clergy II and Clergy III.

After nearly two years, the pace of the complicated legal drama is finally starting to accelerate. Some trial dates have been set, Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles is expected to be deposed by year's end in cases related to his tenure in the Stockton and Fresno dioceses, and a hearing on public access to internal church documents is scheduled for Wednesday.

Legal analysts and attorneys agree that the developments, all of which involve Northern California cases, will affect settlement negotiations that have dragged on for months in Southern California — though exactly how is less certain.

Trials in a handful of Northern California cases, scheduled for March, May and June, could prompt settlements beforehand. Others say that, if there are a few multimillion-dollar jury verdicts, they could chill the ongoing talks in Southern California by giving plaintiffs inflated expectations and exhausting church resources.

"Depending on the circumstances, trials could bust loose settlements or it could lock the church in," said Stephen Yeazell, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, who specializes in complex civil litigation. "It's going to change the calculus no matter what."

Attorneys for the Los Angeles Archdiocese, which faces about 490 civil cases, said it would take more than a handful of trials to discern a pattern that would shape a settlement.

The dioceses involved in the Southern California talks — Los Angeles and Orange (Clergy I), and San Bernardino and San Diego (Clergy II) — account for more than 80 percent of all clergy-abuse lawsuits filed statewide.

In the two years since Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston resigned as archbishop at the height of a clergy abuse crisis there, California has emerged as the United States' new epicenter of the scandal that has shaken the church.

Congress OKs plan for Lewis and Clark historical park

BY MATTHEW DALY
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress has passed and sent to the president a bill that would establish the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park in Oregon and Washington state.

The bill would expand and rename Fort Clatsop National Memorial in Oregon in honor of explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

It also would add three sites along the lower Columbia River, bringing the park for the first time into Washington state.

The Bush administration proposed the federal park in February, calling it a fitting way to mark the bicentennial of the pair's expedition seeking a northwest passage to the Pacific Ocean. The Senate gave the measure final congressional approval Sunday night.

While the Lewis and Clark-led Corps of Discovery spent the winter of 1805-06 in Fort Clatsop, the expedition traveled widely over the region, making a two-state park appropriate, said Interior Secretary Gale Norton.

The park plan follows approval of a law two years ago to expand the Fort Clatsop memorial from 130 to 1,500 acres. The three new sites would add another 560 acres to the park.

"From minting new coins to printing commemorative stamps, Americans have already started celebrating the journey of Lewis and Clark," Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore, said in a prepared statement.

"This bill will help us provide a fitting tribute to the explorers who opened up our nation."

The sites to be added to the park include the Station Camp site near McGowan, Wash., where Lewis and Clark camped before returning east in 1806, as well as the Megler Rest Area and Cape Disappointment State Park, formerly known as Fort Canby State Park.

IN THE WORLD

U.N. helicopter fetching Afghan ballots crashes

No one hurt, but vote count delayed

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Engine failure downed a U.N. helicopter sent to collect ballot boxes from northeastern Afghanistan on Tuesday, injuring no one but injecting a fresh glitch in efforts to tally the results of the country's landmark election.

The accident came as a panel of foreign experts began probing irregularities in Saturday's vote alleged by rivals to front-running interim leader Hamid Karzai.

The complaints have stalled the start of vote-counting, though officials were hopeful the tally could begin Wednesday. Final results could take until late October.

The helicopter had yet to pick up any ballot boxes when it crash-landed in a snow-field in the Pamir mountains of Badakshan province, said David Avery, chief of operations for the U.N.-Afghan body managing the vote.

The American military said one of its C-130 transport planes dropped emergency supplies including sleeping bags and food to the three crewmembers, three election workers and two police officers on board.

The group took shelter in an abandoned house, and the U.S. military said in a statement that another helicopter would attempt a rescue on Wednesday.

Avery said the loss of the Russian-made Mi-8 would slow the recovery of voting papers from Badakhshan, one of the country's most inaccessible provinces. Donkeys have also been used to bring ballot boxes from remote villages.

"It's at such an altitude that it's unlikely to be recoverable," Avery said.

The massive task of counting the results of this war-ravaged nation's first-ever Western-style vote was also being slowed by faulty paperwork accompanying some of the boxes flooding into regional counting centers, Avery said.

Chances for a conclusive outcome were on firmer ground after several of Karzai's challengers backed away from a boycott of the vote, indicating they would accept an independent commission to probe vote-fraud charges.

Karzai is the clear favorite to win, but his ability to consolidate his rule would be undermined if the opposition refused to acknowledge the vote results.

An exit poll conducted by an American group projected Karzai would win with the outright majority needed to avoid a second round, though it has yet to release detailed findings.

Ethnic Tajik candidate Yunus Qanooni, considered Karzai's closest rival, announced Monday he would accept an investigation by independent experts into opposition complaints that the supposedly indelible ink used to mark voters' thumbs in some polling stations could be rubbed off, allowing some to vote more than once.

There were indications another rival, ethnic Uzbek warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum, might be considering backing down as well. Dostum traveled to Kabul on Tuesday from his home in the north, and his spokesman said he was considering accepting a compromise.

The candidates had until Tuesday afternoon to submit formal protests.

Election officials said Qanooni and two other candidates were complaining about a shortage of ballot papers in some areas as well as problems with the ink.

Election organizers agreed to the independent panel in hopes it would end a crisis begun when all 15 opposition candidates declared the boycott Saturday.

AP

People line up to touch a memorial Tuesday at an oceanfront reserve in Sydney, Australia. Commemorations were held around the country for the second anniversary of the nightclub bombings in Bali, Indonesia, that killed 202 people, including 88 Australians.

Bali bomb victims remembered

The Associated Press

BALI, Indonesia — Relatives of the 202 people killed by terrorists bombs on Bali island marked the second anniversary of the suicide attacks Tuesday with a moment of silence, tears and a defiant vow to defeat the Islamic militants behind it.

About 200 family members and survivors, mostly Australians, attended the somber but simple ceremony near the island's ground zero. Similar services were held across Australia, which lost 88 citizens, the most of any country.

"The events of that day represents the loss of innocence and a tragedy for all those who value peace, beauty and what is right," Australian Ambassador David Ritchie said at the 30-minute ceremony in Bali.

Mourners — many in shorts and T-shirts — filed past a monument before tossing white flowers into a small pool as a traditional Balinese orchestra played.

Attendees observed 202 seconds of silence in memory of the victims.

"We are not only here united in our grief and sympathy but in our determination to eradicate this evil from our world," Ritchie said. "I want to assure (Indonesian) President-elect Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and all Indonesians that we Australians will support you and be with you in this battle for as long you need."

Security was tight for the ceremony. The 1,500 police officers standing by included snipers atop buildings. A helicopter buzzed overhead and armored vehicles blocked main roads to the site.

Jemaah Islamiyah, a terror group with ties to al-Qaida, was blamed for the blasts.

Spain snubs U.S. in armed forces day parade

The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — Spain celebrated its National Day on Tuesday with a military parade that added French troops and snubbed the United States by dropping the recent participation of U.S. Marines.

Forty-eight soldiers from a French regiment showing the French blue, red and white flag marched along Madrid's main boulevard in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Paris from Nazi occupation.

In previous years, a contingent of U.S. Marines had been invited by the government of Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, who forged a close relation with President Bush, as a mark of solidarity after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

This year, the new Socialist government of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, which withdrew Spain's troops from Iraq immediately after taking power in April, ended what symbolized Aznar's close ties with Washington.

Defense Minister Jose Bono said last week he decided not to invite the Americans because "it is a national holiday, not a U.S holiday."

The day, officially known as the Spanish National Festivity or armed forces day, commemorates Christopher Columbus' sighting of the Caribbean islands on Oct. 12, 1492, during a Spanish-sponsored expedition.

AP

Alona Pliyeva, right, and classmates cry over a display of children's shoes at school No.1 in Beslan, Russia, on Tuesday, the end of the 40-day mourning period.

In Russia, thirst for revenge replacing grief

The Associated Press

BESLAN, Russia — Wailing and pounding their hands on dirt graves, hundreds of black-clad Ossetians marked the end of the traditional 40-day mourning period for the children and adults killed after terrorists seized a school on the first day of classes.

With the end of the mourning, fears are rising that fits of grief may become outbursts of violence against the Ingush, a rival ethnic group whose members were among the raiders who seized School No. 1. Top federal and regional officials have appealed for calm, but seething anger is replacing sorrow felt by nearly all Ossetians.

"I can promise you there will be violence," said a 47-year-old man outside the school who gave only his first name, Ruslan. "[The Ingush] are all bandits."

The school's broken and shattered remains yet again became the epicenter for the anguish of those whose relatives and friends died in the Sept. 1-3 hostage-taking. In the charred ruins of the gymnasium — where more than 1,000 people were held without food or water in sweltering heat for three days — schoolchildren lit thin prayer candles and people propped up small religious icons and photographs among the flowers and stuffed animals.

Across Russia, priests read Masses in Orthodox churches and cathedrals, while regional politicians urged calm amid rumors that the end of the mourning period would bring a wave of revenge killings.

Former Ingush President Ruslan Aushev has repeatedly warned that revenge attacks could destabilize the entire Caucasus. But Russian authorities have vowed to prevent acts of vengeance, dispatching hundreds of extra police and troops to the region.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR/OPINION

Personnel plan's start date

The Sept. 21 Stars and Stripes article "New DOD civilian personnel system delayed," in which I was quoted, stated that the new National Security Personnel System for the Department of Defense implementation target date is July 2007. That is incorrect. DOD is still on track for initial implementation of NSPS in July 2005. While the program is being managed on an event-driven schedule, the current projection indicates that we will be ready to implement the system for the first phase of employees in July 2005. Full implementation of the system is scheduled for 2007/2008.

NSPS will give DOD a more flexible, agile personnel system that will allow us to better execute our national security mission. It will be a system based on the enduring values of merit principles and veterans preference, while protecting workers' rights that are guaranteed by law.

DOD civilians should watch the NSPS Web site at **www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/** for additional information. They can contact the U.S. Army Europe Civilian Personnel Directorate at DSN 375-2548 if they have any questions on the system.

Jeannie Davis
Civilian personnel director
U.S. Army Europe

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Adieu to troops, KBR

I volunteered to come to Iraq with Defense Contract Management Agency to support the troops. I was in the Texas Air National Guard during the Vietnam War, and while I was sent to Rhein-Main Air Base in Germany I was never called to active duty. During 27 years in the National Guard and Air Force Reserve, I never deployed to a war zone, even though I volunteered for Desert Storm. Because of this I felt a tie to all service personnel in Iraq supporting our country and wanted to help them to be safe while in harm's way.

My five months at camps Slayer and Victory has been rewarding, seeing the good things that U.S. servicemembers are doing here. I was fortunate to meet and know some of them (members of the Kansas Army National Guard and 1st Armored Division at Camp Slayer). I want to wish all of them in Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. to be safe, and have a safe trip home. They all will be in my thoughts and prayers.

I also want to say goodbye to my KBR friends. I want to thank them for their professionalism and workmanship. I know that the environment is not the best to be working in, but I saw many of them pitch in to ensure that we (the DCMA-KBR team) gave our best effort for the troops. I'm very proud to say that I worked with all of them.

Kenyon Donohew
Camps Slayer and Victory, Iraq

Concerns over medical care

I am a soldier serving in Iraq and noticed the article "Military will switch Vioxx" (Oct. 3) about Vioxx being taken off the market stateside due to medical risks. This is very disconcerting because I was just prescribed this medication one week ago to deal with pain from a possible torn meniscus in my left knee. They gave me this medication to deal with the pain instead of sending me to Laundstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany to get an MRI and see how bad the injury is and if it would require surgery. I was told they did this because my knee injury was pre-existing (meaning that I have a permanent profile due to an injury to the same knee requiring surgery).

I feel that it is pretty bad that the medical staff is not keeping up to date with the medications it is handing out in lieu of actual medical treatment. It is pretty sad when they will give a soldier medication that has been removed from the market instead of actually taking care of the problem.

Sgt. Matthew Fritch
Baghdad

Flu vaccine crisis nothing to sneeze at

Los Angeles Times

Even the most ardent libertarian is hard-pressed to argue against government protection from serious public health dangers.

Tuberculosis. Typhoid fever. Polio. Influenza. All communicable, predictable and, in varying degrees, deadly. It's not just sympathy for the suffering victims that drives the idea. Even a week off work by one of every dozen employees carries a shattering total cost to the national economy.

So why was the health bureaucracy of the richest nation in the world caught off guard last week by the loss of half the 100 million flu vaccine doses it had been expecting this season? The shutdown of a key vaccine factory in Liverpool, England, because of bacterial contamination seemed to catch the U.S. government, to say nothing of thousands of hospitals, completely by surprise.

British regulators detected manufacturing errors that inspectors from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration missed. Though it's possible that the full story won't be known for months, it's already abundantly clear that when vaccine maker Chiron Corp. first revealed serious contamination problems at its factory in August, British health officials quickly found other suppliers. Their citizens are not facing a vaccine shortage. U.S. doctors and hospitals will have to turn away millions of supplicants and are likely to see many of them back in costly emergency rooms in coming months with highly infectious flu.

Because it takes up to six months to produce more vaccine, there is no way to fill the chasm created by the three-month closure of the Chiron factory. All that's left is triage, seeking ways to shift the supplies left to the elderly, ill and very young. A congressional hearing Friday failed to identify any efficient way to do so.

In the longer run, Congress can at least set aside more money for researching new vaccine production techniques, which have changed little since British physician Edward Jenner began antivirial vaccinations by inoculating his patients against smallpox in the 18th century. Congress has funded only half of the $100 million the Bush administration requested earlier this year to research the most promising new technique — making the vaccine not from chicken eggs, which take months to hatch, but from readily available animal cells.

The need for haste should now be obvious to legislators.

Congress also ought to be asking why the United States is dependent on just two manufacturers, with much of the supply coming from abroad. What's missing in the regulatory arena? Flu vaccines are an unalloyed social good. Public health officials consumed with stockpiling smallpox vaccine and sarin antidotes against a terror attack now face a human and economic asset that would make a terrorist shiver with glee. The boring business of flu vaccine is suddenly a crisis, and government has to own up to its responsibility.

Doonesbury

By Garry Trudeau

OPINION

It's election time, and the lying seems easy

BY JILL PORTER
Philadelphia Daily News

A red-faced Vice President Dick Cheney apologized Thursday to the American public for the "inexplicable mistake" he made when he claimed he'd never met Sen. John Edwards before Tuesday's debate — even though Cheney presides over the Senate every week.

Ha ha ha.

So much for wishful thinking.

Sure, it's true that Cheney told a whopper during last Tuesday's debate: Not only has he met Edwards several times before, but he rarely presides over sessions of the Senate.

Still, Cheney hardly apologized. His camp stood steadfast: "While the vice president may have passed the senator in the hall or been at the same event at some point in the past 3½ years, the fact is that Sen. Edwards has one of the worst attendance records in the U.S. Senate," a spokeswoman told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Not only did Cheney fail to retract this latest bald-faced lie, he continues to peddle another obvious untruth — that he's never linked Iraq and Sept. 11 — even though there's oft-replayed videotape of him doing just that.

Political lying carries no shame and incurs no consequences these days. So what's the downside? The Bush administration is so notorious for lies and distortions that at least a half-dozen books have been written about it — and yet Bush may well be re-elected.

But [I] don't have to look beyond [my] own back yard to see that intentionally misleading statements can be made with impunity.

During Philadelphia's mayoral election last year, U.S. Rep. Bob Brady was among the local Democratic officials who claimed the federal probe of John Street was a political dirty trick designed to bring down a righteous black man.

Did he actually believe it? "Nah, I was just spinning the [expletive]," he said in a Philadelphia magazine article published in August, "and it worked."

Brady tried to clarify his comment in a subsequent interview with Philadelphia Daily News reporter Dave Davies, but still acknowledged that he had been willing to spin the events because he had been "worried we'd lose the election."

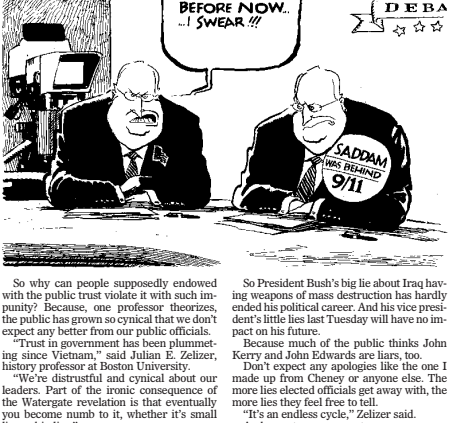
Is he fighting for his political life because of his confession? Hardly.

And, speaking of the bug, the mystery about how it got discovered is still unanswered.

Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson said at the time that no one had asked him to search the mayor's office, but he did it as a part of his regular security efforts — an explanation that came into question when other police officials said they knew nothing about routine sweeps.

Top mayoral aide George Burrell subsequently testified to the grand jury that he had been warned the office might be bugged and asked Johnson to conduct a sweep. According to a story in The Philadelphia Inquirer, based on an anonymous source, that's exactly what Johnson told federal authorities himself.

But is Johnson besieged with a public demand to explain the discrepancies? Not at all.



So why can people supposedly endowed with the public trust violate it with such impunity? Because, one professor theorizes, the public has grown so cynical that we don't expect any better from our public officials.

"Trust in government has been plummeting since Vietnam," said Julian E. Zelizer, history professor at Boston University.

"We're distrustful and cynical about our leaders. Part of the ironic consequence of the Watergate revelation is that eventually you become numb to it, whether it's small lies or big lies."

So President Bush's big lie about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction has hardly ended his political career. And his vice president's little lies last Tuesday will have no impact on his future.

Because much of the public thinks John Kerry and John Edwards are liars, too.

Don't expect any apologies like the one I made up from Cheney or anyone else. The more lies elected officials get away with, the more lies they feel free to tell.

"It's an endless cycle," Zelizer said.

And an outrageous one, too.

Who's screening these pop culture comparisons?

BY JAKE TAPPER

WASHINGTON

All Kelly Ripa had to do was suggest that Sen. John Edwards, her guest on last Thursday's "Live With Regis & Kelly," get Tom Cruise to play him if there were a movie version of campaign 2004. From there, Edwards ran with it.

Last Tuesday's vice presidential debate, Edwards suggested, was a replay of the courtroom scene from the 1992 film "A Few Good Men." Edwards was the young, handsome, idealistic Lt. Daniel Kaffee, played by Cruise. That left Vice President Dick Cheney in the Jack Nicholson role of the villainous Marine Col. Nathan R. Jessup defending his extremism in the name of national security.

Edwards even acted out the scene. "Cheney [saying], 'You need me on that wall! You need me on that wall!' "

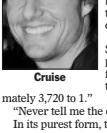
The audience laughed. "And me saying, 'You can't handle the truth!' "

Overlooking the fact that Nicholson's character actually says both lines, Edwards was only embracing what has become an American ritual. Political analysts and entertainers constantly struggle to come up with such pop culture metaphors for politicians — and some have proved quite resilient. Jackie Kennedy could not have known how long the musical "Camelot" would stand for the "brief shining moment" of John F. Kennedy's presidency when, a week after his assassination, she urged journalist Theodore White to quote one of the show's tunes for a Life magazine epilogue.

Such metaphors can also be wielded as a shiv; decades after then-Vice President Richard Nixon tarred 1956 Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson as an "indecisive … pathetic Hamlet on the American political stage," the Shakespearean stain remains in Stevenson's biographies.

"A Few Good Men" is hardly the first film to be revived in this election cycle. Conservatives giggled when … some began comparing Sen. John Kerry to C-3PO. Kerry defenders don't see any similarity between the decorated Vietnam War veteran and George Lucas' gold droid — a multilingual, hand-wringing, fey Cassandra who advocates surrender.

Edwards


Cruise

Who's President Bush in this conservative universe? Swash-buckling Han Solo, who even says "Bring 'em on" when fighting the Death Star.

Perhaps even some Kerry advocates might find it amusing to consider the debate over prospects in Iraq through the "Star Wars" lens. Particularly if — as the conservative bloggers who first came up with the idea — one doesn't have a tough time transposing the president's head onto Solo's body.

"Sir," C-3PO says to Solo in one scene, "the possibility of successfully navigating an asteroid field is approximately 3,720 to 1."

"Never tell me the odds!" retorts Solo.

In its purest form, the idea of the exercise is to find a pre-existing dynamic that sums up both candidates through the dramas we find more understandable and entertaining. In that vein, it has been suggested that R2-D2 is a better stand-in for the president — still on the side of the good guys, but shorter and sometimes difficult to understand. …

The Bush-Kerry pop culture debate can take on the Shakespearean erudition from Stevenson's time. At **www.shaksper.net**, which bills itself as the global electronic conference for the Bard, it is a given that Kerry is the conflicted, discursive Hamlet; the great debate deals with whether Bush is Prince Hal from "Henry IV," emerging from his wasted tavern days to grow into a respected monarch, or Hamlet's impulsive but more assured Laertes.

But Edwards' contribution to the exercise is worth a second look. Americans are being asked to re-elect a leader whose team, like Col. Jessup's, has been accused of cover-ups and excessive force in the name of national security. But it remains to be seen whether Americans wouldn't prefer the zealous Jessup over the more dovish Kaffee to guard their families in the post-9/11 world.

Jake Tapper is a correspondent with ABC News in its Washington bureau. This column first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY

Iran offers deal on nukes

Minister says nation will give Europe assurances no nuclear bombs will be built if it OKs enrichment

BY ALI AKBAR DAREINI
The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's foreign minister made Europe an offer Tuesday: recognize our right to enrich uranium and we will guarantee never to produce nuclear bombs.

Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi put the offer in a speech to an energy conference here about six weeks before his government has to show the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency that it has ceased enrichment and all related activities. Iran, which previously has said it was willing to give such guarantees, already has rejected the IAEA demand.

"The time has come for Europe to take a step forward and suggest that our legitimate right for complete use of nuclear energy is recognized [in return for] assurances that our program will not be diverted toward weapons," Kharrazi said.

In Washington, a senior U.S. official brushed aside the offer Tuesday, saying Iran was already obliged by the International Atomic Energy Agency to stop uranium enrichment. The official spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Two U.S. officials also told the AP in Washington that the Bush administration is holding talks with European allies about offering economic incentives to Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment activities, which are key to producing nuclear weapons.

