Allawi says prosecution of Baathist chiefs to begin soon Page 3

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Model Heidi Klum helps designers sew up competition
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Volume 2, No. 249 © SS 2004 MIDEAST EDITION WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2004

DOD announces newest deployments in terror war

Stateside units involved; troop levels in Iraq, Afghanistan unchanged

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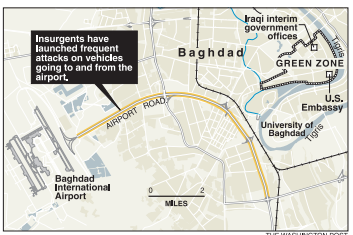
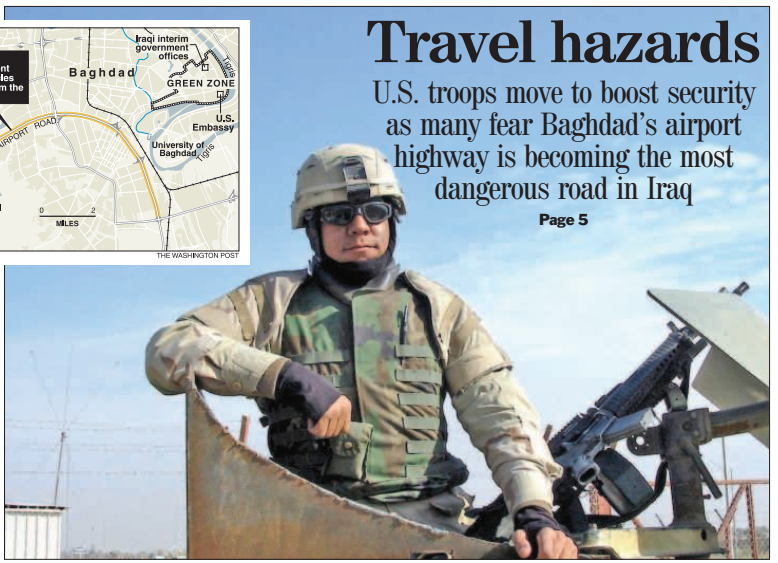
Travel hazards

U.S. troops move to boost security as many fear Baghdad's airport highway is becoming the most dangerous road in Iraq

Page 5



THE WASHINGTON POST



Spc. Edward Gonzalez, 28, a gunner on a Humvee, shot a suicide bomber last month moments before the explosives detonated. A gunner in the Humvee behind him was killed in the explosion, as their convoy patrolled Baghdad's airport road. The road has been the site of nearly 20 car bombings recently, leading the U.S. Embassy to warn its staff not to travel on it.

THE WASHINGTON POST LATWP

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Concorde crash: A titanium strip that fell off a Continental Airlines jumbo jet onto a Paris runway was the main cause of the deadly crash of an Air France Concorde in 2000, judicial experts reported Tuesday.

Meanwhile, French prosecutors summoned top Continental executive Gordon Bethune and other officials for questioning in the probe of the July 25, 2000, crash outside Paris that killed 113 people, a lawyer for civil parties in the case said.

Judicial officials issued a report Tuesday designed to help assess responsibility for the crash, meaning employees at Continental could face prosecution in France.

Madrid bombings: An unidentified witness recognized an alleged mastermind of the Madrid train bombings in front of a Spanish judge investigating the attacks, court officials said on Tuesday.

The witness told National Court Judge Juan del Olmo that he had seen Egyptian Rabei Osman Ahmed in a house on the outskirts of Madrid, where police suspect terrorists prepared the bombs that exploded on Madrid commuter trains, killing 191 people and injuring more than 2,000.

Osman Ahmed, 27, was arrested in Milan in June, and was extradited from Italy last week after police allegedly overheard him boasting that he was the mastermind of the Madrid bombings and was planning another attack imminently.

Taliban arrests: Information from a man caught in a vehicle loaded with explosives led to the arrests of two senior Taliban military commanders believed responsible for a series of terror attacks in southern Afghanistan, an official said Tuesday.

Mullah Naqvi and Mullah Qayum were active in the ousted regime's insurgency, and there was hope they could lead security forces to other top leaders, said Abdullah Laghmani, the intelligence chief in Kandahar province.

Taiwan politics: Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian took the blame for a legislative election defeat and resigned as the leader of his party Tuesday, a move that might help him be more flexible with rival China and ease gridlock in parliament.

Chen's Democratic Progressive Party and its allies were stunned when an opposition alliance — which was disorganized and beset with squabbling — won last weekend's legislative election, taking 114 of the 225 seats.

Filipino film star/candidate: Action film star and presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., who refused to concede May's election, died Tuesday after suffering a stroke. He was 65.

Poe had complained of dizziness while dining with friends and employees at his suburban Manila, Philippines, film studio. He was brought late Saturday to St. Luke's Hospital, where doctors diagnosed a blood clot in his brain, and he later fell into a coma, his neurologist, Abdias Aquino, told reporters. He died at the hospital early Tuesday.

Court-martial in Iraqi's drowning: 1st Lt. Jack Saville, right, arrives for a pretrial hearing in his court-martial with his attorney on Tuesday at Fort Hood, Texas. Saville and Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Perkins, both part of the 4th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team out of Fort Carson, Colo., are accused of ordering soldiers to push two Iraqis into the Tigris River in Samarra, Iraq, in January as punishment for violating curfew. Zaidoun Hassoun, 19, drowned. Defense lawyers contend that Hassoun safely reached shore and that Army investigators failed to positively identify a body or do an autopsy. Trials for Saville and Perkins are set for next month. They face up to 29 years in prison if convicted on all counts.

States

Washington recount: Through all the counting and recounting in the closest governor's race in state history, Republican Dino Rossi has held the slimmest of margins over Democrat Christine Gregoire.

For the first time since the Nov. 2 election, it looks as though the tide could be turning. King County election officials announced Monday that they would count more than 500 ballots that were mistakenly rejected after the election — possibly enough to swing the election to Gregoire.

Rossi won the election by 261 votes, but saw that margin shrink to 42 votes after a machine recount of all 2.9 million ballots cast.

Andrea Yates appeal: Andrea Yates' capital murder convictions for drowning her children should be overturned because the state's expert witness falsely testified and Texas' insanity standard is unconstitutional, her attorneys say in an appeal.

A three-judge panel of the First Court of Appeals in Houston was set to hear oral arguments Tuesday in Yates' appeal, which cites 19 errors from her 2002 trial. Yates' attorneys say she deserves a new trial. Jurors sentenced Yates to life in prison in the 2001 deaths of three of her children. She was not tried in the deaths of the other two.

Michael Jackson case: Claiming they are swamped with potential evidence that prosecutors were slow in handing over, Michael Jackson's defense attorneys next week will ask a judge to postpone the pop star's child-molestation trial, according to court documents.

The trial is scheduled to start Jan. 31 in Santa Barbara, Calif.

Earlier this month, Santa Barbara authorities again searched Jackson's Neverland ranch, securing a saliva sample for DNA testing and examining the pop star's security and telephone systems.

Freighter grounding: U.S. Coast Guard officials said an oil and fuel spill from a freighter that broke in two when it ran aground off Alaska's coast probably amounted to thousands of gallons less than had been feared.

The federal government's incident commander, Capt. Ron Morris, said Monday just 41,