Such a move would be a significant reconsideration of Washington's hard line toward Iran.

The package of incentives will be discussed at a meeting Friday at the State Department by European envoys with Undersecretary of State John R. Bolton and either Secretary of State Colin Powell or Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, one of the officials said on condition of anonymity.

The United States accuses Iran of pursuing a secret program to build nuclear bombs. Iran denies, saying its nuclear program is limited to the production of electricity.

Last week Iran said it has converted a few tons of raw uranium into a gas, a key step toward enrichment. It has also risked confrontation with the IAEA by continuing to assemble centrifuges.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which Iran has signed, does not prohibit uranium enrichment, but Tehran has come under heavy pressure to suspend such activities because of international concern over its nuclear program.

AP

Elodie has the famous barrel around her neck as she sits in front of the peak of the Great Saint Bernard in Switzerland in August 2001. The once-fabled rescue dogs have been mostly replaced by speedier helicopters and heat sensors.

Saint Bernards lose job to technology

BY ERICA BULMAN
The Associated Press

GENEVA, Switzerland — Switzerland's Saint Bernard, famed for rescuing avalanche victims in the Alps, is finally bowing its massive head, the fabled barrel around its neck replaced with a "for sale" sign.

Heavy and slow in the deep Alpine snow, expensive to feed and their jobs largely taken over by helicopters and heat sensors, the once-proud dogs have found themselves obsolete and a drain on the resources of the religious order that has raised and trained them for centuries.

There is no record of when Saint Bernards first started rescuing people, but they are credited with saving some 2,000 travelers over the past 200 years on the Saint Bernard Pass on the border with Italy.

With their usefulness at an end, however, the Congregation of Canons of the Great Saint Bernard is ready to sell the 18 adults and 16 pups.

Big and bulky, an adult male can weigh up to 220 pounds and eat more than four pounds of meat a day. They also take up a lot of time and energy, says Brother Frederic, one of five monks living at the famed hospice on the pass.

"At first, and even at the beginning of the century, they were very useful," Brother Frederic said. "But in 1955, there came the helicopter," which had limited room for the large dogs.

By 1975, the last time one of the dogs was used on a mission, they had mostly been replaced at rescue scenes by smaller, speedier golden retrievers and German shepherds.

But the Saint Bernards remain the tourist's best friend.

The dogs are expected to be sold to associations rather than individuals. The buyers will be required to let them return to the pass each summer.

"Nothing will really change when the dogs are sold," said Brother Frederic. "Just the ownership. It will take a load off of us and allow us to spend more time with those who need it. But the dogs will still be around."

Police: War crimes suspect Karadzic not in Montenegro

BY PREDRAG MILIC
The Associated Press

PODGORICA, Serbia-Montenegro — Montenegrin police on Tuesday rejected the chief U.N. war crimes prosecutor's claim that top war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic is occasionally taking refuge in the tiny Balkan republic.

Carla Del Ponte, the U.N. war crimes prosecutor, has said the former Bosnian Serb political leader, accused in the 1995 genocide of Muslims in the U.N.-protected zone of Srebrenica, has been venturing from Bosnia into neighboring Serbia-Montenegro.

The deputy interior minister of Montenegro, Momcilo Orlandic, said Del Ponte's claim was wrong as far as Montenegro was concerned.

"With all due respect for Del Ponte in her attempts to bring war criminals to justice, her statement is wrong," Orlandic said.

He said that if police receive any credible information "from Del Ponte or anyone else" on where Karadzic and others are hiding in Montenegro, "we will take all necessary measures to arrest them and hand them over to [the U.N. war crimes court in] The Hague."

Karadzic, 58, and former Bosnian Serb military commander Gen. Ratko Mladic are the U.N. war crimes tribunal's most-wanted fugitives. In 1995, they were indicted by the tribunal for genocide in the massacre of some 8,000 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica, only months before the Bosnian war ended with a peace agreement.

But a former aid to Karadzic claimed that the United States promised the former Bosnian Serb leader that the U.N. war crimes tribunal would not prosecute him if he fled the country.

Milovan Bjelica said in a television interview in Bosnia on Monday that then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made the offer in 1997 through a senior Bosnian Serb official.

Bjelica, who was twice detained this year by NATO-led peacekeepers in Bosnia for allegedly helping Karadzic evade arrest, told ATV television that Karadzic had a "gentlemen's deal," with U.S. diplomat Richard Holbrooke, the architect of the Dayton peace accord that ended the war.

Bjelica said that according to that deal, Karadzic agreed to withdraw from his post as president of both the Bosnian Serb mini-state and head his political party if the U.N. indictment against Karadzic were dropped.

Holbrooke repeatedly has denied any deal with Karadzic.

Kosovo panned in interview on aid to tribunal

The Associated Press

PRISTINA, Serbia-Montenegro — The U.N. war crimes prosecutor has said she is not receiving help from international officials and Kosovo authorities on war crimes probes in the province, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

After meeting European Union officials in Luxembourg on Monday, Carla del Ponte said she faced enormous problems in the investigations of leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army, Kosovo's leading daily newspaper Koha Ditore reported.

The now-disbanded ethnic Albanian rebel group battled Serb forces in the 1998-1999 war in Kosovo.

"You cannot think how many problems we have in the investigations against KLA leaders in Kosovo," Del Ponte was quoted as saying. "There are big threats against the witnesses there and now they don't want to cooperate."

The Netherlands-based tribunal indicted early last year four former rebels, including a senior commander, for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against civilians in 1998. The indictment marked the court's first action against ethnic Albanians.

"We have no help from anyone, neither from the international community in Kosovo nor the local authorities," Del Ponte said.

E-mailed bomb threat

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands — A regional Dutch television broadcaster said Tuesday it received an e-mail claiming there was a bomb on board a plane from Amsterdam to Chicago.

But Dutch national police spokesman Bart Coppens said the flight had departed several hours earlier without incident, and that authorities have decided after "an initial analysis" not to ask the pilots to make an emergency landing or change their schedule.

RTV Noord-Holland said the e-mail appeared to have been sent from an address in Germany.

Italy dining guide

ROME — One of Italy's top eating guides has unveiled its latest "three fork" ratings, bestowing top honors on restaurants in the provinces and snubbing the big cities.

Only one restaurant from Rome made the Gambero Rosso's top 10 while not one Milanese restaurant made the top 20 — in contrast to the five from the Veneto region and two from the tiny Alto Adige (South Tyrol) near Austria.

From The Associated Press

Japan suspects suicide pacts behind 9 deaths

BY MARI YAMAGUCHI

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Police found seven young people slumped over dead in a van outside Tokyo on Tuesday in what was believed to be Japan's biggest-ever group suicide, while also finding a pair of women dead in an apparent suicide pact in a car at a temple.

The cases — involving young people in their teens and 20s — raised alarm over suicide agreements, many of which are made by people who meet over the Internet. They have claimed dozens of lives and shocked Japan over the past several years.

Tuesday's suicide of four young men and three women in the van would be the largest group suicide yet, the National Police Agency said.

Authorities found the rented van in a deserted mountain lot after a friend of one of the seven who had received an e-mail hinting at suicide called the police, but officers failed to reach it in time, a police spokesman in Saitama prefecture, just outside Tokyo, said on condition of anonymity.

The van windows were sealed with vinyl tape from the inside and the seven were found slumped over in their seats, the spokesman said. Investigators found four charcoal stoves in the car that they believe the group used to poison themselves. No external wounds or signs of a struggle were found. The Saitama police said they believed the seven died of carbon monoxide poisoning, and ordered autopsies.

In a separate incident, two women were found dead in a car parked outside an isolated temple in Yokosuka, about 60 miles to the southeast, a Kanagawa prefecture police spokesman said.

They were in the car's back seat, with two charcoal stoves on the floor. The car windows were sealed with a black plastic tarp.

A partially covered van, in which seven young men and women were found dead, is seen Tuesday at a police station in Chichibu, north of Tokyo.

AP

Dutch medical marijuana not selling well

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands — There's a whiff of crisis in the air at the Dutch Health Ministry: It has a mountain of marijuana that it just can't sell.

The Netherlands rolled out a program last year that allows people with medical needs to buy prescription marijuana at any pharmacy and get part of the money back from medical insurance.

But in a country where any adult can walk into a "coffee shop" and smoke a joint for a quarter of the price, many say the government's experiment at regulating medical marijuana has been a bust.

"I think it's a shame that they can't deliver a cannabis product a little bit cheaper than the coffee shops," said David Watson, head of Hortapharm, an Amsterdam-based company licensed for research and development of cannabis for pharmaceutical use. "Why is it that a legal commodity is more expensive than an illegal commodity?"

Even the government acknowledges its program may be foundering.

"We are not meeting our targets," said Bas Kuik, spokesman for the Office of Medicinal Cannabis, an arm of the Dutch Ministry of Health. Of the 440 pounds in anticipated sales, only 176 pounds were sold since the project was launched last year, he said.

In Britain, spiders rank scarier than terrorists

LONDON — Spiders are scarier than terrorists — at least according to a survey of a thousand Britons released Monday.

Household creepy crawlies frighten Britons more than terrorist attacks, or even death, the survey found.

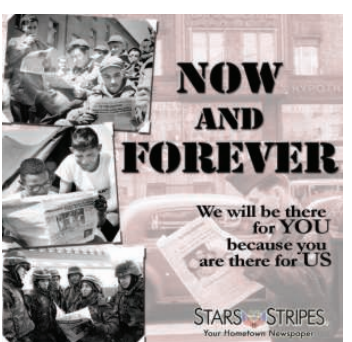
Terrorism only came second on the list of respondents' top ten fears, according to the survey conducted by RSGB Omnibus for Universal Pictures UK Ltd. The survey was based on telephone interviews of 1,000 aged 16 to 55 across Britain on Sept. 22-26.

Another crawling phobia — snakes — was ranked third, followed by a fear of heights. Death came in a surprising fifth place as the nation's greatest fear.

Psychologist Donna Dawson, hired by Universal Pictures to comment on the survey noted that "fear of small creatures that scuttle about on four or more legs is a much more ancient, primordial fear, going straight back to caveman days."

A visit to the dentist came in sixth place, followed by needles and injections, and fear of public speaking — whether professionally or at family events. Fear of debt came in ninth position, beating concerns over flying.

From The Associated Press



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Park budget woes

CA SACRAMENTO — California has stopped acquiring land for state parks for the foreseeable future because it cannot afford to staff and maintain new parkland, according to a newspaper report.

Facing a budget deficit next year of up to $10 billion, state public works officials quietly decided in March to stop accepting or buying new parkland, the San Jose Mercury News reported in Saturday editions.

Following outcries from environmentalists and conservationists, however, the California Public Works Board agreed Friday to add 1,000 acres of redwoods to Castle Rock State Park in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

But in a compromise with park supporters, the board also decided to keep the newly acquired acreage unmarked and closed to the public to save money.

Trying to free freighter

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — Workers pumped fuel from a 600-foot freighter in an attempt to refloat the vessel after it ran aground near a South Florida port.

The Panamanian-flagged Federal Pescadores, transporting cement, ran aground Wednesday about a half mile offshore while attempting to anchor at Port Everglades. It was carrying 588 tons of bunker oil and 105 tons of diesel fuel.

The Coast Guard said there were no signs of pollution from the fuel transfer and there were no injuries.

The Florida Marine Research Institute said divers would survey a reef in the area to determine if there was any damage.

The grounding was under investigation.

Vintage planes destroyed

MI VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP — Fire swept through an aviation museum hangar that housed vintage aircraft, destroying the building and the planes inside.

No injures were reported in the fire Saturday at the Yankee Air Museum at Willow Run Airport, officials said. Several historic planes that were parked outside the hangar were unscathed.

The cause of the fire at the airport 25 miles west of Detroit was not known.

A spokesman for the Wayne County Airport Authority, which owns and operates the airport, did not immediately return a telephone message.

The Yankee Air Museum includes functioning historic aircraft, fixed displays and historic artifacts, according to the its Web site. Its centerpiece was the 1941 hangar that burned Saturday night, which was part of a plant built by Henry Ford to produce World War II bombers on assembly lines like those used at his automotive factories.

Diver attacked by shark

HI KAHULUI — A diver from Honolulu was hospitalized in critical condition after being attacked by a shark in waters off Molokai's south shore Saturday, Maui County fire officials said.

The man was diving at the Kupeke Fishing Pond off Pukoo when he was attacked around 12:40 p.m. near a wall about 200 yards from the beach access, authorities said.

"He was diving alone and he had got bitten by a shark," Maui County Assistant Fire Chief Frank Tam said. "He was screaming, some residents and bystanders came to his aid, saw that he had an injury and called 911. He was bitten front to back in his shoulder area."

Authorities said the man, whose name and age weren't immediately released, was taken by helicopter to Maui Memorial Hospital.

Mom's neglect charges

NV LAS VEGAS — A woman has been charged with child neglect more than 18 months after her two daughters were stabbed during a break-in while she was out gambling.

Tamara Ann Bergeron was charged Friday with 18 counts of child neglect and abuse. Her boyfriend, Robert John Schmidt, was also charged.

Authorities said 11-year-old Brittney Bergeron and 3-year-old Kristyanna Cowan were stabbed by two teenagers who broke into their mobile home when Bergeron and Schmidt were out gambling in January 2003.

Cowan died in the attack and Brittney Bergeron was paralyzed.

Police said the teens, who have since been arrested, were retaliating after being ripped off during a drug deal with Bergeron and Schmidt.

Bergeron's attorney did not immediately return a call for comment.

Pumpkin princess

Dressed as Cinderella, Erin Hunter, 4, makes sure she chooses the perfect pumpkin in a patch among many during Pumpkin-Palooza in Michigan.

Protest at parade

CO DENVER — More than 200 sign-waving and chanting protesters were arrested Saturday after blocking a Columbus Day parade for more than an hour, police said.

Police said they began making arrests after ordering the group of about 600 protesters to leave when the parade was about a block away.

The 230 protesters who were arrested were charged with loitering and disobedience to a lawful order.

There were no reports of violence or injuries.

Police said the protesters, many of whom were American Indians, gathered at the state Capitol, then marched to the parade route in downtown Denver.

Most carried signs, including one that read "Not Genocide, Celebrate Pride" and another showing a crossed out picture of Columbus with the word "savage" over it.

Adam K. Becenti, a University of Colorado-Boulder student of Navajo descent, said the protest was meant to educate people about the inaccuracies in history books.

But Carter Barnard, a member of the Sons of Italy in America, said the protesters had no right to delay the event.

Six killed in arson fire

PA PHILADELPHIA — A fast-moving arson fire killed six people in a rowhouse before dawn Saturday, four of them children, police said.

Authorities concluded that the fire was set deliberately after police dogs smelled an accelerant, and have ruled the deaths homicides.

The house in the North Philadelphia neighborhood was engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived. Five of the victims died at the scene.

The sixth, a 2-year-old boy, died after being taken to the hospital, officials said.

"The heat was very intense, even for the firefighters trying to make their attempts at rescues," police Capt. Richard Ross said.

The victims were two adults and four children, ranging in age from 2 to 12, fire officials said.

Really bad trip to dentist

CA SAN DIEGO — A tiger named Awang Relak could help keep his species from becoming extinct, zoo officials say, but first he needs to do something about his teeth.

The 240-pound Indochinese tiger was anesthetized and strapped to a medical table at the San Diego Zoo on Friday so a dentist could clean out pockets of infection and pry smaller teeth away from larger ones.

While that was going on a veterinarian was probing the 3-year-old's private parts, making sure his sperm count is good enough that he'll be able to mate with female tigers when he's older.

"He was a fabulous patient," said veterinarian Nancy Boedeker.

Frightfully busy season **Vicki Rimkus prepares one of the mannequins displayed Thursday at Cedar Point amusement park near Sandusky, Ohio. Theme parks nationwide are transforming themselves into dark and spooky Halloween attractions at a time of year that once was a slow period but now is one of the busiest.**

Soaring to new heights **Garrett Tomlinson, 15, of Village Mills, Texas, turns a flip as he springs through the air on "The Powerjump," at the the 35th annual Texas Rice Festival in Winnie, Texas.**

Colorful costume **Lynn Rosskamp gets Norbert, her pet rat, ready for the costume contest during the RatsPacNW Fall Rat Show on Mercer Island, Wash.**

Seeing double

Idaho Junior Miss candidates are reflected in a mirror as they rehearse with Dana Smith in Pocatello, Idaho, for a dance routine at the finals.

A great way to travel

The Conway Scenic Railroad makes its way through Craford Notch in Harts Location, N.H. The line at one time was used for freight but now is used for tourist travel, as are many other railroad lines in the Northeast.

Time to hang

Sea lions and seals hang out on the docks at the East Mooring Basin on Sunday in Astoria, Ore. When the salmon head upriver, the sea lions move in to the docks several times a year.

Walking for a cause

Hundreds of supporters take to the streets on the campus of Central Texas College to show their support for the American Heart Association during the annual Heart Walk in Killeen, Texas.

Police officer cleared

TX BAYTOWN — An internal investigation by the Baytown Police Department has determined an officer did nothing wrong when he used his Taser gun against a woman while arresting her.

This is the third time that Micah Aldred, 28, has been cleared of any wrongdoing in the case, The Baytown Sun reported Sunday.

In January, a Harris County jury acquitted Aldred on charges of using excessive force against Naomi Autin during a dispute at her brother's home.

After he was acquitted, Aldred was reinstated back into the department following five months of paid leave.

The jury's decision came after a federal ruling by the U.S. Department of Justice that Aldred did not violate Autin's civil rights.

She accused him of unnecessarily zapping her with his stun gun three times in July 2003, then throwing her against a pole, which left her with a head gash that required stitches.

Nazi deportation case

PA SHARON, Pa. — A man facing deportation because he served as a guard at two Nazi concentration camps said he was forced to join the unit that guarded the camps or face death.

The U.S. Department of Justice wants to revoke the citizenship of Anton Geiser, 79, a retired Pennsylvania steelworker who was born in Croatia. The department said Geiser hid his service in the Waffen SS from U.S. officials when he immigrated in 1956.

The department said Geiser was an armed guard at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin from January to November 1943 before being transferred to the concentration camp at Buchenwald.

But Geiser, who does not deny he was a guard at the camps, said the U.S. visa application did not ask him to reveal his service and that the law did not require him to volunteer information.

In papers filed in federal court in Pittsburgh, Geiser also said he was drafted as a 17-year-old in German-occupied Yugoslavia in 1942 and that his service in the SS "was entirely involuntary and ... performed on pain of death."

Suit against filmaker

NM SANTA FE — Three former high school classmates of "Dazed and Confused" director Richard Linklater have filed a lawsuit claiming they have suffered embarrassment and ridicule because of characters based on them in the movie.

The men — Bobby Wooderson, Andy Slater and Richard "Pink" Floyd — say Linklater did not get their permission before creating three characters in the 1993 cult classic sharing their surnames and likenesses.

The suit was filed Thursday in Santa Fe against Universal Studios, which released the film.

The movie follows the drug- and alcohol-fueled hijinks of teenagers on the last day of school in May 1976. The men said the negative characterizations in the film have made their lives miserable and caused their neighbors to think poorly of them.

"We had fun in high school, but there is nothing true about that movie. Yet I am having to deal with it all the time," said Floyd, who works at a car dealership in Huntsville, Texas, where the men went to high school.

Ernest Freeman, one of the plaintiffs' attorneys, said Slater has also had problems because people make assumptions that he takes illegal drugs.

Officials charge suspect

MI DETROIT — The father of a 3-year-old beaten to death in an attack on her day care center was arrested Saturday, a day after he was named as the suspect in the rampage that also left two women hospitalized with gunshot wounds.

Bernard Kelly, 37, of Detroit, was taken into custody Saturday evening, Detroit Police Officer Jeremy Aguayo said. An arrest warrant for Kelly listed charges of murder, assault with intent to commit murder and felony firearms possession, The Detroit News reported Sunday.

Police initially reported that 3-year-old Stefanie Belue had been shot to death, but later said she was fatally beaten in the Sept. 28 attack.

The warrant came after one of the victims named Kelly as the assailant, Officer Glen Woods said.

Annette Rice, 41, the day care's operator, and Sherita Griggs, Rice's 22-year-old niece, were shot and critically wounded. Both remained hospitalized Saturday. Police said Griggs regained consciousness Friday and identified Kelly.

Rice remained unconscious and in critical condition.

Players' rape charges

NJ NEWARK — Two football players accused of raping a 15-year-old schoolmate have been charged with sexual assault, authorities said.

The two Montclair High School players, ages 15 and 16, were charged with kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, conspiracy and other charges, officials said. Their names were withheld because they are juveniles.

The two turned themselves in on Friday, said Montclair Police Chief David Sagagh.

Sagagh said the two boys picked up the female student on Monday, plus a third boy who is also a member of the football team, then drove to a park. The chief said the third boy, who is cooperating with police, left before the assault after becoming uncomfortable with the situation.

Montclair Superintendent of Schools Frank Alvarez said Friday that the two boys had been suspended from school and removed from the football team.

Tainted registration rolls

CO DENVER — Officials say some 6,000 prisoners and parolees are on the state's voter registration rolls, despite a state law that denies the vote to prisoners serving sentences or convicted felons who are on parole. Secretary of State Donetta Davidson said she plans to convene an emergency meeting this week of Colorado's 64 county clerks to stop prisoners and parolees from voting.

Photos and stories from wire reports

FACES

Pavarotti relocates concert

Luciano Pavarotti will stage his annual benefit concert in Brazil this year instead of his Italian hometown of Modena, a news report said.

The Pavarotti and Friends concert will take place in Sao Paolo in December, the ANSA news agency said Monday, quoting the famed opera singer.

The report didn't explain the change of location, and concert organizers said they had no information on the venue.

Geldof addresses Africa commission

Irish rock star **Bob Geldof** has acknowledged that solutions to Africa's poverty, disease and conflict elude a commission set up by British **Prime Minister Tony Blair** to craft ways of helping the continent.

Geldof

Speaking on the final day of a meeting of the Africa Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Geldof said Friday that increased aid, debt relief and fairer trade weren't enough to end the woes of the world's poorest continent.

"There is something else, something else that all of us are missing and I keep wanting to hear the new idea," the singer said.

Geldof is a member of the commission working to spell out what Africa needs to develop and explain what has held it back.

Kansas town fetes artist Parks

Gordon Parks, the poet and composer, filmmaker and photographer, wasn't able to sit with whites when he was growing up in Fort Scott, Kan. The town has made it up to him with a four-day celebration of his life.

More than 200 people attended four days of lectures, panel discussions, movie screenings and reminiscing. The crowd included about a dozen members of Parks' family who presented a bronze bust of him to the town's Mercy Health Center.

The 91-year-old Parks, still recovering from a hernia operation less than a month ago, defied doctors' orders to attend the celebration.

Parks directed the films "The Learning Tree" and 1971's "Shaft."

Don't look for Pfeiffer on 'Legal'

Don't hold your breath for a guest appearance by **Michelle Pfeiffer** on **David E. Kelley**'s latest TV show.

Kelley

Kelley, the creator of hits such as "Ally McBeal" and "Boston Public," said his wife could have a role on his new ABC drama, "Boston Legal," only if certain conditions are met.

"She would be great. The trick would be convincing her to ever work with me. Even though I might be able to persuade her that other people are running the show, she might not quite believe that I would completely stay out of the process," he said.

Danes, Crudup romance upstages

The on-screen romance in "Stage Beauty" could be upstaged by the real romance that ignited on the set between **Claire Danes** and **Billy Crudup**.

Danes

"Stage Beauty" director **Richard Eyre** stirred the pot recently by acknowledging their relationship to Entertainment Weekly magazine.

"Stage Beauty," which also stars **Ben Chaplin**, is set in 17th-century England at a time when men assumed the female roles in plays. Crudup spends much of the movie in full drag as a stage star considered the most beautiful leading lady of his day.

Danes plays an ambitious wannabe actress who falls in love with him, but is jealous of his success.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

Platt fits in

Actor hones his craft despite constant change

BY LUAINE LEE
Scripps Howard News Service

When he was little, Oliver Platt's family moved constantly. There wasn't time for him to develop friends or revel in familiar places.

That's one reason, he thinks, he became an actor.

"I lived in a lot of countries in the Far East because my father was in the Foreign Service. I was born in Canada and left after two months," says the tall, broad Platt.

When the family returned to the States, Platt found there were two sides to the experience.

"One is it's all I knew so, in a way, you're being traumatized and you don't even know it. On the other hand, you're also seeing a lot of different stuff that nobody gets to see. It was just my life. I wasn't like 'poor me,' " he says.

"There's one of two things that happens to families who move a lot — either they blow apart and disintegrate very quickly because of the stress, or else they get very, very close. And fortunately the latter happened to me. I had this loving family — not that it was a cakewalk — but it made it a lot easier," says Platt.

He is co-starring in Showtime's fascinating new series, "Huff," premiering Nov. 7. It stars one of Platt's best friends, Hank Azaria, as a burdened psychiatrist.

It was Azaria who sent Platt the script, urging him to take the part of the womanizing, cocaine-sniffing lawyer. Whatever extremities the part calls for, they're no problem for Platt.

His performance in a grammar-school Christmas pageant first gave him the idea of becoming an actor, though he had only one line. "But the whole auditorium went totally nuts," he smiles, remembering.

"When you're an insecure, screwed-up kid who doesn't know anybody and that happens to you, you go, 'Oh, I'll have some MORE of this. This is really fun.'

"On a deeper, psychological level, you think it nurtures you. But the fact of the matter is, it's just fun. It's really fun to be with a group of people and have them respond," says Platt, 44.

After the Christmas high, he began to audition for every school play. "Then you have instant friends, which is a neat trick when you're traveling all the time."

Married to his wife, Camilla, for 12 years, and the father of three kids, ages 10, 7 and 5, Platt says it was a wake-up call when he had his first child at 34.

"That really refocuses your priorities," he says, rubbing his chin. "It's especially healthy for someone in show business. You're surrounded by so much swirling clouds of [nonsense]."

Even though he displayed bright promise as an actor, he held back.

"I was always too smart to decide I could do this for a living," he says. "I waited until it was happening to decide I could. You always have another job 'until.' I worked bartending or something like that.

"I'm one of the few people I know that I'm doing what I was meant to do. This is what I was put on the Earth to do, for better or worse."

There was no seismic break for Platt, though he's co-starred in films like "Indecent Proposal," "Doctor Doolittle" and "Pieces of April."

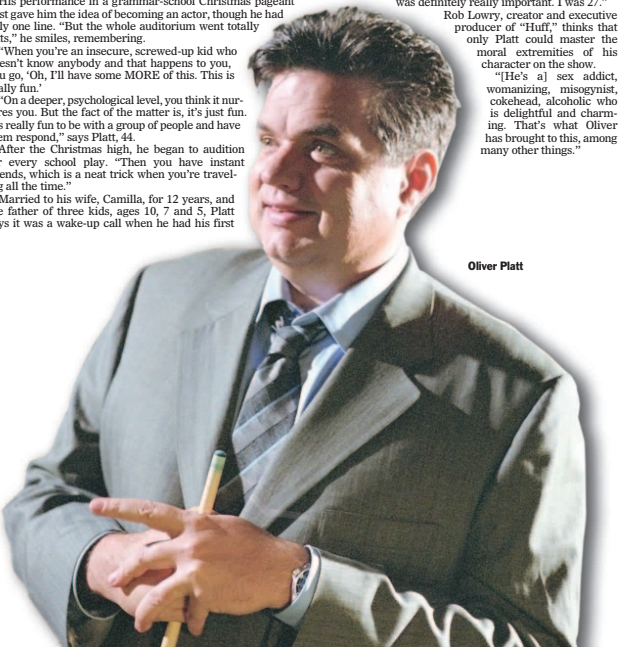
"My biggest break was when I got to New York and I was cast in this high-powered showcase of one-act plays at a place called the Manhattan Punch Line, where all these agents came to look for talent. It was an easy night for them. You'd see four or five new casts, new writers, new directors, in a night. And there were two nights of this thing. I had the best part in the best play of the evening. I had to work really hard not to screw it up. And I did not screw it up. So I had a lot of options. … I had instantly good agents fighting over me."

Bill Murray came to see the one-acts that night and alerted director Jonathan Demme about the winsome Platt.

"And he asked me to do 'Married to the Mob,' so that job was definitely really important. I was 27."

Rob Lowry, creator and executive producer of "Huff," thinks that only Platt could master the moral extremities of his character on the show.

"[He's a] sex addict, womanizing, misogynist, cokehead, alcoholic who is delightful and charming. That's what Oliver has brought to this, among many other things."



Oliver Platt

YOUR MONEY

Computer making annoying sounds

Q. Whether I am on the Internet or not, there is a noise that comes out like a cat crying. I have shut off my speakers, so I know the sound is coming from the computer. There is no regular time that it comes on, but it sure is annoying.

—Martin Johan @msn.com

A. That's not a cat, Mr. J. It's supposed to be Beethoven.

You are experiencing a rare phenomenon in which a part of your computer called the BIOS (basic input output system) has triggered a warning that your main microprocessor and/or other chips are giving off heat above the recommended level. BIOS uses a tiny and tinny speaker built onto the chipboards, and the warning signal is a rendition of Beethoven's "Fur Elise" classic.

Ask Jim

Jim Coates

Usually the cause of the overheating is a failing fan, but another cause can be a lack of ventilation, so move the computer away from any obstructions covering the air vents on the case.

Sometimes the warning gets triggered because one of the circuit boards plugged in to the expansion slots has become loose. So if you're comfortable removing the cover, you might try pushing each of these boards to make sure they fit into the slots as far as they can go.

Replacing a fan is probably a job for a computer repair shop, so let's hope getting better ventilation or pressing down on the expansion boards will fix things.

Q. We recently bought our first Windows XP computer and an iPod music player. Multiple family members have created separate logons in XP and have their own iTunes music libraries. However, we cannot figure out how to share songs between users without actually copying the songs to a CD and reimporting them into the other user's library.

Isn't there an easier way since the files are on the same computer? I find the whole XP concept of hiding file folders between users confusing. Can you help?

—Paul Smith @aol.com

A. A great many more Windows users than just your family of music lovers encounter this problem with Apple's super-popular iPod digital music player. It was designed from the ground up for Macs and not for PCs based on Microsoft Windows.

The best solution I know comes from Des Moines-based MediaFour Corp. It includes software called XPlay2 for iPods among its line of programs designed to let PCs read and write to Mac hard drives.

In essence, XPlay2 cuts through the fog of iPod copy protection and Apple's proprietary formatting system. Running on a PC, the software can simplify using music files in multiple user accounts to a drag-and-drop cakewalk.

Instead of that workaround you figured by recording songs onto a CD and then ripping them back into another account, you can have folks just pick whatever tunes they want and drag copies to their iPod accounts.

There are no issues with the computer automatically synchronizing with the iPod when you connect it, so XPlay2 allows users to share files among different screen names without removing them.

The software works with Windows-formatted iPods and those with the Mac formatting. At $30, this software is a particular boon to those of us with large MP3 collections on our PCs when we want to enjoy those sleek status symbols known as iPods. Details at **www.mediafour.com**.

Q. I have tried everything I can think of, and still my mouse keeps getting slowed to a crawl after I have been on the computer for a period of time. Sometimes rebooting fixes it but not always.

I've played through all the settings under settings/control panel/mouse/pointer options and such. No help. I even thought I fixed it by replacing the mouse itself (theory was connector on the mouse had gone bad), but after a couple sessions the same thing is happening with the new mouse.

Then, with theory that the mouse driver might be bad (though Microsoft says it's fine), I went out and bought another mouse with its own driver — same result. I even thought I might have inadvertently set something on my virus/firewall program that slowed it down.

I've tested for spyware/adware, but none was found. My anti-virus and firewall seem to be working fine.

Any ideas? —Russ Herber @starstream.net

A. As that great technical support consultant Sherlock Holmes once advised his sidekick Watson, "How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth?"

Yes, my dear Mr. H., you did a brilliant job attacking the Riddle of the Recalcitrant Rodent.

Your efforts covered just about every possible solution to mouse problems, including acquiring a brand-new mouse. You did not, however, consider what remains, however improbable that may sound.

Contact Jim Coates via e-mail at: **jcoates@ tribune.com** or via snail mail at the Chicago Tribune, Room 400, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago IL 60611. Questions can be answered only through this column. Add your point of view at: **www.chicagotribune.com/askjim.**

Cost of flying rises with oil

BY LAURENCE FROST

The Associated Press

PARIS — Airlines the world over are raising fares in response to the latest oil price hike, which threatens to choke off a gradual recovery in air travel and deepen the woes of carriers already struggling with bankruptcy.

British Airways PLC became the latest airline to increase prices on Friday after AMR Corp.'s American Airlines raised one-way domestic flights by $5 earlier in the week, prompting UAL Corp.'s United Airlines and Continental Airlines Inc. to follow suit.

The latest round of fare hikes could dampen demand for air travel, industry watchers warn, just as passenger traffic figures were beginning to recover from a series of setbacks.

Air France SA and Germany's Deutsche Lufthansa AG are among carriers that have scaled back their short-term growth forecasts, reflecting expectations of more muted demand.

If a prolonged rise in oil prices triggers a broader global economic slowdown, airlines will suffer even more as nonessential business travel and holiday plans are cut back.

"Any dampening effect is most likely to come through the impact of higher oil prices on economic growth and consumer sentiment," said Brian Pearce, chief economist at the International Air Transport Association, which represents major airlines.

The surge in fuel prices is just the latest calamity to beset airlines. The global industry has lurched from crisis to crisis since the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, racking up combined losses of more than $30 billion.

Analysts say the biggest victims could be airlines that find it difficult to raise their fares — like major carriers in the United States, where overcapacity and cutthroat competition prevent higher fuel costs being passed on to passengers.

MONDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES

52-week High	52-week Low	Name	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD % Chg	52-wk % Chg
10,753.63	9,497.72	Dow Jones Industrials	10,081.97	+26.77	+.27	-3.56	+3.25
3,389.20	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,336.17	+.17	+.01	+10.94	+16.05
301.55	243.26	Dow Jones Utilities	300.17	+.09	+.03	+12.47	+18.22
6,798.12	5,812.25	NYSE Composite	6,643.17	+6.75	+.10	+3.15	+11.82
1,291.81	1,005.78	Amex Index	1,284.73	-.47	-.04	+9.47	+25.50
2,153.83	1,750.82	Nasdaq Composite	1,928.76	+8.79	+.46	-3.72	-.25
1,163.23	1,018.32	S&P 500	1,124.39	+2.25	+.20	+1.12	+7.56
618.46	528.13	S&P MidCap	594.31	+.15	+.03	+3.18	+9.36
606.42	503.88	Russell 2000	577.56	+1.91	+.33	+3.71	+9.48
11,371.14	9,890.89	DJ Wilshire 5000	10,985.95	+21.43	+.20	+1.73	+8.05

NYSE

MOST ACTIVE ($1 OR MORE)

Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Lucent	295644	3.44	+.05
Merck	240544	30.74	+.39
Calpine	199240	2.64	-.22
Pfizer	189401	30.31	+.51
TexInst	111658	21.89	-.16
Corning	108857	10.58	+.33
MicronT	95695	11.90	-.11
HomeDp	87466	40.07	+1.05
GenElec	85516	34.00	+.26
Citigrp	77570	44.86	+.30

AMEX

MOST ACTIVE ($1 OR MORE)

Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Nasd100Tr	503802	35.75	+.14
SemiHTr	230552	30.68	+.09
SPDR	194000	112.97	+.46
OilSvHT	49598	81.98	-2.30
iShRs2000	38983	115.14	+.54
DJIA Diam	35259	101.14	+.44
WheatR g	24342	3.25	-.02
SP Engy	24210	35.88	-.31
iShJapan	22009	10.03	+.07
BemaGold	19289	3.09	-.09

NASDAQ

MOST ACTIVE ($1 OR MORE)

Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
SiriusS	1044981	3.52	-.18
Intel	491842	20.61	+.06
Microsoft	440705	28.06	+.07
ApldMatl	299323	16.29	+.08
Oracle	255468	12.20	+.03
Cisco	228483	18.98	+.20
SunMicro	183336	4.22	+.06
Isonics	140025	2.44	+.74
Peoplesoft	132002	21.83	-.12
Yahoo s	125625	34.02	-.15

KEY DEFENSE STOCKS

Name	Div	PE	Last	Chg	YTD %Chg
Alliant Technosystem	...	14	57.79	-.17	+.1
Armor Holdings	...	41	42.55	+1.00	+61.7
Boeing	.80	16	50.26	+.16	+19.3
Computer Sciences	...	17	49.14	+.26	+11.1
Engineered Sup Sys	.04	19	47.04	+.25	-14.6
General Dynamics	1.44	18	100.07	-.08	+10.7
General Electric	.80	22	34.00	+.26	+9.7
Halliburton	.50	...	34.39	-.98	+32.3
Harris Corp.	.48	29	57.83	+.25	+52.4
Allied Signal	.75	22	35.54	-.21	+6.3
L-3 Communications	.40	21	64.78	-.33	+26.1
Lockheed Martin	1.00	22	55.50	+.08	+8.0
NorthrpG s	.92	20	51.97	-.18	+8.7
Raytheon	.80	79	36.40	+.08	+21.2
Rockwell Intl.	.66	23	39.45	+.15	+10.8
Sequa Corp.	...	39	51.65	+.50	+5.4
Texas Instruments	.10	22	21.89	-.16	-25.5
Textron Inc.	1.30	34	65.04	+.67	+14.0
United Technologies	1.40	18	92.27	-.16	-2.6

KEY MUTUAL FUNDS

Name	NAV	Chg.	YTD %Ret.
Fidelity Invest: GroInc	36.12	+.10	+2.6
Fidelity Invest: GroCo	49.76	+.23	-.6
Amer Century Inv: Ultra	26.81	+.06	+.6
Fidelity Spartan: EqIdx	39.91	+.08	+2.3
Putnam Funds A: GrInA p	18.08	+.04	+3.0
Fidelity Invest: A Mgr	15.62	+.03	+.6
Frank/Temp Frnk A: SMCpGrA	30.25	+.04	+.1
AIM Investments A: Const p	20.89	+.02	-2.9
Fidelity Invest: USBI	11.18	...	+3.5
Fidelity Invest: Ovrsea	32.00	-.08	+1.8
Fidelity Advisor T: GrOppT	28.22	+.07	-1.5
Fidelity Advisor T: EqInT	26.84	+.03	+4.2
Scudder Funds S: GroIncS	20.40	+.03	+1.7
Putnam Funds A: GlbEqty p	7.67	-.01	+2.8
AIM Investments A: ChartA p	12.06	+.01	+1.4
AIM Investments A: WeingA p	11.84	+.01	-2.0
Merrill Lynch I: BalCapI	26.90	...	+2.7
Scudder Funds S: Intl FdS	40.04	-.08	+4.3
Fidelity Advisor T: OvrseaT	15.99	-.04	+1.3
Lord Abbett A: DevGtA p	14.34	+.06	-4.4
Scudder Funds S: Income S	12.99	...	+4.0
Merrill Lynch I: USGvtMtg	10.31	...	+2.7
Scudder Funds S: Devel	17.60	+.02	-6.6
Putnam Funds A: GlGvA p	12.49	+.01	+2.5

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro	$1.2648
British pound	$1.84
Japanese yen (Oct. 12)	109.00
South Korean won (Oct. 9)	1,121.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.37699
British pound	$1.7966
Canada (Dollar)	1.2546
Denmark (Krone)	5.70
Egypt (Pound)	6.2352
Euro	$1.2379
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.791
Hungary (Forint)	198.82
Iceland (Krona)	70.685
Israel (Shekel)	4.4563
Japan (Yen)	109.35
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.29461
Norway (Krone)	6.30
Philippines (Peso)	56.30
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.59
Singapore (Dollar)	1.68
South Korea (Won)	1,146.00
Switzerland (Franc)	1.19
Thailand (Baht)	41.31
Turkey (Lira)	1,496,000.00

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

PRECIOUS METALS

London close	
Gold	$413.70
Silver	$6.95

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.75
Discount rate	2.75
Federal funds market rate	1.75
3-month bill	1.69
30-year bond	4.91

Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America

Cents and Sensibility
Money tip of the day

Ready home for winter

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — High oil prices won't hit consumers at just gas pumps this year. As the weather gets colder, they'll probably feel the pinch in home heating bills as well.

Costs for heating oil, propane and natural gas are expected to rise across the nation, even in areas where fuel demands are lower.

Start preparing your home for the colder months now.

■ Adjust your water heater, advises the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. Turn down the temperature to the warm setting — about 120 degrees. Buy an insulating blanket for your water heater to prevent heat from escaping.

■ Buy a programmable thermostat. Set it to automatically decrease and increase the temperature based on your schedule — lower when you're at work and late at night, and higher for when you're up and about the house.

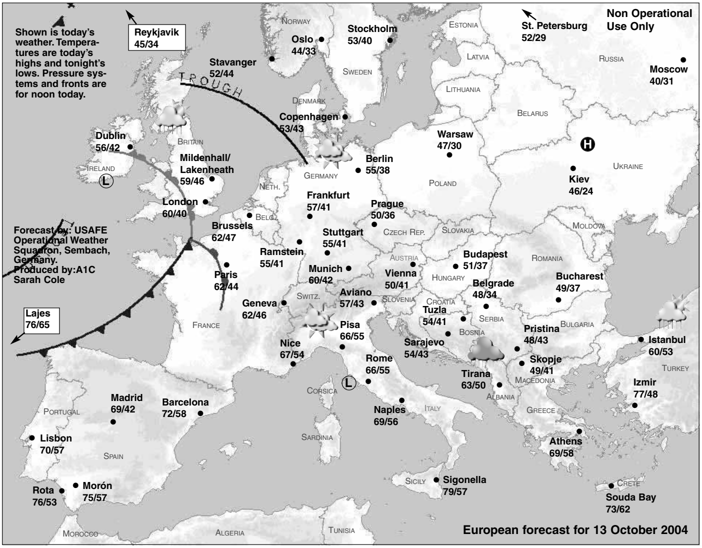
■ Replace your furnace's heating filters each fall.

■ Seal up air leaks in your house. Listen for windows and doors that whistle on windy days, and then plug the cracks with rope caulk or weather strips. Place towels or draft blockers at the bottom of doors.

■ Clear away furniture from heat vents and registers, advises USA Today. Make sure that hot air has an obstacle-free path to move through the house.

■ Talk to your utility company or your state's energy office about ways to adjust your bill. Either office may be able to schedule an energy audit so that you can find out whether your home can be more efficient. Your utility company may also offer alternate payment schedules to spread out the cost of high winter bills.

Visit the Administration for Children & Families, under the U.S. Health and Human Services Department, at **www.acf.dhhs.gov/**. The administration offers a home energy-assistance program, including help with bills and weatherizing, for people on low or fixed incomes.



KEY: Sunny · Pt. Cldy. · Mostly cldy. · Cloudy · Showers · T-storms · Rain · Rain/snow · Snow · Cold frnt. · Warm frnt. · Trough · Occluded fr. · Staty. front · Low · High

EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and gustly winds. Highs in the lower 60s, Wednesday lows in the upper 40s to lower 50s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy with rainshowers and gusty winds. Highs in the upper 50s to lower 60s, Wednesday lows in the upper to lower 40s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the mid 50s, Wednesday lows in the lower 40s.

France: Cloudy with rainshowers. Highs in the mid 60s, Wednesday lows in the mid 40s.

Northern Germany: Sunny to partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 50s, Wednesday lows in the upper 30s to lower 40s.

Southern Germany: Partly to mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s to lower 60s, Wednesday lows in the lower 40s.

Hungary: Sunny. Highs in the mid 50s, Wednesday lows in the upper 30s.

Northern Italy: Partly to mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 50 to mid 60s, Wednesday lows in the lower 40s to mid 50s.

Southern Italy: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 60s, Wednesday lows in the mid to upper 50s.

Kosovo: Cloudy with rainshowers. Highs in the upper 40s, Wednesday lows in the lower 40s.

Norway: Mostly cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the mid 40s to lower 50s, Wednesday lows in the lower 30s to lower 40s.

Portugal, Spain: Partly cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the upper 60s to mid 70s, Wednesday lows in the lower 40s to upper 50s.

Turkey: Partly to mostly cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the lower 60s to mid 80s, Wednesday lows in the upper 40s to lower 60s.

For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to the USAFE Operational Weather Squadron home page at:
https://ows.sembach.af.mil
http://ows.public.sembach.af.mil

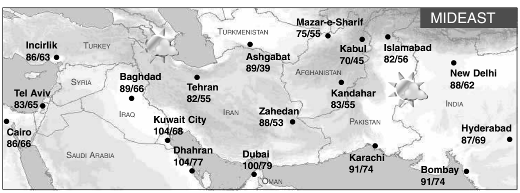
AFRICA

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Cape Town	77	54	Mogadishu	88	75
Dakar	89	78	Nairobi	84	58
Freetown	87	75	Rabat	73	55
Kinshasa	84	70	Tripoli	91	64

THE WORLD

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Amsterdam	61	46	Manila	89	74
Bahrain	97	73	Mexico City	70	53
Beijing	66	40	Montreal	60	43
Beirut	81	69	Riyadh	99	69
Bermuda	79	72	Rio de. Jan	76	71
Caracas	92	78	Seoul	69	42
Helsinki	50	35	Sofia	48	38
Hong Kong	87	72	Sydney	88	68
Lisbon	70	57	Tokyo	75	61

MIDEAST



SUN & MOON

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	0306	0307
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	0545	0547
Sunset (Baghdad)	1432	1431
Sunset (Frankfurt)	1640	1638

New moon Oct 14 · First qtr. Oct 20 · Full moon Oct 28 · Last qtr. Nov 05

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

	Hi	Lo	Otlk
Abilene,Tex.	75	48	Cldy
Akron,Ohio	63	48	Rain
Albany,N.Y.	67	47	Clr
Albuquerque	68	45	PCldy
Allentown,Pa.	68	49	PCldy
Amarillo	64	38	PCldy
Anchorage	48	37	Cldy
Asheville	67	51	Rain
Atlanta	69	53	Cldy
Atlantic City	68	53	PCldy
Austin	83	55	PCldy
Baltimore	68	52	Cldy
Baton Rouge	78	53	PCldy
Billings	62	41	PCldy
Birmingham	68	53	PCldy
Bismarck	51	34	PCldy
Boise	70	41	Clr
Boston	67	51	Clr
Bridgeport	67	53	Clr
Brownsville	88	66	Clr
Buffalo	69	50	PCldy
Burlington,Vt.	62	43	Clr
Caribou,Maine	56	43	PCldy
Casper	59	41	PCldy
Charleston,S.C.	78	63	Rain
Charleston,W.Va.	64	50	Rain
Charlotte,N.C.	69	55	Rain
Chattanooga	67	52	Cldy
Cheyenne	53	35	PCldy
Chicago	60	45	Cldy
Cincinnati	61	46	Rain

Cleveland	64	52	Rain
Colorado Springs	50	32	PCldy
Columbia,S.C.	76	57	Rain
Columbus,Ga.	74	56	PCldy
Columbus,Ohio	63	49	Rain
Concord,N.H.	68	38	PCldy
Corpus Christi	88	65	PCldy
Dallas-Ft Worth	78	51	PCldy
Dayton	61	46	Rain
Daytona Beach	86	64	PCldy
Denver	55	34	PCldy
Des Moines	60	36	Cldy
Detroit	63	47	Cldy
Duluth	50	27	Rain
El Paso	81	54	Clr
Elkins	62	46	Rain
Erie	64	50	PCldy
Eugene	74	44	Clr
Evansville	64	48	Rain
Fairbanks	39	23	Cldy
Fargo	49	27	PCldy
Flagstaff	65	30	Clr
Flint	63	45	Cldy
Fort Smith	73	47	PCldy
Fort Wayne	59	43	Rain
Fresno	87	58	Clr
Goodland	57	30	Cldy
Grand Junction	71	42	Clr
Grand Rapids	63	44	PCldy
Great Falls	65	44	PCldy
Green Bay	59	41	Cldy
Greensboro,N.C.	62	54	Rain
Harrisburg	67	51	PCldy

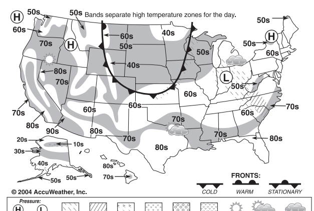
Hartford Spgfld	70	44	Clr
Helena	66	42	PCldy
Honolulu	88	72	Rain
Houston	84	60	PCldy
Huntsville	66	50	Cldy
Indianapolis	61	47	Rain
Jackson,Miss.	72	54	PCldy
Jacksonville	84	60	PCldy
Juneau	53	43	Rain
Kansas City	63	37	PCldy
Key West	85	75	PCldy
Knoxville	66	50	Cldy
Lake Charles	81	58	PCldy
Lansing	62	43	PCldy
Las Vegas	87	62	Clr
Lexington	65	49	Rain
Lincoln	60	36	Cldy
Little Rock	70	48	Cldy
Los Angeles	77	60	Clr
Louisville	64	50	Rain
Lubbock	67	42	PCldy
Macon	75	56	PCldy
Madison	58	38	Cldy
Medford	85	45	Clr
Memphis	69	50	PCldy
Miami Beach	88	71	PCldy
Midland-Odessa	76	47	PCldy
Milwaukee	60	42	Cldy
Mpls-St Paul	53	34	Clr
Mobile	79	56	Cldy
Montgomery	74	55	PCldy
Nashville	65	49	Rain
New Orleans	80	59	PCldy

New York City	68	57	Clr
Newark	69	54	Clr
Norfolk,Va.	70	57	Rain
North Platte	58	29	PCldy
Oklahoma City	69	44	Cldy
Omaha	57	36	Cldy
Orlando	86	65	PCldy
Paducah	63	48	Cldy
Pendleton	43	72	Clr
Peoria	59	42	Cldy
Philadelphia	69	55	PCldy
Phoenix	92	68	Clr
Pittsburgh	65	47	Cldy
Pocatello	60	33	Clr
Portland,Maine	66	47	PCldy
Portland,Ore.	74	50	Clr
Providence	69	46	Clr
Pueblo	58	31	PCldy
Raleigh-Durham	66	56	Rain
Rapid City	56	34	PCldy
Reno	77	43	Clr
Richmond	67	54	Rain
Roanoke	60	50	Rain
Rochester	67	48	PCldy
Rockford	60	41	Cldy
Sacramento	94	52	Clr
St Louis	63	43	Cldy
St Thomas	88	79	PCldy
Salem,Ore.	75	46	Clr
Salt Lake City	66	42	Clr
San Angelo	77	51	Cldy
San Antonio	85	58	PCldy
San Diego	75	63	Clr

San Francisco	80	56	Clr
San Jose	85	56	Clr
San Juan,P.R.	89	78	PCldy
Santa Fe	65	34	PCldy
St Ste Marie	60	44	PCldy
Savannah	79	61	Cldy
Seattle	67	49	Clr
Shreveport	76	53	Cldy
Sioux City	54	32	PCldy
Sioux Falls	53	31	PCldy
South Bend	58	43	Rain
Spokane	66	37	Clr
Springfield,Ill.	60	43	Cldy
Springfield,Mo.	63	38	PCldy
Syracuse	70	48	PCldy
Tallahassee	81	57	PCldy
Tampa-St Ptrsbg	84	68	PCldy
Toledo	63	48	Rain
Topeka	64	38	PCldy
Tucson	87	58	Clr
Tulsa	67	42	PCldy
Tupelo	68	48	PCldy
Waco	82	52	PCldy
Washington,D.C.	68	54	Cldy
W.Palm Beach	88	67	PCldy
Wichita	66	39	PCldy
Wichita Falls	74	48	Cldy
Wilkes-Barre	70	49	PCldy
Wilmington,Del.	68	52	PCldy
Yakima	40	74	Clr

THE UNITED STATES TODAY

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time



Via Associated Press

Scheduled to ETS or PCS?

Check our Relocation Guide every Saturday to find Realtors at your new station.

STARS AND STRIPES®
Your Hometown Newspaper

Horoscope

Joyce Jillson

This is a beautiful commencement day for relationships, establishments, endeavors and projects. Making a resolution with yourself now is extremely lucky, but naming a group mission or a common cause is even more fortunate. The moon in balanced Libra is having a party with Mercury, Mars, Jupiter and the sun.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (October 13). You might surprise yourself by taking up a cause that stirs you to action and revives your passion. It could be something as huge as taking on global warming or as small as helping an elderly neighbor clean out her garage. Resistant family members will come around once they see how serious you are. Lucky love signs are Cancer and Aquarius.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Someone's laziness does not reflect poorly on you; it merely shines a light on your own weaknesses. Perhaps you're jealous and wish you, too, could live a life of ease. Examine your motivations before blaming.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Prestige is overrated. What does it get you other than a sense of importance and entitlement? The high esteem that others bestow upon you is ephemeral; it can evaporate overnight. Self-respect is better than prestige.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Identify negative thought patterns. Ask yourself: Where did this thought come from? Is it true and provable? Once you realize negative thinking is not fact but a fiction created by your insecurities, you can adjust your worldview.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour. Life's unexpected twists and turns are what keep things interesting. After all, would you really want everything to go exactly according to plan? Boring!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Control is an illusion. Management is reality. No matter how well you plan your day, you're always going to have that last-minute e-mail or drop-in visitor to throw off your day. With a good attitude, you'll still be amazingly productive.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). To realize the value of a minute, ask a person who has missed a plane. To realize the value of a second, ask someone who narrowly escaped a serious accident. Every moment of your life has value. Make the most of your moments.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Does your partner balance you out? You know it's true if he or she is still clearly on your side even when you both disagree. But if your disagreements turn into unproductive arguments, it's time for a re-alignment.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You may receive some news from a family member who's going through a difficult and confusing time. The information he or she imparts will throw some light on recent strange behavior. Listen, and sympathize.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Sometimes to see the big picture, you need to look at several smaller snapshots. Nowhere is this truer than in examining your life. What did you receive from others today? What did you give? Write down the answers.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Happiness comes through doors you didn't even realize you left open. Seek it, and you probably will not find it. Stop searching, and there it is. It finds you when you're ready for it — and usually when you least expect it.

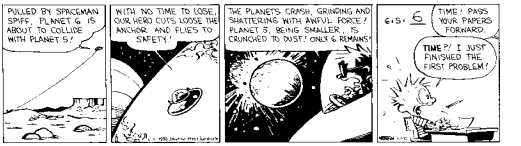
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The longer you complain, the longer it takes until you are healed. So take some real action. Do something to fix the situation. No matter who got you into a mess, you're the best person to get yourself out of it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Some mistakes are too much fun to make only once. Repeat them often enough, and you'll eventually get bored with them, like anything else. There's no getting around growing up — it happens to the best of us.

Creators Syndicate

Peanuts

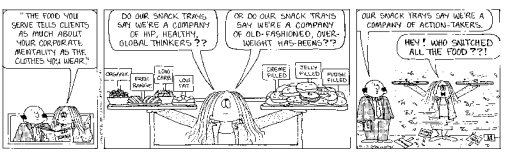
Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start

Zits

Cathy



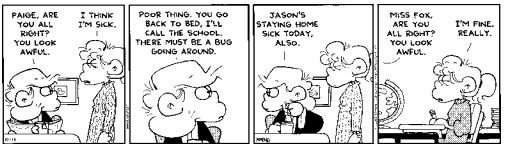
Hi and Lois

Beetle Bailey

Red and Rover

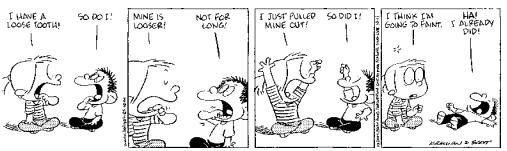
Better or Worse

Foxtrot

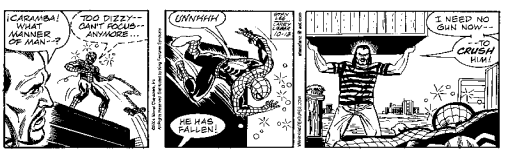


B.C.

Baby Blues

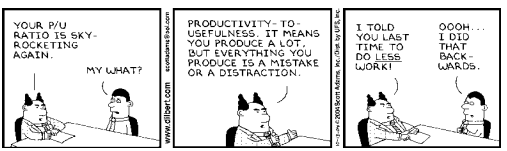


Spider Man

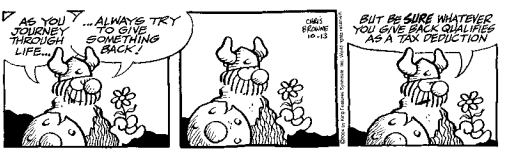


Blondie

Dilbert

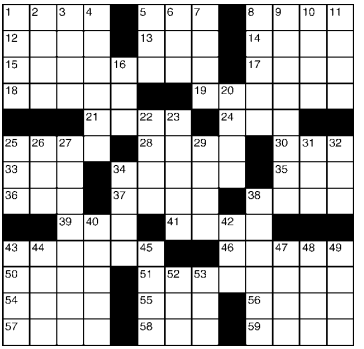


Hagar



Garfield

Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

1 Bellow
5 Will Ferrell movie
8 Mulligan, e.g.
12 Advantage
13 Actress Gretchen
14 Emanation
15 TV
17 Wading bird
18 Watchful guardian
19 Dormant
21 Tavern stack
24 Kreskin's claim
25 Chip in a chip
28 Sauce thickener
30 The whole shootin' match
33 Addressee
34 Political affiliation
35 Part of NIMBY
36 Undergo recession
37 Concept
38 Venomous vipers
39 Fleece provider
41 "Begone!"
43 Oscar contenders
46 "Silver Streak" star
50 Odin's kid
51 Centrifuge insert
54 Klutz's comment
55 Rd.
56 "I cannot tell —"
57 Majority
58 Archery-bow wood
59 Pip

Down

1 Ms. McEntire
2 Aroma
3 Eager, and then some
4 Scold
5 Ostrich's cousin
6 High arcing shot
7 Dog bane
8 Takes to the lake
9 Bundt makers' needs
10 Ontario neighbor
11 Nasty stinger
16 Mao — -tung
20 Erotic
22 Alumnus
23 Abrasions
25 Seaman's assent
26 San Francisco's — Hill
27 Sleeveless garments
29 Beehive State
31 Prune
32 USN officers
34 Harbor structure
38 Heartlines?
40 Bottom of the list
42 Make up your mind
43 Teensy bit
44 Train sound
45 Command to Rover
47 Year-end celebration
48 Stage statuette
49 Harmonica part
52 Leading lady
53 Wield a needle

Answer to Previous Puzzle

C	L	A	Y		H	A	S		F	A	N	G
C	O	K	E		A	L	I		E	V	I	L
S	T	A	R	T	L	E	D		R	I	C	E
			T	O	T		E	L	E	V	E	N
V	O	I	L	E		S	C	A	N			
O	B	O	E		S	T	A	R	C	H	E	S
W	I	T		S	W	O	R	D		E	L	L
S	T	A	R	T	E	R	S		B	A	B	A
			H	U	E	Y		F	O	R	A	Y
T	Y	R	A	N	T		N	O	W			
B	O	O	M		S	T	A	R	L	I	N	G
A	G	U	E		O	A	T		E	R	I	E
R	A	T	S		P	R	O		R	A	P	T

10-13 **CRYPTOQUIP**

G F U W I X J B X U T F R U C J I D C C U Q U W I B G D M X D Q F W - X D F P C J D F C , U I M F C C U ' O B C B W P B R O D W I F T .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF I CAN PROVE THE BASEBALL OFFICIAL MADE A BLUNDER, IS THAT UMPIRICAL EVIDENCE?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals S

Child discipline a sticking point

Dear Abby: My boyfriend of four years, "Harold," and I are starting to discuss marriage and starting a family. I am hesitant because of one thing: We have very different views about disciplining children.

My parents never used violence as a form of punishment, and I don't want to use it to discipline my kids. I think that other methods of discipline work just as well, without destroying the bond between parent and child.

When Harold was young, his father would discipline the kids by hitting them with a belt. Harold sees nothing wrong with this.

However, both Harold and his brother have big anger management issues. I love him and would love to spend the rest of my life with him, but this is a major issue for me.

Do you think this marriage would work, and are there any good compromises we could agree on?

— Non-Violent in St. Louis

Dear Non-Violent: Your boyfriend may believe that he has turned out OK, but the fact that he has anger management problems proves that he didn't. Before any decisions about marriage are made, Harold should get professional help.

Dear Abby

You and Harold should enroll in classes on child development and parenting. Some hospitals, high schools and community colleges offer them. Unless the two of you can reach a firm agreement about this subject, you should NOT marry.

Dear Abby: I am 16 and a junior in high school. My best friend says there may be something wrong with me. When I was younger, I was a hard-core tomboy. I stayed that way until I got to be 13.

Finally, in my freshman year of high school, I began to wear makeup on occasion — but to this day, I have never been interested in dating guys. I mean I like guys, but I don't care to DATE them. Once a guy I know said he thought I was gay. I'm not. Now my friend is saying I might have a problem.

Abby, do I? Should I date so people won't get the impression I'm gay? Please help.

— Not Interested in N. Carolina

Dear Not Interested: No, and it is OK not to be obsessed with boys right now. Not everyone — male or female — matures at the same rate. I have received letters from readers telling me they didn't become seriously interested in a romantic relationship until they were 18 or 19, or even older. You may be a late bloomer.

People are "coming out" much earlier than they used to, and were you attracted to people of the same sex, you would probably know it. If you don't think you're gay, you probably aren't.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at **http://www.uexpress.com/dearabby**

Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SILLE

DENEY

AGOVEY

MALFEE

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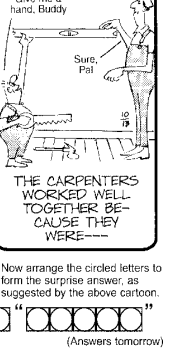
www.jumble.com

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A: THE " "

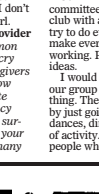
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: SYNOD BASIN TRIPLE EXODUS
Answer: What he did at the London casino – LOST "POUNDS"

Infant child a handful at day care

Dear Annie: I recently started a day-care center and took in a 10-month-old girl, "Macy." Whenever I leave the room, Macy starts crying and follows me. Also, I have a daughter the same age who is well-behaved and kind to other children. Yet any time my daughter goes near Macy, the girl flips out and begins hitting, kicking and screaming. I am wondering if these are signs that Macy has been neglected or abused.

Annie's Mailbox



I don't want to stop watching Macy, because she is a sweet child, but at the same time I don't want her to hurt my little girl.

— Confused Day-care Provider

Dear Provider: It's common for infants and toddlers to cry when their parents or caregivers leave the room, and to follow them. This does not indicate neglect, but rather that Macy needs time to adjust to her surroundings. Her reaction to your daughter could be due to many things: your daughter may be annoying her in ways you do not see, your daughter may remind her of another child whom she dislikes, or she may be jealous of your daughter's closeness to you.

If the hitting and kicking continue beyond the first month, discuss it with the girl's parents, and explain that they will have to make other arrangements for Macy, because your daughter's well-being must come first.

Dear Annie: I belong to a committee in charge of a seniors' club with a large membership. We try to do everything possible to make everyone happy, but it isn't working. Please give us some ideas.

I would say nearly 90 percent of our group joins in on most everything. The vast majority enjoy life by just going and doing — movies, dances, dinners, lunches, any kind of activity. But we also have many people who don't make any effort to get along. They are constantly blaming others for every little thing. These people never seem to have a nice word about anyone.

Why is it that some people can't try and get along? Why would they rather be miserable? We are sure there must be some way we can bring these people around. We would appreciate your input.

— One Who Cares

Dear One Who Cares: You're sweet, but you are fighting an uphill battle. Some people derive great satisfaction in being curmudgeonly.

Their negative attitude provokes a great deal of attention and effort, and they enjoy it.

Since 90 percent of your group likes the activities, don't fuss so much over the others. If you plan things that are entertaining, the grouches have the choice of joining in or not.

Ignore the sniping.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to **annies-mailbox@comcast.net**, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus

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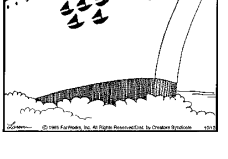
"Enough! This is a lecture, not a debate!"

GRAFFITI

Dennis the Menace

©Gary Larson

The Far Side



Non Sequitur

SCOREBOARD

AFN TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFN-Sports, 2 p.m. — Outdoors: Wal-Mart FLW Tour (did).
AFN-Sports, 7:30 p.m. — College football: Purdue at Penn St. (did).

Thursday

AFN-Sports, 2 a.m. — Baseball: NLCS, Game 1, Houston at St. Louis.
AFN-Atlantic, 2 a.m. — Baseball: ALCS, Game 2, Boston at N.Y. Yankees.
AFN-Sports, 7 a.m. — Outdoors: Wal-Mart FLW Tour (did).
AFN-Sports, 9 a.m. — Baseball: ALCS, Game 2, Boston at N.Y. Yankees (did).
AFN-Sports, 1:30 p.m. — NBA preseason: Sacramento vs. Houston at Shanghai.
AFN-Sports, 5 p.m. — NFL: NFL Films Game of the Week (did).
AFN-Sports, 7 p.m. — Soccer: Panama at U.S. men World Cup qualifier (did).
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. — College football: West Virginia at Connecticut (did).

All times are Central European Time; did indicates delayed broadcast. All listings are subject to change. Some radio broadcasts not available in all areas. Visit **www.myafn.net** for more information.

College football

Division I-AA Top 25

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The top 25 teams in the Sports Network Division I-AA football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Oct. 10 and previous ranking:

	Record	Pts	Pvs
1. Southern Illinois (85)	5-1	2,620	1
2. Georgia Southern (17)	5-1	2,523	3
3. Delaware (1)	4-1	2,342	4
4. Western Kentucky (2)	4-1	2,277	6
5. Montana	5-1	2,081	7
6. Wofford	4-1	1,932	8
7. New Hampshire	4-1	1,870	9
8. Furman	4-0	1,773	2
9. Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo	5-0	1,755	10
10. Stephen F. Austin	4-1	1,717	5
11. Northwestern State	4-1	1,588	11
12. Maine	3-2	1,410	12
13. Sam Houston State	4-1	1,313	13
14. Jacksonville State	5-0	1,244	15
15. Appalachian State	4-2	1,095	21
16. William & Mary (1)	4-1	1,070	18
17. James Madison	4-1	937	19
18. Lehigh	4-1	929	17
19. Northeastern	3-2	631	23
20. Hofstra	3-2	576	30
21. UC Davis	5-0	574	24
22. Hampton	5-1	423	25
23. Eastern Washington	4-2	329	—
24. Villanova	3-3	303	14
25. Pennsylvania	3-1	232	—

AP Top 25 schedule

Wednesday, Oct. 13
No. 17 West Virginia at Connecticut
Thursday, Oct. 14
No. 3 Miami vs. No. 18 Louisville
Saturday, Oct. 16
No. 1 Southern Cal vs. No. 15 Arizona State
No. 2 Oklahoma at Kansas State
No. 4 Auburn vs. Arkansas
No. 5 Purdue vs. No. 10 Wisconsin
No. 6 Virginia at No. 7 Florida State
No. 8 California vs. UCLA
No. 9 Texas vs. Missouri
No. 11 Utah vs. North Carolina
No. 12 Georgia vs. Vanderbilt
No. 13 Tennessee at Mississippi
No. 14 Michigan at Illinois
No. 16 Oklahoma State vs. No. 23 Texas A&M
No. 19 Minnesota at Michigan State
No. 21 Boise State at Tulsa
No. 22 Florida vs. Middle Tennessee
No. 24 Southern Mississippi at Alabama
No. 25 Ohio State at Iowa

Pro soccer

Major League Soccer

Eastern Conference	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
y-Columbus	12	5	12	48	39	31
x-MetroStars	11	11	7	40	45	46
x-D.C. United	10	10	9	39	40	42
Chicago	8	12	9	33	35	42
New England	7	13	9	30	40	42
Western Conference						
x-Kansas City	13	9	7	46	37	29
x-Los Angeles	11	8	10	43	42	39
x-Colorado	10	9	10	40	28	31
San Jose	10	10	10	37	39	33
Dallas	10	14	5	35	32	43

NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.
x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Saturday's games
Chicago at New England
San Jose at Dallas
Los Angeles at Kansas City
Columbus at Colorado

Sunday's game
MetroStars at D.C. United
End of Regular Season

Pro basketball

WNBA playoffs

FINALS
(Best-of-three)
Seattle vs. Connecticut
Friday, Oct. 8
Connecticut 68, Seattle 64
Sunday, Oct. 10
Seattle 67, Connecticut 65, series tied 1-1

Tuesday, Oct. 12
Connecticut at Seattle

NBA preseason

EASTERN CONFERENCE	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlantic Division				
Boston	0	0	.000	—
New Jersey	0	0	.000	—
New York	0	0	.000	—
Philadelphia	0	0	.000	—
Toronto	0	0	.000	—
Central Division				
Indiana	1	0	1.000	—
Chicago	0	0	.000	½
Cleveland	0	0	.000	½
Detroit	0	0	.000	½
Milwaukee	0	0	.000	½
Southeast Division				
Atlanta	0	0	.000	—
Charlotte	0	0	.000	—
Orlando	0	0	.000	—
Miami	0	1	.000	½
Washington	0	1	.000	½
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Pacific Division				
Golden State	1	0	1.000	—
L.A. Clippers	0	0	.000	½
L.A. Lakers	0	0	.000	½
Phoenix	0	0	.000	½
Sacramento	0	1	.000	1
Southwest Division				
Houston	1	0	1.000	—
Dallas	0	0	.000	½
Memphis	0	0	.000	½
New Orleans	0	0	.000	½
San Antonio	0	0	.000	½
Northwest Division				
Denver	0	0	.000	—
Minnesota	0	0	.000	—
Portland	0	0	.000	—
Seattle	0	0	.000	—
Utah	0	0	.000	—

Sunday's games
Houston 85, Miami 75
Golden State 97, Sacramento 79
Monday's games
Indiana 85, Washington 84
Tuesday's games
Chicago vs. Boston at Manchester, N.H.
Memphis at Orlando
Washington vs. Philadelphia at Durham, N.C.
Seattle vs. L.A. Lakers at Anaheim, Calif.
Wednesday's games
Orlando vs. Atlanta at Macon, Ga.
Boston at Detroit
Dallas at New Orleans
Minnesota vs. Milwaukee at Grand Forks, N.D.
L.A. Clippers at Phoenix
Seattle at Portland
Thursday's games
Sacramento vs. Houston at Shanghai, China
New Jersey vs. New York at Barre, Pa.
Washington at Charlotte
Cleveland at Indiana
Minnesota vs. Atlanta at Birmingham, Ala.
Milwaukee vs. Denver at Colorado Springs, Colo.
Portland at Golden State

Golf

PGA Tour statistics

Through Oct. 10
Scoring Average
1, Vijay Singh, 68.92. 2 (tie), Phil Mickelson and Ernie Els, 68.96. 4, Tiger Woods, 69.10. 5, Retief Goosen, 69.49. 6, Stewart Cink, 69.73. 7, Sergio Garcia, 69.79. 8, Stephen Ames, 69.88. 9, Scott Verplank, 69.96. 10, Davis Love III, 69.99.

Driving Distance
1, Hank Kuehne, 314.7. 2, Scott Hend, 312.8. 3, John Daly, 306.0. 4, Mike Heinen, 305.2. 5, Geoff Ogilvy, 305.1. 6, Chris Smith, 304.3. 7, Lucas Glover, 303.5. 8, J.J. Henry, 302.5. 9, Chris Couch, 302.3. 10, Tiger Woods, 302.0.

Driving Accuracy Percentage
1, Fred Funk, 77.9%. 2, Scott Verplank, 76.9%. 3, Craig Bowden, 75.9%. 4, Jose Coceres, 75.3%. 5, Tom Byrum, 74.4%. 6, Joe Durant, 74.3%. 7, Bart Bryant, 74.0%. 8, Garrett Willis, 73.9%. 9, Olin Browne, 73.7%. 10, John Cook, 73.3%.

Greens in Regulation Pct.
1, Vijay Singh, 72.8%. 2, Joe Durant, 72.6%. 3, Sergio Garcia, 70.7%. 4, John Senden, 70.5%. 5, Tom Lehman, 70.4%. 6, Chris Smith, 70.3%. 7, Duffy Waldorf, 70.1%. 8, Phil Mickelson, 69.9%. 9, Briny Baird, 69.7%. 10, Robert Allenby, 69.6%.

Total Driving
1, Jeff Brehaut, 70. 2, Lucas Glover, 93. 3, John Senden, 96. 4, Joe Durant, 100. 5, J.J. Henry, 102. 6, Ted Purdy, 104. 7, Craig Barlow, 107. 8 (tie), Brian Bateman, Harrison Frazar and Geoff Ogilvy, 111.

Putting Average
1 (tie), Stewart Cink and Greg Chalmers, 1.720. 3, Tiger Woods, 1.722. 4, Carl Pettersson, 1.730. 5 (tie), John Daly, Ernie Els and Darren Clarke, 1.734. 8, Ben Crane, 1.735. 9, Loren Roberts, 1.736. 10, 2 tied with 1.738.

Birdie Average
1, Tiger Woods, 4.38. 2, Phil Mickelson, 4.34. 3, Vijay Singh, 4.29. 4, Ernie Els, 4.13. 5, Adam Scott, 4.08. 6, John Daly, 4.01. 7, Retief Goosen, 3.98. 8, Woody Austin, 3.97. 9, Geoff Ogilvy, 3.93. 10, Carl Pettersson, 3.92.

Eagles (Holes per)
1, Harrison Frazar, 83.3. 2, Geoff Ogilvy, 90.0. 3, John Daly, 91.3. 4, Nick Price, 96.0. 5, Vaughn Taylor, 99.7. 6, Vijay Singh, 103.8. 7, Mike Heinen , 106.0. 8, John Senden, 108.0. 9, Neal Lancaster, 119.6. 10, Lee Janzen, 129.6.

Sand Save Percentage
1, Jim Carter, 70.0%. 2, Len Mattiace, 62.6%. 3, Dan Forsman, 62.3%. 4, Adam Scott, 61.8%. 5 (tie), Jose Coceres and Geoff Ogilvy, 61.7%. 7, Dennis Paulson, 61.1%. 8, Rod Pampling, 60.2%. 9, Nick Price, 60.0%. 10, 2 tied with 59.7%.

All-Around Ranking
1, Phil Mickelson, 279. 2, Geoff Ogilvy, 284. 3, Vijay Singh, 297. 4, Retief Goosen, 336. 5, John Daly, 357. 6, Stephen Ames, 385. 7, Ted Purdy, 401. 8, Harrison Frazar, 402. 9, Stewart Cink, 405. 10, Tiger Woods, 415.

Tennis

Kremlin Cup

Tuesday
At Olympic Stadium
Moscow
Purse: Men, $1 million (Intl. Series); Women, $1.2 million (Tier I)
Surface: Carpet-Indoor
Singles
Men
First Round
Radek Stepanek, Czech Republic, def. Iraklis Labadze, Georgia, 6-2, 6-1.
Vladimir Voltchkov, Belarus, def. Gilles Elseneer, Belgium, 6-2, 7-6 (1).
Andrei Stolyarov, Russia, def. Cyril Saulnier, France, 4-6, 7-5, 7-6 (6).
Ivo Heuberger, Switzerland, def. Karol Beck, Slovakia, 6-4, 6-4.
Mikhail Youzhny [5], Russia, def. Marc Rosset, Switzerland, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.
Nikolay Davydenko [8], Russia, def. Sergiy Stakhovsky, Ukraine, 6-0, 6-3.
Kenneth Carlsen, Denmark, def. Kristian Pless, Denmark, 6-0, 6-4.
Dominik Hrbaty [3], Slovakia, def. Thomas Johansson, Sweden, 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.
Women
First Round
Sanda Mamic, Croatia, def. Mary Pierce, France, 6-0, 6-4.
Elena Likhovtseva, Russia, def. Fabiola Zuluaga, Colombia, 6-1, 6-2.
Elena Bovina, Russia, def. Daniela Hantuchova, Slovakia, 6-2, 6-1.
Elena Dementieva [5], Russia, def. Patty Schnyder, 6-2, 6-2.
Nadia Petrova [8], Russia, def. Paola Suarez, Argentina, 7-5, 6-4.
Michaella Pastikova, Czech Republic, def. Ai Sugiyama, Japan, 6-2, 7-5.
Vera Zvonareva [6], Russia, def. Nathalie Dechy, France, 6-0, 6-2.
Karolina Sprem, Croatia, def. Anna Smashnova, Israel, 6-1, 6-3.
Monday
Singles
Men
First Round
Sargis Sargsian, Armenia, def. Teimuraz Gabashvili, Russia, 6-2, 6-1.
Igor Kunitsyn, Russia, def. Tomas Berdych [6], Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4.
Joachim Johansson [7], Sweden, def. Jan Hernych, Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-2.
Marat Safin [1], Russia, def. Max Mirnyi, Belarus, 6-7 (8), 7-6 (2), 7-6 (1).
Greg Rusedski, Britain, def. Ivo Karlovic, Croatia, 7-6 (4), 6-4.
Women
First Round
Vera Douchevina, Russia, def. Magdalena Maleeva, Bulgaria, 5-7, 6-4.
Francesca Schiavone, Italy, def. Silvia Farina Elia, Italy, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 7-5.

CA Tennis Trophy

Monday
At Wiener Stadthalle
Vienna, Austria
Purse: $847,225 (Intl. Gold)
Surface: Hard-Indoor
Singles
First Round
Feliciano Lopez [8], Spain, def. Agustin Calleri, Argentina, 1-6, 7-5, 6-3.
Guillermo Canas [6], Argentina, def. Julian Knowle, Austria, 6-2, 6-4.
Bobby Ginepri, United States, def. Potito Starace, Italy, 4-6, 7-6 (4), 6-4.
Rik de Voest, South Africa, def. Janko Tipsarevic, Serbia-Montenegro, 6-3, 6-4.
Florian Mayer, Germany, def. Juan Ignacio Chela (4), Argentina, 6-4, 6-4.

Open de Moselle

Monday
At Palais Omnisports des Arenes de Metz
Metz, France
Purse: $446,050 (Intl. Series)
Surface: Hard-Indoor
Singles
First Round
Jeff Morrison, United States, def. Christophe Rochus, Belgium, 6-4, 6-3.
Raemon Sluiter, Netherlands, def. Adrian Garcia, Chile, 6-4, 2-0, retired.
Olivier Patience, France, def. Philipp Kohlschreiber, Germany, 7-6, 0-6, 6-4.
Richard Gasquet, France, def. Dennis van Scheppingen (7), Netherlands, 6-3, 7-6 (5).
Olivier Mutis, France, def. Nicolas Mahut, France, 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (1).
Thierry Ascione, France, def. Antony Dupuis, France, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (3).

Tashkent Open

Tuesday
At Dynamo Tennis Club
Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Purse: $145,000 (Tier IV)
Surface: Hard-Outdoor
Singles
First Round
Iroda Tulyaganova, Uzbekistan, def. Marion Bartoli (1), France, 6-4, 6-4.
Meghann Shaughnessy (2), United States, def. Ryoko Fuda, Japan, 6-2, 6-2.
Arantxa Parra Santonja (4), Spain, def. Maria Santangelo, Italy, 6-3, 1-6, 6-4.
Evgenia Linetskaya, Russia, def. Tamarine Tanasugarn (8), Thailand, 6-4, 4-6, 6-0.
Ekaterina Bychkova, Russia, def. Silvija Talaja, Croatia, 6-1, 6-4.
Nadejda Ostrovskaya, Belarus, def. Ivana Abramovic, Croatia, 1-6, 6-1, 6-4.
Olga Savchuk, Ukraine, def. Anne Kremer, Luxembourg, 7-6 (4), 2-6, 6-1.
Virginie Razzano (9), France, def. Katerina Bondarenko, Ukraine, 7-6 (6), 6-1.
Maria Golovizina, Russia, def. Akgul Amanmuradova, Uzbekistan, 7-5, 7-6 (4).
Monday
Singles
First Round
Anca Barna (5), Germany, def. Suchanan Viratprasert, Thailand, 6-4, 6-4.
Yulia Beygelzimer, Ukraine, def. Martina Muller, Germany, 6-0, 6-1.
Anastasiya Yakimova, Belarus, def. Adriana Serra Zanetti, Italy, 4-6, 7-6 (5), 6-0.

Deals

Monday's transactions

BASEBALL
American League
OAKLAND ATHLETICS—Announced they will not renew the contract of Chris Speier, bench coach.
TEXAS RANGERS—Activated RHP Mickey Callaway from the 60-day DL and sent him outright to Oklahoma of the PCL.
National League
ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS—Announced the resignation of Scott Brubaker, senior vice president of sales and marketing.
CHICAGO CUBS—Announced Wendell Kim, third base coach, will not be retained. Reassigned Gene Clines from first base coach to hitting coach, and Gary Matthews from hitting coach to first base coach, with the additional responsibilities of outfield instruction and baserunning.
CINCINNATI REDS—Extended the contract of Dave Miley, manager, through the 2006 season. Signed OF Jason Romano to a minor league contract.

FOOTBALL
National Football League
DENVER BRONCOS—Waived WR Adrian Madise and TB Jermaine Chatman.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS—Waived K Matt Bryant. Signed DL Keith Wright. Signed DT Jason Stewart to the practice squad.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League
TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS—Assigned F Chris St. Jacques, D Daniel Turor and G Todd Ford to Pensacola of the ECHL.

COLLEGE
DARTMOUTH—Named Brian Stanford sailing coach and Katie McDowell assistant sailing coach.
EDWARD WATERS—Announced the resignation of Brett Harvey, men's basketball coach. Named Neil Orr interim men's basketball coach.
HARTFORD—Named William Warder lacrosse coach.
NIAGARA—Named Kyle Swiatocha assistant baseball coach.
NORTH CAROLINA—Suspended WR Adarius Bowman, LB Fred Sparkman and DT Isaiah Thomas indefinitely from the football team.
TEMPLE—Suspended men's basketball F Michael Blackshear for violating team rules.

TANK McNAMARA

T. Labonte to race part-time in '05, '06

BY JENNA FRYER
The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Two-time NASCAR champion Terry Labonte will race a limited schedule in 2005 and 2006, joining the growing list of veteran drivers slowly easing out of racing.

Labonte is scheduled to run about 10 races next season in the No. 44 Chevrolet, followed by 10 races in 2006 in what will be his final season.

Terry Labonte

"I thought a while about just walking away and I couldn't do it, but I didn't want to do a traditional farewell tour," the 47-year-old Labonte said.

Nineteen-year-old Kyle Busch will take Labonte's spot in the No. 5 Chevy and is to run a full-time Nextel Cup schedule in 2005. He is the younger brother of current Nextel Cup points leader Kurt Busch.

Labonte began his Cup career in 1978, running five races for Billy Hagan. His first full season of competition was in 1979 and he went on to set a then-record of 655 consecutive starts that was broken in 2000.

He won two series titles along the way, in 1984 and again in 1996. He has 22 career victories, the most recent last August at Darlington Raceway in the final Southern 500 run on Labor Day weekend — a victory that broke a 156-race winless streak.

Labonte was in the No. 44 when he won his first points title.

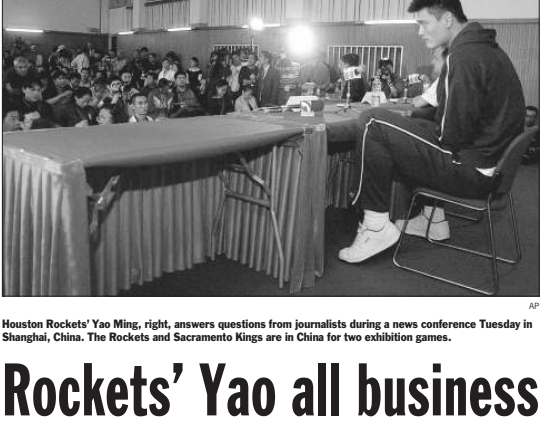
His younger brother, Bobby, won NASCAR's top title in 2000, making the Labontes the only pair of brothers with series championships.

Labonte is following in the footsteps of 49-year-old Bill Elliott, who scaled back to a part-time schedule this season. He said his decision was inspired in part by Elliott's example.

Rusty Wallace also has announced that 2005 will be his final season; other longtime NASCAR mainstays probably aren't too far behind.

Car owner Jack Roush said in August that 45-year-old Mark Martin indicated next season will be his last, and the two have called a news conference for Thursday.

Dale Jarrett and Ricky Rudd were born the same year as Labonte and Wallace. Sterling Marlin and Jimmy Spencer are 47, and Kyle Petty is 44.



AP

Houston Rockets' Yao Ming, right, answers questions from journalists during a news conference Tuesday in Shanghai, China. The Rockets and Sacramento Kings are in China for two exhibition games.

Rockets' Yao all business

Former national team star wants to win NBA's first exhibition games in China

BY CHRISTOPHER BODEEN
The Associated Press

SHANGHAI, China — Declaring himself "here on business," hometown favorite Yao Ming joined Tracy McGrady and the rest of the Houston Rockets on Tuesday as they prepared for a pair of exhibition games against the Sacramento Kings — the first NBA games played in China.

Yao and the Rockets settled into their hotel after the long flight from the United States, but canceled a scheduled practice session after a baggage mix-up.

The 7-foot-6 Yao told reporters in a packed press conference that he was happy to be home, but didn't consider his visit a social call.

"I'm here on business and I want to play well," said Yao, who was selected for Shanghai's youth team at age 14 and later played for the Shanghai Sharks of the Chinese professional league.

Houston will play the Kings in Shanghai on Thursday and in Beijing on Sunday.

Rockets coach Jeff Van Gundy said he would likely play Yao between 22 and 28 minutes in Thursday's game to give the fans the thrill of seeing the hugely popular center on the court.

"Obviously, I want to play him because he's in his hometown, but I don't want to overplay him given that it's only the second exhibition game and we have a long season ahead of us," Van Gundy said.

"I know he wants to play very, very well here and I want to give his fans the opportunity to see him play," he added.

Van Gundy said the team would work out in its hotel health club Tuesday, then hit the court Wednesday.

"We don't want to make any excuses. We just want to play well and keep improving so I don't think that the long flight will have anything to do with how we play," Van Gundy said.

Shanghai has heavily refurbished the city gym that was built in the days of Mao Zedong's 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, adding an NBA regulation floor, giant television screens and additional dressing room and office space.

The gymnasium seats about 10,000, but only about 3,000 tickets were available for fans — those were snapped up in one afternoon.

Chris Webber, Mike Bibby and the rest of the Kings were scheduled to practice later Tuesday afternoon. Liu Wei, Yao's teammate on the national team and the Sharks' current star, was invited to join the Kings for training in July and is expected to appear on the court in Shanghai and Beijing.

Yao said he wouldn't try to make things easy for Liu, but added: "I'm more afraid of accidentally passing the ball to him just out of habit."

The games are the NBA's latest attempts to harness basketball's surging popularity in China, 25 years after Wes Unseld and the Washington Bullets visited Shanghai to play the Chinese national team.

Wang Zhizhi became the first Chinese player in the NBA in 2001, and four others have either played or trained with NBA teams, including Liu and Yao.

Notre Dame QB Quinn likely to start vs. Navy

The Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Notre Dame quarterback Brady Quinn is expected to start Saturday against Navy after sustaining a concussion in his last game.

Irish coach Tyrone Willingham said Tuesday that Quinn was expected to practice later in the day. He said the training staff would monitor Quinn.

"I think Brady is fine, but I think what we have to do is always go through the formal steps each time a guy has an injury," Willingham said. "This one requires you to look at him. But I think he's fine."

Quinn didn't return to the game against Stanford last Saturday after scoring on a 2-yard run with 4:10 left in the game.

The sophomore has thrown for 1,529 yards with nine touchdown passes and five interceptions this season. His backup, Pat Dillingham, has played in three games this season, going 3-for-3 against Purdue for 28 yards.

Peirsol, U.S. relay set world records in Short Course

INDIANAPOLIS — Aaron Peirsol lowered his world record in the 200-meter backstroke Monday, then helped his American teammates set a world mark in the 400 medley relay on the closing night of the Short Course World Championships.

Brooke Hanson of Australia won her record sixth gold medal, beating American Amanda Beard in the 200 breaststroke.

The United States won five of 12 finals Monday night, giving the Americans 21 victories in 40 events and 41 medals overall.

Australia was the only other country with a double-digit medal total. The Aussies earned 29, including seven gold.

Peirsol's time of 1 minute, 50.52 seconds in the backstroke bettered his mark of 1:50.64 set in March in a short course World Cup meet in East Meadow, N.Y. He also won the 100 back.

The team of Peirsol, Brendan Hansen, Ian Crocker and Jason Lezak won the relay by more than 5 seconds over Australia in 3:25.09, bettering the mark of 3:25.38 set by the University of Texas in the World Cup meet in March. The Aussies finished in 3:29.72. Russia was third.

Sports briefs

Four world records were set during the five-day meet held in a 25-meter temporary pool at Conseco Fieldhouse.

Hanson broke the gold-medal mark she shared with China's Le Jingyi (1993) and American Neil Walker (2000). She won the 200 breaststroke in 2:21.68, ahead of Beard in 2:22.53.

Hanson's other victories were in the 50 breaststroke, 100 and 200 individual medleys, 100 breaststroke, and she was part of Australia's world-record 400 medley relay team.

American Jenny Thompson earned bronze in the 100 butterfly, then came back 25 minutes later to finish seventh in the 50 free in the final race of her career.

Beckham admits getting suspended deliberately

LONDON — England captain David Beckham thought he was being "clever" by deliberately getting a yellow card. The ploy could backfire and land him in trouble with his coach and soccer's governing body.

Beckham said he drew a foul intentionally in Saturday's 2-0 World Cup qualifying win over Wales. He knew he would already miss the next game because he broke a rib a few minutes earlier.

"It was deliberate," Beckham said in Tuesday's British newspapers. "I am sure some people think that I have not got the brains to be that clever, but I do have the brains."

Beckham went into Saturday's match carrying one yellow card from a previous game. Under international rules, a player who picks up two yellows in qualifying is automatically suspended for one game.

Beckham got himself suspended for Wednesday's qualifier against Azerbaijan, knowing he would miss the game because of his injury. That means he would have no yellow card hanging over him for subsequent matches.

FIFA spokesman John Shumacher said the world governing body had no immediate comment but did not rule out possible disciplinary action against Beckham for unsportsmanlike contact.

S. Jackson has a productive debut with Pacers

BY JON KRAWCZYNSKI
The Associated Press

MUNCIE, Ind. — After spending a long, frustrating season with the lowly Atlanta Hawks, Stephen Jackson was eager to play for a winner. It showed on Monday.

Jackson looked sharp in his debut for Indiana, scoring 19 points on 7-for-14 shooting to lead the Pacers to an 85-84 victory over the Washington Wizards in the preseason opener for both teams.

"I was just happy to be in the blue and white," said Jackson, acquired in an offseason trade that sent Al Harrington to the Hawks.

Jackson got the Pacers off to a quick start with 10 points in his first 10 minutes, and little-known free agent Randy Holcomb finished the Wizards off.

Holcomb tipped in a rebound as the clock expired for the winning basket.

"It just felt good to be in the right place at the right time," Holcomb said.

His good fortune spoiled the homecoming of former Indiana University star Jared Jeffries.

On Washington's previous possession, Jeffries tipped in a miss by Michael Ruffin with 9.7 seconds to play for an 84-83 lead.

But Indiana's Eddie Gill drove the lane and missed a high-arching layup and Holcomb came from the backside to tip it in for the win.

"I wish it would have played out a little differently," Jeffries said, shaking his head and smiling.

He was in high demand after the game, signing autographs for fans at Worthen Arena on the campus of Ball State University.

"It was good to get home," Jeffries said.

Jackson started for Ron Artest, who watched the game after missing two practices because he was attending his grandmother's funeral.

Jermaine O'Neal also missed the game for Indiana with a sprained left foot.

A slimmed-down Brendan Haywood had 17 points, seven rebounds and four blocks for Washington. Haywood's numbers would have been even more impressive if he hadn't gone 3-for-11 from the free-throw line.

Washington made just 14 of 32 (49 percent) foul shots.

"We're a young team," Jeffries said. "We still have a lot to work on, but we did some good things tonight."

Pacers rookie center David Harrison looked good in his NBA debut, scoring 14 points in 24 minutes.

Quarterly report favorable for Jets, Giants, Lions

Roethlisberger leads class of rookie QBs

BY DAVE GOLDBERG
The Associated Press

Analysis

It's no surprise that New England and Philadelphia are unbeaten after a quarter of the NFL season, with the Patriots holding an NFL record with 19 straight wins, counting playoffs.

It's probably a bit surprising that the New York Jets are 4-0, although they were pegged to contend for a playoff spot by some.

But consider the Giants, Steelers, Lions and Chargers, a combined 19-45 a year ago and now 14-5. Add Atlanta, which lost its first game (to Detroit) on Sunday and it's 24-56 to 18-6.

That's life in the modern NFL.

One offshoot is San Diego — holding the Giants' first pick in next year's draft via the Eli Manning deal — which is unlikely to have two top-five choices. The Chargers are 3-2 and the Giants are 4-1 and neither looks like it's about to collapse.

"When we play the way we're capable of playing, we can compete," Chargers coach Marty Schottenheimer said after Sunday's 34-21 victory over Jacksonville.

That could be a litany for the modern NFL, where injuries and luck make everyone but a handful of teams at the top (New England, Philadelphia, Indianapolis) and bottom (Miami, Buffalo, Arizona and San Francisco) just about even. It's been the same for the last half-dozen seasons or more and it doesn't change.

Some first-quarter snapshots:

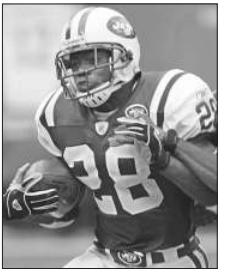
Rookie QBs: While Manning sits behind Kurt Warner in New York and Philip Rivers behind Drew Brees in San Diego, Ben Roethlisberger has been a hit in Pittsburgh.

He's 3-0 as a starter since replacing the injured Tommy Maddox as the Steelers, 6-10 a year ago, lead the AFC North. He's being asked to play risk-free on a team whose philosophical approach has always been running and defense, and he's been good at it. He was 16-for-21 for 231 yards and a touchdown in a victory over Cleveland on Sunday. His passer rating is a good 91.3, 14th in the league and only a half-point lower than Warner's.

The next rookie to start might be the Bills' J.P. Losman, taken 22nd overall behind Manning (1), Rivers (4) and Roethlisberger (11). He is currently working his way back into shape after breaking his leg, but given Buffalo's 0-4 record, he might replace Drew Bledsoe during the second half of the season.

AP

Running back Tiki Barber leads the NFL in rushing (577 yards) and total yards (817) and has not fumbled this season. He is a prime reason the New York Giants are 4-1.



AP

Curtis Martin, above, has 502 rushing yards after four games, the best start of his 10-year NFL career. His rebirth has been a factor in the Jets' surprising 4-0 record.

AP

Detroit end Kalimba Edwards (98), sacking Atlanta quarterback Michael Vick on Sunday, is part of an improved defense that ranks fifth in the NFC against the run (98.3 yards per game) and has yielded 18.0 points per game. Last season the Lions gave up an average of 23.7 points a game.

New York/New York: The Giants are a surprise to those who saw them in preseason and figured they would win five games at best. And many thought they would revolt against ultra-disciplinarian Tom Coughlin and his picky rules.

But remember that entering the 2003 season, the Giants were considered a Super Bowl contender and they still have the same skill players — except Warner at quarterback is an upgrade over Kerry Collins. Last year, they collapsed under an offensive line that was the NFL's worst. This year, it's improved to acceptable with help from a couple of journeymen and rookie guard Chris Snee, Coughlin's son-in-law.

The most obvious standout is Tiki Barber, who leads the league in rushing with 577 yards and total yards with 817. He hasn't fumbled after dropping the ball 35 times between 2000-03. But also credit Jeremy Shockey, who groused early about having to block too much in Coughlin's new offense, but is now second on the team with 22 receptions and has TD catches in each of the past two games.

Plus defensive coordinator Tim Lewis, whose aggressiveness has the Giants leading the league with a plus-11 turnover margin after finishing last minus-16 last season. Unfortunately, Lewis doesn't get a chance to talk about his defense (and enhance his chances for a head coaching job) because Coughlin doesn't allow his assistants to talk to the media.

The Jets have the distinction of being the worst unbeaten team in the league, but emphasize "unbeaten" rather than "worst."

Yes, they've struggled in all four wins, two over the winless Dolphins and Bills. And they allowed Buffalo, the league's best winless team, to score two late touchdowns Sunday before winning 16-14 on Doug Brien's field goal with 58 seconds left.

But the Jets can bank these victories for later. If they're unlikely to win the AFC East over the Patriots, they're a solid wild-card contender.

Again, the main contributors were already there: quarterback Chad Pennington, who missed the first six games last season with a broken left hand, and Curtis Martin, who is off to the best start of his career with 502 yards rushing in four games. He moved up to ninth on the career rushing list Sunday, passing Franco Harris.

Plus John Abraham, who had three sacks against Buffalo, and a revamped defense emphasizing speed.

Lovable Lions: Credit the turnaround to coach Steve Mariucci, who in a season-and-a-quarter in Detroit has eight wins, or three more than Marty Mornhinweg got in two years with the Lions.

Also credit the past three drafts, which brought in Joey Harrington, Charles Rogers, Roy Williams, Boss Bailey, Teddy Lehman and a host of lesser-known players. Rogers and Bailey are hurt and Williams sprained his ankle on Sunday, but the team plugs on.

One major improvement is defense. The Lions sacked Michael Vick six times in their upset in Atlanta on Sunday and made a huge special teams play when safety Terrence Holt (Torry's younger brother) spotted a fake field goal before it unfolded and was able to break it up.

That was Detroit's second straight road win after a record 24 straight road losses covering the entire 2001, 2002 and 2003 seasons. In the next two weeks, they face the Packers at home and Giants on the road, contests which for the first time in a long time — other than Thanksgiving — will make a Lions game of interest outside Detroit.

Vikings walking the tightrope successfully so far

BY DAVE CAMPBELL
The Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — On the road, with a comfortable lead, playing in fresh air, on natural grass, watching their defense being picked apart down the stretch.

It's an old story for the Minnesota Vikings, and so often that formula spelled defeat. But Sunday's 34-28 overtime victory over the pesky Houston Texans spoke loudly about the Vikings' ability to avoid that familiar finish and bolstered their belief that they can be successful this season.

"You talk about a confidence builder for your football team," coach Mike Tice said Monday.

Now 3-1 and tied for first place in the NFC North with Detroit, Minnesota gained some momentum out of its off week, and hopes to continue healing and extend its winning streak to four games at New Orleans on Sunday night.

"I don't know how it was in the past, but we could have easily folded," said cornerback Antoine Winfield, in his first season with the Vikings. "We didn't, and we came out with a win."

Minnesota led 21-0 early in the third quarter and 28-14 midway through the fourth, but David Carr rallied Houston to a tie with 1:53 left in regulation. Each team had a possession in overtime until Daunte Culpepper hit Marcus Robinson for a 50-yard touchdown pass.

"Guys never really had any doubt we would win this game," defensive end Lance Johnstone said. "So when we got into an overtime situation, we just found a way."

Culpepper matched the career-best five touchdowns he threw in the opener against Dallas. Culpepper, who leads the NFL with a 126.0 passer rating, has 13 TD passes, one interception, one lost fumble, 1,341 yards and a 72.7 completion percentage. Plus 109 yards and another touchdown rushing.

"He's playing outstanding football," Tice said. "He's leading us."

Rookie Mewelde Moore, a fourth-round draft pick out of Tulane, ensured a seamless transition at running back with Onterrio Smith suspended and Michael Bennett and Moe Williams hurt. Moore had 182 total yards.

Other backups called on by recent injuries who played well against the Texans included center Cory Withrow, linebacker Raonall Smith and right tackle Nat Dorsey. At one point, when Max Yates came in after a strained groin sidelined linebacker Dontarrious Thomas, the Vikings were missing 11 players who either started or played significantly in Week 1 against the Cowboys.

"A tribute to the coaches, a tribute to the team and a tribute to our college and pro scouting departments and a tribute to the players," Tice said.

One concern is, of course, the pass defense. Carr threw two TD passes in the final 3½ minutes and finished with 372 yards.

Minnesota also is the only team in the NFL without an interception, after leading the NFC in that category last season.

The good news for the Vikings? They shut out the Texans for more than 38 minutes and had a season-high four sacks.

"We're living and dying right now with some inexperience," defensive coordinator Ted Cottrell said. "I know we'll get it corrected. They're playing hard. They're not giving up."

AP

Receiver Randy Moss, top, celebrates his with offensive lineman Chris Liwienski, bottom. Minnesota is 3-1 and tied for first place despite defensive deficiencies.

NFL scoreboard

American Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
East						
New England	4	0	0	1.000	105	63
N.Y. Jets	4	0	0	1.000	98	75
Buffalo	0	4	0	.000	51	73
Miami	0	5	0	.000	42	87
South						
Indianapolis	4	1		.800	159	106
Jacksonville	3	2	0	.600	73	86
Houston	2	3	0	.400	118	127
Tennessee	2	3	0	.400	111	118
North						
Pittsburgh	4	1	0	.800	112	94
Baltimore	3	2	0	.600	97	79
Cleveland	2	3	0	.400	82	96
Cincinnati	1	3	0	.250	66	95
West						
Denver	4	1	0	.800	99	74
San Diego	3	2	0	.600	140	115
Oakland	2	3	0	.400	95	119
Kansas City	1	3	0	.250	89	110

National Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
East						
Philadelphia	4	0	0	1.000	107	55
N.Y. Giants	4	1	0	.800	104	72
Dallas	2	2	0	.500	67	91
Washington	1	4	0	.200	71	85
South						
Atlanta	4	1	0	.800	98	66
New Orleans	2	3	0	.400	92	127
Carolina	1	3	0	.250	69	88
Tampa Bay	1	4	0	.200	69	89
North						
Detroit	3	1	0	.750	78	72
Minnesota	3	1	0	.750	112	94
Chicago	1	3	0	.250	68	76
Green Bay	1	4	0	.200	99	142
West						
Seattle	3	1	0	.750	92	46
St. Louis	3	2	0	.600	116	113
Arizona	1	4	0	.200	87	87
San Francisco	1	4	0	.200	91	137

Sunday's games

Detroit 17, Atlanta 10
N.Y. Giants 26, Dallas 10
Indianapolis 35, Oakland 14
Minnesota 34, Houston 28, OT
New England 24, Miami 10
Pittsburgh 34, Cleveland 23
Tampa Bay 20, New Orleans 17
N.Y. Jets 16, Buffalo 14
San Diego 34, Jacksonville 21
St. Louis 33, Seattle 27, OT
San Francisco 31, Arizona 28, OT
Denver 20, Carolina 17
Baltimore 17, Washington 10
Open: Cincinnati, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Chicago

Monday's game

Tennessee 48, Green Bay 27

Sunday, Oct. 17

Green Bay at Detroit
Miami at Buffalo
Houston at Tennessee
San Diego at Atlanta
Washington at Chicago
San Francisco at N.Y. Jets
Seattle at New England
Kansas City at Jacksonville
Cincinnati at Cleveland
Carolina at Philadelphia
Pittsburgh at Dallas
Denver at Oakland
Minnesota at New Orleans
Open: Indianapolis, Arizona, N.Y. Giants, Baltimore

Monday, Oct. 18

Tampa Bay at St. Louis

NFL calendar

Oct. 19 — Trading deadline.
Jan. 2 — Regular season ends.
Jan. 8-9 — Wild-card playoffs.
Jan. 15-16 — Divisional playoffs.
Jan. 23 — Conference Championships.
Feb. 6 — Super Bowl, Jacksonville, Fla.
Feb. 13 — Pro Bowl, Honolulu.
Feb. 23-March 1 — Scouting combine, Indianapolis.
April 23-24 — NFL Draft, New York.

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Titans, Brown rip through Packers

By Arnie Stapleton
The Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Lambeau Field just isn't what it used to be, and neither are the Green Bay Packers.

Chris Brown ran for 148 yards and two long touchdowns, and Tennessee cruised to a 48-27 rout of the Packers on Monday night, scoring more points than any visitor ever at the famed stadium.

The Titans (2-3) snapped a three-game losing streak and sent the Packers (1-4) to their fourth straight loss — Green Bay's first four-game skid since 1991.

From 1996 to 2002, Green Bay was 53-7 at home, including the postseason. The Packers lost to Atlanta in a playoff game in January 2003, starting a Lambeau slump that reached 6-7 with the loss to Tennessee.

"This is unfamiliar territory," Packers coach Mike Sherman said.

Only eight teams in NFL history have overcome a 1-4 start to reach the playoffs, including the Titans two years ago.

"It's something you want to avoid at all costs," Titans coach Jeff Fisher said.

Tennessee scored on five of its first six possessions with Brown going in on its first two series, from 37 and 29 yards out.

"To come in here and have a chance to win, you have to run the ball and get turnovers," Fisher said.

The Packers had six turnovers, including four in the second half. The Titans didn't turn the ball over at all.

"This wasn't season-saving, but it got us back on the right track," Titans safety Tank Williams said.

Steve McNair (chest, ankle) returned after missing Tennessee's last game, and threw two touchdown passes, including an 11-yarder to Eddie Berlin in the third quarter after Brett Favre's third interception.

Favre extended his NFL record with his 213th consecutive start, including playoffs, despite numerous injuries, including a mild concussion he suffered last week. Favre also played after the death last week of his 24-year-old brother-in-law in an ATV accident at the family home in Mississippi.

Both teams had lost three straight, and much of the blame went to poor run defense, which showed up right away again for Green Bay as Brown carried nine times for 90 yards in the first quarter. The early deficit altered Green Bay's plan to give the Titans a steady diet of Ahman Green, who finished with just 10 carries for 33 yards.

The Packers had just 5 yards rushing in the first half.

Green Bay cornerback Michael Hawthorne capped a poor first series by missing the tackle on Brown's 37-yard touchdown run.

Brown made it 14-0 with a 29-yard scamper to beat the blitz on the Titans' second possession, after which Sherman chewed out his defenders on the sideline.

But soon his wrath was focused on Green.

The Packers' fumble-prone running back coughed up the ball at the Green Bay 34 with nose tackle Kevin Carter recovering for Tennessee. Green has fumbled four times this season.

The Titans converted Green's gaffe into a 36-yard field goal that made it 17-0 with 6 minutes left in the first quarter.

The Packers never recovered.

AP

Titans running back Chris Brown (29) pushes Packers safety Bhawoh Jue (21) away as he breaks away for a 29-yard touchdown run in the first quarter. Brown ran for 148 yards and two scores in Tennessee's victory.

Monday
Titans 48, Packers 27

Tennessee	17	10	7	14—48
Green Bay	3	10	0	14—27

First Quarter

Ten—Brown 37 run (Anderson kick), 13:31.
Ten—Brown 29 run (Anderson kick), 9:45.
Ten—FG Anderson 36, 6:05.
GB—FG Longwell 39, 1:13.

Second Quarter

Ten—Fleming 14 pass from McNair (Anderson kick), 9:27.
GB—Franks 1 pass from Favre (Longwell kick), 6:27.
Ten—FG Anderson 38, 1:46.
GB—FG Longwell 53, :02.

Third Quarter

Ten—Berlin 11 pass from McNair (Anderson kick), 8:00.

Fourth Quarter

Ten—Mason 26 pass from Bennett (Anderson kick), 13:42.
GB—Franks 11 pass from Favre (Longwell kick), 5:44.
Ten—A.Smith 15 run (Anderson kick), 2:34.
GB—Walker 1 pass from Nall (Longwell kick), 1:01.

A—70,620.

	Ten	GB
First downs	23	22
Total Net Yards	456	437
Rushes-yards	44-224	11-35
Passing	232	402
Punt Returns	1-7	2-1
Kickoff Returns	5-76	9-172
Interceptions Ret.	3-44	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	16-27-0	31-52-3
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	3-0
Punts	4-38.0	2-34.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	4-3
Penalties-Yards	12-105	3-15
Time of Possession	38:00	22:00

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing—Tennessee, Brown 27-148, McNair 7-36, A.Smith 9-28, Bennett 1-12. **Green Bay**, Green 10-33, Favre 1-2.

Passing—Tennessee, McNair 15-26-0-206, Bennett 1-1-0-26. **Green Bay**, Favre 24-44-3-338, Nall 7-8-0-64.

Receiving—Tennessee, Mason 4-63, Berlin 3-53, Fleming 3-38, Brown 3-24, Bennett 2-42, Holcombe 1-7. **Green Bay**, Driver 10-150, Walker 8-159, Fisher 3-22, Henderson 3-11, Chatman 2-32, Franks 2-12, Green 2-5, Ferguson 1-11.

Missed field goal—Tennessee, Anderson 42 (BK).

Vick trying to get grip on offense, keep grip on ball

By Paul Newberry
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Michael Vick can do some amazing things with a football. But first, he's got to hang on to it.

Vick had three turnovers in the Atlanta Falcons' first loss of the season — all of them having a crucial impact on the game.

An interception set up the Lions' go-ahead touchdown and Vick fumbled twice deep in Detroit territory, including the Falcons' last offensive play.

Vick, of course, puts himself in position for more turnovers because of his ability to scramble or just take off. Then again, he can't afford to fumble three times the way he did Sunday (one was recovered by a teammate).

"You can practice it to a certain extent, but when you get in a game and those live bullets are firing, you just have to be conscious of where you are and protecting the ball," Vick said. "You're caught up looking downfield, looking for a receiver, and you kind of get careless with the ball."

The past three weeks, opponents have taken drastic steps to keep Vick in the pocket.

Arizona used five down linemen to keep him contained, holding the Falcons without a touchdown, though the defense ensured a 6-3 victory. Carolina kept Vick in its sights, only to get burned by the running of Warrick Dunn and T.J. Duckett.

Coach Jim Mora acknowledged that Vick holds the ball lower than most quarterbacks when he moves around in the pocket, making it easier to get stripped.

"Mike has a mind-set that he can get out of anything and he can run, so sometimes he does drop the ball low," Mora said.

Offensive coordinator Greg Knapp and quarterbacks coach Mike Johnson have been working with Vick on protecting the ball, but they don't want to hinder him.

"You hate, with a guy like Mike, to ever tell him, 'Concede the play. Put the ball up to your body and concede the sack,' " Mora said. "It's hard to tell a guy to do that, especially Mike Vick, who's like Houdini."

He showed off those skills on the final drive, scrambling out of the pocket and hitting Peerless Price for a 12-yard gain. Five plays later, Vick fumbled away the last chance to force overtime.

"Are you going to tell him not to do those things?" Mora said, not even waiting for an answer. "No, you're not. It's just trying to get him to just — it's hard for me to find the word. I don't think the word's careful. I don't think the word's smart. Just maybe more cognizant of the ball at times.

Much has been made of Vick's transition to the West Coast offense, a scheme that relies on timing and short pass routes. He hasn't looked comfortable all season, averaging just 160 yards through the air with two TDs.

"Who knows? Maybe in the 10th or 11th year I'll be comfortable with it," Vick said immediately after the game. "But for now, I've got to keep working, keep working."

Mora said his talented quarterback was probably just speaking out of frustration when he gave such a pessimistic outlook.

"There were some real hidden positives in his game," Mora said. "And when he watches the film, he'll feel a lot better about his performance than I'm sure he did after the game."

Playing 'dumb' costing Raiders

Penalties, turnovers remain despite other changes

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
The Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Former coach Bill Callahan made national headlines for calling the Oakland Raiders the "dumbest team in America" last season.

With a new coach, new quarterback and plenty of new personnel, the same old problems are plaguing this team: turnovers, penalties and poor decision-making.

Coach Norv Turner again spent Monday vowing to clean up things, but everybody is wondering whether it's truly possible.

Penalties have historically been as much a part of the Raiders' persona as owner Al Davis' seemingly endless supply of shiny sweatsuits, and that doesn't seem to be changing under Turner's new regime.

This team is still seeing yellow.

Oakland (2-3) has been flagged 48 times for 335 yards, and isn't taking care of the ball, either. The Raiders have lost five of their 10 fumbles and thrown nine interceptions, seven of those by Kerry Collins in the past 2½ games.

Since 1995, the Raiders have been among the league's top five for penalties each year, leading the NFL in 1996 and again during last season's 4-12 flop. In '96, they committed a franchise-record 156 penalties — a league record until Kansas City was flagged 158 times in 1998.

Last season, when the Raiders took the worst fall of any team that played in the previous Super Bowl, Oakland was penalized 134 times for 1,120 yards.

And penalties aided the first four Indianapolis touchdown drives in the Colts' 35-14 win on Sunday.

Four-time Pro Bowl cornerback Charles Woodson was reminded about Callahan's comments that came after another ugly performance in a 22-8 home loss to Denver last November that left the Raiders at 3-9.

"First of all, we're not the dumbest team, so we pass on that," Woodson said. "We're a little ways away right now. It's frustrating to lose. We're not seeming to go in the right direction at this point. We're making too many mistakes.

"This is the fifth game of the season, people can't start folding their tents. This is a tough loss against a good team, make no mistake about that. But we've got to turn it around now."

Collins, who led the Giants to the 2001 Super Bowl, was picked off three times in his second start in place of injured Rich Gannon, the 2002 NFL MVP who's out with a broken vertebra in his neck.

If Collins were to stay on such a pace, which Turner insists isn't possible, he would shatter the Raiders' franchise record of 30 interceptions set by Ken Stabler in 1978. No Raiders quarterback has thrown more than 16 interceptions in a season since 1985.

"I think that Kerry has played long enough that he's had streaks where he's gone an extended period of time where he hasn't thrown an interception, and I think we can get him to that point," Turner said. "He wants to make the play because he knows if he makes it, it gives us a better chance to go score or get back in the game. You have to take something else and be a little more patient."

Only four times in his first nine NFL seasons did Collins throw more touchdowns than interceptions.

"It bothers me to a point, but I've learned you can't dwell on the past, good or bad," Collins said. "I've gone through stretches like this before, and I played my way through it.

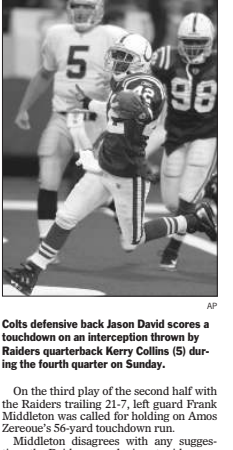
"We lost, so that's an F in my book."

Most of his teammates would probably give themselves the same grade.

On third-and-3 at the Oakland 48 during the Colts' first series, defensive end Tyler Brayton jumped offside to extend the drive, which ended with James Mungro's 1-yard TD catch.

Early in the second quarter, the Colts had fourth-and-1 at the Raiders 40, and Akbar Gbaja-Biamila jumped offside to give Indianapolis a first down. On the next play, Reggie Wayne beat Denard Walker for a 35-yard touchdown and a 14-0 lead.

Gbaja-Biamila said he'd watched film on the Colts' quick snap and assumed the ball would be snapped as soon as the center touched the ball.



AP

Colts defensive back Jason David scores a touchdown on an interception thrown by Raiders quarterback Kerry Collins (5) during the fourth quarter on Sunday.

On the third play of the second half with the Raiders trailing 21-7, left guard Frank Middleton was called for holding on Amos Zereoue's 56-yard touchdown run.

Middleton disagrees with any suggestions the Raiders are playing stupid.

"We're not the only team in the league making penalties," he said. "They're not mental mistakes, they're just from playing hard. But I think right now we're trying to do too much."

Failing on fourth down troubling Parcells

The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Don't expect the Dallas Cowboys to go for it on fourth down any time soon.

Coach Bill Parcells said Monday that he's giving up on that sort of risk. The Cowboys failed twice in a 26-10 loss Sunday to the New York Giants.

His reasoning: He only tries it when he has confidence in his team, and right now he absolutely doesn't.

"I don't really know what to expect at this point," Parcells said.

Parcells is fed up with how many penalties and turnovers the Cowboys (2-2) are committing, and the crucial times those mistakes and others are occurring.

It all comes down to concentration, he says. His players simply lack it, no matter how much coaches talk about it — and they've been talking about it a lot since training camp.

"Quite apparently, we're not getting through to the team," Parcells said. "It hasn't changed no matter how hard I've tried to do it, tried to emphasize it. We have periodically gotten better, but then we fall right back into the same thing."

Dolphins might have to turn to third-string quarterback

DAVIE, Fla. — Jay Fiedler has a cracked rib, and A.J. Feeley has a concussion. So the Miami Dolphins might be forced to turn to third-string quarterback Sage Rosenfels when they play the Buffalo Bills Sunday in a matchup of the NFL's last two winless teams.

Rosenfels has not played this season. He is 4-for-9 for one touchdown in four NFL seasons.

Fiedler first hurt his rib against the Jets on Oct. 3, then was injured again late in Sunday's 24-10 loss at New England when he was sacked by safety Rodney Harrison.

"The ribs are tender right now," Fiedler said Monday. "I'll take it day by day and see how it goes."

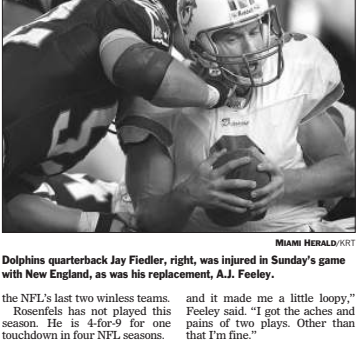
Feeley, who replaced Fiedler against New England, sustained a concussion on Miami's last offensive play when he was hit by linebacker Rosevelt Colvin after releasing a pass.

"I got a direct shot to the chin and it made me a little loopy," Feeley said. "I got the aches and pains of two plays. Other than that I'm fine."

"Jay and A.J. are both doing better than [on Sunday] from a health standpoint. We will evaluate them and then see where they're at on Wednesday morning as far as practice and who can do what and exactly where their health is."

Wannstedt's only other option is Rosenfels, a fourth-year veteran who has played in just six games.

"I'm the insurance policy," Rosenfels said. "If for some reason these guys can't go, I'm going to be ready just like I am every week."



MIAMI HERALD/KRT

Dolphins quarterback Jay Fiedler, right, was injured in Sunday's game with New England, as was his replacement, A.J. Feeley.

Foster out 6-10 weeks

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — DeShaun Foster joined Carolina's growing list of injured offensive stars and will be out six to 10 weeks with a broken collarbone.

That's devastating news for the Panthers (1-3).

After remaining fairly injury-free last season en route to the NFC championship, the bumps, bruises and breaks have piled up early this year.

Star receiver Steve Smith is out indefinitely with a broken leg, top running back Stephen Davis has missed three games after knee surgery, and kick returner Rod Smart, also the No. 3 running back on the roster, is out with a knee injury.

Davis is still day to day, even after declaring only "a hurricane, maybe a tornado or something" would hold him out of Sunday's game at Denver. But when he looked just so-so in pregame warmups, the Panthers scratched him in favor of Foster.

That backfired when Foster left in the first half, leaving Nick Goings and fullback Brad Hoover as the only able runners in Denver's 20-17 victory.

Simms' injury gives Griese shot

TAMPA, Fla. — Brian Griese never lost faith in himself.

He fell out of favor in Denver and didn't quite feel at home in his native Miami, but the 29-year-old quarterback is determined to make the most of an opportunity to rekindle his career with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

"I've been through quite a bit in my career," Griese said after learning he'll make his first start for the Bucs next Monday night against the St. Louis Rams, replacing injured Chris Simms.

Griese came off the bench to spark Sunday's 20-17 victory over the New Orleans Saints, completing 16 of 19 passes for 194 yards and a touchdown after Simms left his first pro start with a sprained throwing shoulder.

Coach Jon Gruden said Monday that Simms is day-to-day, but Griese will start against the Rams. If Simms is not healthy enough to be the backup, Brad Johnson — the starter through the first four games — will be No. 2.

49ers' Peterson out for season

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — All-Pro linebacker Julian Peterson will have surgery to repair his torn left Achilles' tendon Tuesday, ending his season with the San Francisco 49ers.

Whether the injury also ended his career in San Francisco is uncertain. As he left the 49ers' training complex on crutches Monday, Peterson claimed he doesn't regret rejecting a $15 million signing bonus and a lucrative long-term contract from the club last summer.

"If this team doesn't want to pay me, somebody else will," said Peterson, who sat out training camp before signing a one-year tender offer worth about $6.1 million.

Peterson will be placed on injured reserve this week, coach Dennis Erickson said.

NFL briefs

NFL injury update

Injuries to prominent NFL players, followed by team's prognosis. (See Friday's edition for complete injury report provided by the league):

Lions: WR Roy Williams (ankle) is day-to-day but is unlikely to play on Sunday.

Redskins: S Matt Bowen (knee) is out for the season.

Giants: WR Tim Carter (hip) likely is out for the season.

Dodgers take positive attitude into winter

First playoff victory since 1988, emergence of Beltre pleases L.A.

BY JOHN NADEL
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Dodgers made it to the postseason and won a playoff game for the first time in 16 years.

They hope it's only the beginning.

"This experience for us as a team and the city of Los Angeles is a great start," Dodgers slugger Shawn Green said. "Once you do it one time, you learn how to do it again, and we want to do it again.

"I think it will be a different mind-set next year. It would be incredible to go further."

The Dodgers hadn't won a postseason game since the 1988 World Series before beating the Cardinals 4-0 on Saturday night.

Since that time, they had qualified only twice — in 1995 and 1996.

There's a lot of work to be done, starting with figuring out what to do about manager Jim Tracy and MVP candidate Adrian Beltre.

Both are without contracts for next season.

"We have a lot of decisions to make as an organization," general manager Paul DePodesta said Sunday night after the Dodgers' loss to the St. Louis Cardinals in the first round of the playoffs.

"There are a lot of positive things here," said the 31-year-old DePodesta, hired last winter by new Dodgers owner Frank McCourt. "We had an incredibly positive year and built a lot of positive momentum that we'd like to maintain going into spring."

It will certainly help if they re-sign the 25-year-old Beltre, who emerged as one of baseball's top offensive players with a major league-leading 48 homers, 121 RBIs and a .334 batting average.

"Belly's a huge part of this team, on the field and in the clubhouse," Green said. "He's just getting better. It's hard to imagine him having a better season than this year. But once he found it, he's going to repeat it."

Beltre earned $5 million this season, and he'll likely get a big raise as one of baseball's most desirable free agents. With the team's expected payroll still a mystery, it's unknown whether the Dodgers will have enough flexibility to keep the third baseman.

"There's new ownership here and I don't know exactly where they want to go," Beltre said. "Nobody knows."

When asked about Beltre, DePodesta replied: "Right there at the top — that's certainly something critical."

DePodesta must also deal with outfielder Steve Finley and starting pitchers Odalis Perez and Jose Lima, all of whom are free agents.

Eric Gagne, one of baseball's best closers, is arbitration eligible. Since he can enter the free-agent market after the 2006 season, the Dodgers might try to sign him to a long-term deal.

Then there's Tracy, who guided the Dodgers to a 93-69 record this season — their best since 1991. He has a 356-292 mark in four years on the job.

"I'm hopeful I'm going to have the opportunity to continue here," Tracy said Monday. "I love the community, I love the fans. I feel very strongly that when you put the work in that myself and my coaching staff has put in over the past four years and realizing what's out there on the horizon, this has a chance to be special for several years to come."

DePodesta said last month he hoped to re-sign Tracy. It was agreed that talks wouldn't begin until the season ended.

A year after having a major league-best 3.16 ERA and scoring a major league-low 574 runs, the Dodgers went in opposite directions this season with a 4.01 ERA and 761 runs. They got a franchise-record .53 come-from-behind victories and 26 wins in their last at-bat.

Starting pitching was their biggest problem, especially late in the season. That was illustrated against the Cardinals when Perez failed to get through the third inning in each of his two starts and Jeff Weaver didn't survive the fifth in his outing.

Lima, a journeyman who signed a minor league contract last winter and wasn't a member of the rotation until midseason, pitched a five-hit shutout against the Cardinals in Game 3 and wants to come back. Considering his presence in the clubhouse and popularity with fans, he seems a bargain at whatever price he commands.

Hideo Nomo, exceptional in 2002-2003, didn't get the job done this season and almost surely won't return. The erratic Kazuhisa Ishii is under contract for next year, but can hardly be counted on despite winning 13 games this season. He was left off the playoff roster.

DePodesta was heavily criticized for the trade deadline deal that sent popular catcher Paul Lo Duca, setup man Guillermo Mota and outfielder Juan Encarnacion for starter Brad Penny, who wound up on the sideline because of irritation of a nerve in his pitching arm.

As it turned out, DePodesta's belief that the Dodgers needed an ace for the starting rotation certainly proved correct, but Penny couldn't fulfill the role because of his injury.

He was terrific in his first start, allowing two hits in eight shutout innings, but was injured early in his second, on Aug. 8. An attempted late-season comeback failed.

"I'm proud of what we did do," Gagne said. "It's been a great year and we've got to learn from it. It's been amazing. This team is amazing. You look at the talent, and we're good on paper. But our heart was huge.

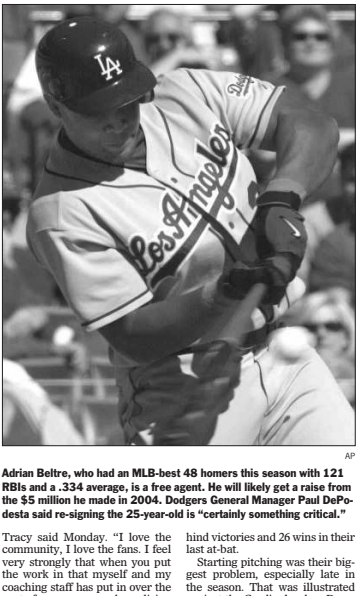
"We've just got to remember that feeling next year and get back to it."

L.A. story

The yearly record of the Dodgers since they won the World Series:

Year	Record	Finish
2004	93-69	1st
2003	85-77	2nd
2002	92-70	3rd
2001	86-76	3rd
2000	86-76	2nd
1999	77-85	3rd
1998	83-79	3rd
1997	88-74	2nd
1996	90-72	2nd#
1995	78-66	1st
1994	58-56	1st*
1993	81-81	4th
1992	63-99	6th
1991	93-69	2nd
1990	86-76	2nd
1989	77-83	4th

— qualified for playoffs as wild card
* — strike-shortened season



AP

Adrian Beltre, who had an MLB-best 48 homers this season with 121 RBIs and a .334 average, is a free agent. He will likely get a raise from the $5 million he made in 2004. Dodgers General Manager Paul DePodesta said re-signing the 25-year-old is "certainly something critical."

AP

Manager Jim Tracy led the Dodgers to a 93-69 record — their best since 1991. He is 356-292 in four years in L.A. and is not under contract for next season.

D-backs lining up managerial candidates

BY BOB BAUM
The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Bob Melvin spoke to the Arizona Diamondbacks about becoming the team's manager on Monday, joining Mark Grace and Al Pedrique as those interviewed for the job.

General manager Joe Garagiola Jr. said interviews are scheduled for three others, and he expects to talk with two more.

Manny Acta, third base coach for the Montreal Expos, will be interviewed on Tuesday; Wally Backman, manager for Arizona's Class A team in Lancaster, Calif., on Wednesday; and Jamie Quirk, bench coach of the Colorado Rockies, on Thursday.

The Diamondbacks also have permission to speak with Texas Rangers first base coach DeMarlo Hale and bench coach Joe Maddon of the Anaheim Angels.

Garagiola said he had not scheduled interviews with either of them, but hoped to do so soon. He said he had yet to talk to Maddon to measure his interest in the Arizona job.

"I'm hopeful that by the end of the week we will feel we've got a group that we can make some recommendations to ownership on," Garagiola said.

Melvin served as Arizona manager Bob Brenly's bench coach in 2000 and in the World Series championship season of 2001, then left to replace Lou Piniella as manager of the Seattle Mariners.

The Mariners went 93-69 in 2002, but faded to 63-99 this year, and Melvin was fired the day after the season ended.

"We were interested in asking him about his experiences as manager, and what were the positives that he took from that," Garagiola said. "It was another good session."

Grace, who retired as a player after the 2003 season and was a television analyst for Arizona's games this year, repeatedly has expressed his desire to manage in the major leagues.

Brenly was the team's television analyst when he was hired to replace the fired Buck Showalter. But unlike Grace, Brenly had experience as a major league coach.

Asked about Grace's lack of experience as either a coach or manager, Garagiola said: "You can neither discount it, nor is it an automatic disqualifier. If it was a disqualifier, we wouldn't have interviewed him."

Pedrique, who began the year as Arizona's third base coach, took over as manager for the remainder of the season after Brenly was fired on July 2. The injury-ravaged Diamondbacks went on to lose 111 games, tied for eighth-most in baseball history.

Jeff Moorad, a prominent player agent, officially takes over as the team's Diamondbacks' chief executive officer on Friday.

AP

Bob Melvin was fired last week after his second season in Seattle after the Mariners fell from 93-69 in 2003 to 63-99 this year.

Rodriguez in middle of of ALCS rivalry

BY MIKE FITZPATRICK
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Alex Rodriguez almost ended up wearing a Boston uniform. Instead, he's the proudest player in pinstripes.

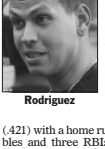
Funny how it happened. Baseball's best all-around player appeared headed to the Red Sox before a trade fell through in December. The New York Yankees swooped in and pulled off a blockbuster deal with Texas, acquiring him for All-Star second baseman Alfonso Soriano.

A-Rod shifted from shortstop to third base so he could play alongside Derek Jeter, and has been at the center of the Yankees-Red Sox storm ever since.

Now he's just glad he landed on this side of the rivalry.

"Without a question, it was a huge blessing in disguise," Rodriguez said Monday as New York prepared to face Boston in the AL Championship Series. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think I'd be in pinstripes."

His most important moments are yet to come, beginning Tuesday night at Yankee Stadium against Red Sox ace Curt Schilling in Game 1. After watching from home as New York beat Boston on Aaron Boone's homer in a seven-game classic last fall, Rodriguez is a key to the rematch.


Rodriguez

He's probably playing his best ball of the year. He went 8-for-19 (.421) with a home run, three doubles and three RBIs to lead the Yankees past the Minnesota Twins in the first round.

Best of all, he excelled in clutch situations after batting only .248 with runners in scoring position during the regular season.

"He can make so many things happen, because he possesses so much ability in every aspect of the game," Yankees manager Joe Torre said. "Not everybody can do what he does. I mean, every dimension."

With the Yankees in danger of going down 0-2, Rodriguez hit a tying double in the 12th inning last Wednesday, sparking New York to a comeback victory.

He manufactured the go-ahead run all by himself in the 11th inning of Game 4, when he doubled down the left-field line, stole third and scored on a wild pitch. The Yankees advanced with a 6-5 victory.

"You could see just when he went up to the box to hit ... there was that look in his eye," Torre said. "When he got on base, it just looked like he had a determination that something was going to happen."

General Manager Theo Epstein had a deal all worked out last off-season — slugger Manny Ramirez would be shipped to the Rangers for Rodriguez, who would take over at shortstop in Boston once Nomar Garciaparra was traded.

But the players' union vetoed a proposal to restructure Rodriguez's record $252 million, 10-year contract, and the deal fell apart.

That opened the door for the opportunistic Yankees, always willing to spend.

After Boone injured his left knee playing pickup basketball in January, New York jumped in and traded for A-Rod on Feb. 16.

Desperate to play for a winning team, he happily agreed to move to third base, replacing Boone, who was later released.

It was another bitter blow for Boston in this one-sided rivalry.

"It feels like it was five to 10 years ago," Rodriguez said. "I don't really care what Red Sox fans are thinking."

Rodriguez had a tough time in New York, though. Under scrutiny all year, the reigning AL MVP hit .286 with 36 homers, 106 RBIs and 28 stolen bases, subpar numbers for him.

He did make an impressive transition to third base, committing only 13 errors. And he and Jeter appeared to become fast friends again, often needling each other in the dugout.

"It's been fun for us," Jeter said. "We've enjoyed it because we've been successful, but we're not where we want to be yet."

Tormented by fans at Fenway Park, Rodriguez went 1-for-17 during a four-game series in April. Then he got into a fight with Boston catcher Jason Varitek in July. But Rodriguez bounced back to finish the season with three homers and nine RBIs against the Red Sox, batting .306.

"I'm glad he's hot. It's a lot better to watch him facing him right now," Yankees reliever Tanyon Sturtze said. "He's so knowledgeable. I just think he's a great hitter."

Rivera attends funeral, plans to be at Game 1

BY JUAN ZAMORANO
The Associated Press

PUERTO CAIMITO, Panama — A weeping Mariano Rivera attended the funeral Tuesday of two family members who died at his house, and he later planned to board a private jet to return to New York for Game 1 of the Yankees-Red Sox pennant series.

Rivera broke out in tears as a choir sang hymns at the God of the Prophecy Church in his hometown, a fishing village 40 miles from Panama City.

"This is a very hard moment for Mariano," said Manuel de la Rosa, a fellow member of the church.

The cousin of Rivera's wife, Clara, died along with his 14-year-old son Saturday at Rivera's house.

Officials said Victor Dario Avila and his son were electrocuted, apparently when an electrical cable fell into the water as the younger Avila was in the pool and his father tried to save him.

On Tuesday, Rivera first visited the house where a vigil was held for the bodies, then rode with Avila's wife in a funeral procession of about 100 people to the Evangelical church.

He told reporters Monday he would return to New York after the funeral to rejoin the team, despite being "devastated, tired, sad" at the death of Avila, with whom he grew up, and his son.

Yankees manager Joe Torre said Monday that he wasn't counting on Rivera's return for the start of the AL championship series: "If he's here tomorrow, wonderful. If he's not, then we understand that."

If Rivera doesn't return, it would be the first time since he became the Yankees' closer in 1997 that Torre wouldn't be able to call on the pitcher widely regarded as the best at his position in postseason history.

Rivera has failed to close out a game only three times in 33 postseason opportunities, including Game 2 of the division series against Minnesota last Wednesday night.

If Rivera isn't back, Torre said, Tom Gordon would be the closer. Gordon has been Rivera's primary setup man this season, going 9-4 with a 2.21 ERA and four saves in 80 appearances.

Pro-Yankees/anti-Red Sox T-shirt recalled

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Yankees fans will need more than a T-shirt to taunt the Red Sox.

A day before Boston and New York started the AL Championship Series, Major League Baseball recalled a T-shirt it had sanctioned because it rubbed Red Sox fans the wrong way.

The message on the shirt that drew the negative reaction read: "Hey Red Sox ... Who's your daddy?"

The shirt bears a Yankees logo and a picture of a red pacifier with the letter "B" on it — a reference to remarks Red Sox ace Pedro Martinez made after a recent loss to Boston's longtime rivals.

"Call the Yankees my daddy. I can't find a way to beat them at this point," Martinez said.

MLB began offering the shirt for wholesale distribution to licensed retailers over the weekend and promoted it on a Web site, spokesman Carmine Tiso said.

On Monday, the few thousand shirts that were made were recalled from retailers, and the shirt was removed from the Web site.

"We did hear some feedback from the Boston fans, who didn't necessarily feel they were comfortable with the T-shirt and the message on it," Tiso said. "Some fans felt it went a little too far, and obviously in this instance we're listening to our fans."

Although most MLB-sanctioned apparel promotes individual teams without denouncing their rivals, there have been some items that touched on baseball's biggest rivalries.

MLB briefs

Kim not retained as Cubs make coaching changes

CHICAGO — The fallout from the Chicago Cubs' disappointing finish started Monday.

Third-base coach Wendell Kim, often criticized for being too aggressive in sending runners home, won't be back next year. Also, Gene Clines is replacing Gary Matthews as hitting coach, with Matthews taking Clines' old spot at first base.

Matthews also will be responsible for outfield instruction and baserunning.

After taking a 1½-game lead in the NL wild-card race, the Cubs lost seven of their last nine and missed the playoffs. Part of the collapse was due to timely hitting — or the lack of it.

The Cubs scored most of their runs on homers, and often struggled to manufacture runs in close games. They were 19-30 in one-run games, including 0-for-5 down the stretch.

Pitching coach Larry Rothschild, bench coach Dick Pole and bullpen coach Juan Lopez will keep their same jobs for the 2005 seasons. Sonny Jackson also will return as Baker's special assistant.

General Manager Jim Hendry said Triple-A manager Mike Quade would be considered for the third-base coach's job, and he'll look at outside candidates, as well.

Reds extend Miley's contract through 2006

CINCINNATI — Manager Dave Miley got a long-awaited show of confidence Monday from the Cincinnati Reds' front office, which extended his contract through the 2006 season.

Miley, 42, had little security when he took over for the fired Bob Boone in July 2003. He finished that season as the interim manager, then got only a one-year extension with a club option for 2005.

The Reds had the best record in the NL last June before the pitching staff imploded and injuries gutted the starting lineup.

Cincinnati finished 76-86.

It was the Reds' fourth straight losing year, their longest such stretch since going from 1945-55 without a winning record.

Dodgers' Ventura announces retirement

BY JOHN NADEL
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Robin Ventura retired in a fashion befitting his 16-year career — timely and with little fanfare.

Ventura told teammates of his decision last week, but waited until the Dodgers' postseason run ended Sunday night to make his announcement public.

"I'm absolutely positive. I've realized that it's time to go, and that's it," Ventura said after the Los Angeles Dodgers lost to St. Louis 6-2, eliminating them from the NL playoffs.

Ventura, 37, played nine years with the Chicago White Sox, two with the New York Mets and 2½ with the Yankees before finishing up with 1½ seasons in Los Angeles — less than 200 miles from where he grew up.

He was used mostly in a utility role with the Dodgers, hitting .243 with five homers and 28 RBIs in 152 at-bats this season. He hit two grand slams — raising his career total to 18. That's tied with Willie McCovey for the third-most in baseball history, behind Lou Gehrig (23) and Eddie Murray (19).

Ventura, a .267 career hitter, leaves with 294 home runs, 1,182 RBIs and six Gold Gloves for his work at third base.

"I've been fortunate in the four years I've managed in the big leagues to be around some very professional people," Dodgers manager Jim Tracy said Monday. "Robin Ventura transcends about every possible thing you can think of when it comes to professionalism."

Ventura said the limitations of an arthritic right ankle played a role in his decision. He broke his ankle during spring training in 1997, a gruesome accident on a slide at home plate.

"I knew my ankle has been progressively worse each year," he said. "I knew it wouldn't be fair to Tracy to come back here and, if somebody got hurt, not be able to be more than just a pinch-hitter."

Ventura, who said he might consider returning to baseball in some capacity, attended high school in Santa Maria and was a three-time All-American at Oklahoma State, where he set a national record with a 58-game hitting streak.

Ventura had his best year with the Mets in 1999, hitting .301 with 32 homers and 120 RBIs.

Despite his mild-mannered reputation, Ventura is often remembered for a run-in with Nolan Ryan back in 1993.

After being hit by a pitch from baseball's career strikeout leader, Ventura charged the mound. Ryan grabbed Ventura in a headlock and punched him a half-dozen times.

Ventura was ejected and later handed a two-game suspension. Ryan stayed in the game and got the victory.

Baseball's perfect host weary of role

Atlanta eliminated from playoffs at home for fifth straight season

BY CHARLES ODUM
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Those who criticized the Atlanta Braves for cashing in on only one of five World Series appearances in the 1990s should at least give those teams credit for making it that far.

The Braves of the 2000s can only dream of a World Series loss.

With Monday night's 12-3 loss to the Houston Astros in Game 5, the Braves have been eliminated in the NL Division Series in three consecutive years and four of five.

And while the Braves made this playoff series interesting with a gritty Game 4 comeback in Houston on Sunday, that road resolve only set up the home fans for more misery. For a fifth straight year, Atlanta fans watched a visiting team celebrate after eliminating the Braves.

"The older guys don't want to sit there and watch it," said third baseman Chipper Jones, one of the team's veterans. "It's old hat; we've been through it before. Guys like Chucky [Thomas] and Adam [LaRoche], they need to feel that sting. That will motivate them in the offseason."

The 2003 Cubs, 2002 Giants and 2000 Cardinals clinched their first-round wins in Atlanta, and Arizona wrapped up its 2001 NL pennant at Turner Field.

The Braves' first season in Turner Field was 1997, and in seven of their eight years in "The Ted" the Braves have been eliminated from the postseason at home. The lone exception was 1999, when the Braves were swept in the World Series by the Yankees, and Game 4 was played in New York.

The Braves are 4-12 in their last 16 home postseason games, including a 1-2 home record in this series.

Jaret Wright lost for the second time in the series. Though he had been through the postseason grind before with Cleveland in 1997, he said the pain was new and unique.

"It's never fun to lose," Wright said. "To go out there and lay it on the line, you can't describe it."

Wright gave up four runs and six hits in $5^1/_3$ innings.

AP

Atlanta Braves players, from left, Dewayne Weis, Wilson Betemit and Travis Smith look dejected during Monday's playoff loss in Atlanta.

"Trying to shut down a team like that is a tough job," he said. "We gave it all we had."

Reliever Chris Reitsma gave up four runs and four hits in two-thirds of an inning, leaving him with an 18.00 ERA for the series.

"It doesn't feel good," Reitsma said. "It's frustrating to come to this point and lose. It's a pretty bad feeling."

The Braves, who have at times played before empty seats in the playoffs in recent years, can't blame their fans for lack of support Monday. A Turner Field sell-out crowd of 54,068 showed up, the second-largest crowd in Atlanta history, but Braves' fans had few occasions to chant and chop their familiar red foam tomahawks.

The Braves' 13th consecutive division flag has been mounted in left field, but the division dynasty was again reduced to postseason rubble as the wild-card Astros won their first postseason series.

"It just doesn't seem fitting for the postseason to end like this," Jones said.

Launch: Team full of B's gets all A's in Game 5

LAUNCH, FROM BACK PAGE

The Bums won on their eighth try in the 1955 World Series.

Houston jumped ahead 3-0 on Jaret Wright, with Beltran homering in the third. The Braves had the big crowd roaring in the fifth when Rafael Furcal and Johnny Estrada hit solo homers, but Beltran hit a drive off Wright that just cleared the right-field wall leading off the sixth.

Wright also was the loser in Game 1, putting a damper on his 15-win comeback season.

The Astros finished off the Braves in the seventh, scoring five runs with two outs. Chris Reitsma gave up RBI singles to Biggio and Beltran before Bagwell launched a mammoth two-run homer into the left-field seats. Jeff Kent added an RBI single off Tom Martin for a 9-2 lead.

Roy Oswalt, pitching on three days' rest for the second time this season, made it through five innings for his first postseason win. He threw 111 pitches, the Braves helping out by stranding seven runners.

Bagwell and Biggio, who took much of the blame for Houston's past futility, silenced their critics. Biggio was 8-of-20 (.400) with a homer and four RBIs in the series. Bagwell was 7-of-22 (.318) with two homers and five RBIs.

No one was better than Beltran — 10-of-22 (.455) with eight RBIs, capped by a two-run single in the eighth.

AP

Houston Astros' Carlos Beltran celebrates his second home run of Game 5 Monday in Atlanta.

"When I played in Kansas City, a lot of people didn't know who I was," he said. "But as soon as I was traded to Houston, people started realizing who I was."

The Astros underachieved much of the season. Phil Garner took over as manager at the All-Star break, and Houston had to win 36 of its last 46 games just to get the wild card.

Not a bad formula, actually. Last year, the Florida Marlins fired their manager during the season, got into the playoffs as a second-place team and went on beat the New York Yankees in the World Series.

Furcal tried to spark the Braves with eight hits, two homers, five runs and three stolen bases in the series.

Of course, he had plenty of incentive, facing a 21-day jail sentence for his second DUI arrest.

The judge delayed the sentence until the day after the Braves' season ended, so Furcal reports to jail Tuesday.

Friends mourn Caminiti; cause of death uncertain

BY PAM EASTON
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Ken Caminiti's struggles both on and off the field kept the former National League Most Valuable Player fighting, but he had managed to survive them all — including a drug charge three years ago.

Caminiti's death of an apparent heart attack over the weekend shocked friends and former teammates who believed the former Houston Astros slugger was turning his life around.

"He had a lot of setbacks, but he was a person who always overcame adversity," Terry Yates, Caminiti's lawyer, said Monday.

"He was a person who was always positive and had a positive outlook on life."

Yates stood next to Caminiti last week as the ex-athlete admitted testing positive for cocaine.

Caminiti's agent-lawyer, Rick Licht, said the three-time All-Star third baseman died of an apparent heart attack Sunday in New York City. But the process of confirming an exact cause of death could take as long as 10 days. The city medical examiner's office performed an autopsy Monday but could not rule on a cause of death until toxicology tests were complete, spokeswoman Ellen Borakove said.

Caminiti was optimistic about his future and planned to pursue some development projects in Montana, Yates said, and was also talking with the San Diego Padres about returning to the organization, possibly as a coach.

The slugger's sentence of 180 days in jail, ordered by State District Judge William Harmon, allowed for his release last Tuesday. He already had served 189 days behind bars and in a drug treatment center since he received deferred adjudication for felony cocaine possession in March 2001.

Caminiti was convicted of the felony charge because of the probation violation. He had failed four drug tests during his probation, which began in 2002.

"Ken had been with us Wednesday afternoon and when he left, he was upbeat in a good mood and anxious to come back to Houston so we could figure some things out regarding his future," another lawyer, Kent Schaffer, said.

Astros star Jeff Bagwell reflected on the report that it was a heart attack that killed his friend.

"That's where it starts — his heart," Bagwell told the Houston Chronicle in Tuesday's editions. "One of the biggest attributes Ken had is his heart ... How our relationship developed, and all the great things that he's meant to my life, I think if you start with his heart and how great a person he was, that's a good way to remember him."

"We are truly saddened by the death of Ken," Astros owner Drayton McLane said. "We admired him for his accomplishments and the respect he gained with his teammates because of his passion for playing the game of baseball ... We all rooted hard for Ken on the field, and we rooted equally hard for him in overcoming his problems off the field."

Baseball scoreboard

MLB playoffs

DIVISION SERIES
American League
New York vs. Minnesota
Tuesday, Oct. 5
Minnesota 2, New York 0
Wednesday, Oct. 6
New York 7, Minnesota 6, 12 innings
Friday, Oct. 8
New York 8, Minnesota 4
Saturday, Oct. 9
New York 6, Minnesota 5, 11 innings, New York wins series 3-1
Anaheim vs. Boston
Tuesday, Oct. 5
Boston 9, Anaheim 3
Wednesday, Oct. 6
Boston 8, Anaheim 3
Friday, Oct. 8
Boston 8, Anaheim 6, 10 innings, Boston wins series 3-0
National League
St. Louis vs. Los Angeles
Tuesday, Oct. 5
St. Louis 8, Los Angeles 3
Thursday, Oct. 7
St. Louis 8, Los Angeles 3
Saturday, Oct. 9
Los Angeles 4, St. Louis 0
Sunday, Oct. 10
St. Louis 6, Los Angeles 2, St. Louis wins series 3-1
Atlanta vs. Houston
Wednesday, Oct. 6
Houston 9, Atlanta 3
Thursday, Oct. 7
Atlanta 4, Houston 2, 11 innings
Saturday, Oct. 9
Houston 8, Atlanta 5
Sunday, Oct. 10
Atlanta 6, Houston 5
Monday, Oct. 11
Houston 12, Atlanta 3, Houston wins series 3-2
LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES
American League
Tuesday, Oct. 12
Boston (Schilling 21-6) at New York (Mussina 12-9)
Wednesday, Oct. 13
Boston (Martinez 16-9) at New York (Lieber 14-8)
Friday, Oct. 15
New York (Brown 10-6) at Boston (Arroyo 10-9)
Saturday, Oct. 16
New York (Hernandez 8-2 or Vazquez 14-10) at Boston (Wakefield 12-10)
Sunday, Oct. 17
New York at Boston, if necessary
Tuesday, Oct. 19
Boston at New York, if necessary
Wednesday, Oct. 20
Boston at New York, if necessary
National League
Wednesday, Oct. 13
Houston at St. Louis
Thursday, Oct. 14
Houston at St. Louis
Saturday, Oct. 16
St. Louis at Houston
Sunday, Oct. 17
St. Louis at Houston
Monday, Oct. 18
St. Louis at Houston, if necessary
Wednesday, Oct. 20
Houston at St. Louis, if necessary
Thursday, Oct. 21
Houston at St. Louis, if necessary
WORLD SERIES
Saturday, Oct. 23
National League at American League
Sunday, Oct. 24
NL at AL
Tuesday, Oct. 26
AL at NL
Wednesday, Oct. 27
AL at NL
Thursday, Oct. 28
AL at NL, if necessary
Saturday, Oct. 30
NL at AL, if necessary
Sunday, Oct. 31
NL at AL, if necessary

Monday
Astros 12, Braves 3

HOUSTON	ab	r	h	bi	ATLANTA	ab	r	h	bi
Biggio lf	5	2	3	1	Furcal ss	4	2	2	1
DMiceli p	0	0	0	0	JDrew rf	4	0	1	0
Wheeler p	0	0	0	0	CJones 3b	5	0	2	0
CBeltrn cf	5	3	4	5	JEstda c	4	1	2	2
Bgwell 1b	4	1	1	2	Byrd p	0	0	0	0
Brkmn rf	4	2	2	0	AJones cf	3	0	1	0
JKent 2b	5	1	2	1	Lroche 1b	4	0	0	0
Ensbrg 3b	5	1	2	1	MGiles 2b	4	0	1	0
JVzcnó ss	4	1	1	1	Thmas lf	3	0	0	0
RChavz c	2	0	1	0	JSWrht p	2	0	0	0
OPlmro ph	1	0	0	0	Grybsk p	0	0	0	0
Asmus c	0	0	0	0	DWise ph	1	0	0	0
Oswalt p	2	0	0	0	Ritsma p	0	0	0	0
Qualls p	0	0	0	0	TMartn p	0	0	0	0
Lamb ph	1	0	0	0	JuCruz p	0	0	0	0
Gallo p	0	0	0	0	EddPrz c	1	0	0	0
Hrville p	0	0	0	0					
Lane lf	1	1	1	1					
Totals	**39**	**12**	**17**	**12**	**Totals**	**35**	**3**	**9**	**3**

Houston	021	001	530—12
Atlanta	000	020	100— 3

E—Bagwell (1), JDrew (1). DP—Houston 1, Atlanta 2. LOB—Houston 4, Atlanta 9. 2B—Biggio (2), Berkman (1), Rhino (3), Ensberg (2). HR—CBeltran 2 (4), Bagwell (2), Furcal (2), JEstrada (2). S—RChavez. SF—JVizcaino.

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Houston						
Oswalt W,1-0	5	7	2	2	3	4
Qualls	1	0	0	0	0	1
Gallo	$^2/_3$	2	1	1	1	0
Harville	$^1/_3$	0	0	0	0	0
DMiceli	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wheeler	1	0	0	0	0	0
Atlanta						
JSWright L,0-2	$5^1/_3$	6	4	4	1	1
Gryboski	$^2/_3$	0	0	0	0	1
Reitsma	$^2/_3$	4	4	4	0	0
TMartin	$^1/_3$	2	1	1	0	0
JuCruz	$^2/_3$	4	3	3	1	0
Byrd	$1^1/_3$	1	0	0	0	0

T—3:12. A—54,068 (50,091).

SPORTS

Robin Ventura retires after 16 seasons in the big leagues, Page 30

Successful launch

Astros blast Braves in first playoff series win

BY PAUL NEWBERRY
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — The journey was long, with plenty of discouraging setbacks along the way.

The last step was easy.

The Houston Astros finally won a postseason series in their 43rd year, shaking off the burden of seven playoff losses with a 12-3 rout of the Atlanta Braves on Monday night.

The newest Killer B, Carlos Beltran, hit two more homers and had five RBIs in the deciding fifth game of the first-round NL series.

With that, Houston got to experience all the trappings of postseason success: the group hug on the pitcher's mound, the sweet taste of champagne in the clubhouse.

"We feel comfortable with our team," said Beltran, an impending free agent acquired from Kansas City in June. "The past is in the past. We win, we move on."

The triumph was especially satisfying for Jeff Bagwell and Craig Biggio, the heart of the Killer B's for more than a decade and part of the last four playoff series losses.

Three of those times, Houston's season ended with a loss to the Braves.

"We've been through a lot here, Craig and I and this organization," Bagwell said. "This is a big relief for us."

Beltran homered four times in the series, breaking the Houston postseason record. In a poignant note, the mark was formerly held by Ken Caminiti, who spent 10 seasons with the Astros.

Caminiti died Sunday of an apparent heart attack at age 41 — news that hit his former teammates especially hard.

"I think I felt his spirit out there," Biggio said.

"I know he's smiling somewhere," Bagwell added.

The clubhouse celebration was rather muted for a team that has endured so much postseason disappointment. The Astros enjoyed soaking their owner, Drayton McLane, but didn't appear satisfied with winning one playoff series.

Next up for the wild-card Astros is a matchup against Central Division rival St. Louis in the NL Championship Series starting Wednesday night at Busch Stadium.

After squandering a three-run lead at home in Game 4, the Astros had the series right where they wanted it.

Atlanta has lost Game 5 of the division series three years in a row — all at Turner Field. The second-largest crowd in franchise history, 54,068, saw another familiar ending.

AP

Houston Astros players celebrate defeating the Atlanta Braves 12-3 in Game 5 to win their National League Division Series in Atlanta on Monday. It was the Astros' first series victory in their 43-year history.

John Smoltz hopes it won't diminish the perception of a team that was picked to finish no better than third in the NL East.

"For one night, it's a very terrible feeling," the Atlanta closer said. "When you break down this team, it was a really remarkable year."

The team that proudly displays 13 straight division titles still has only one World Series to show for it. It marked the fifth straight year that the Braves' season ended at the Ted.

This one was especially dismal, equaling the worst postseason loss in franchise history.

The Astros exorcised their playoff demons, matching the Brooklyn Dodgers for most series losses before getting their first postseason victory.

SEE LAUNCH ON PAGE 31

Packers in trouble after third straight loss at Lambeau Field

Page 27

Yao returns home to lead Rockets in first NBA games played in China

Page 25

Same old story for Raiders squad plagued by penalty flags

Page 28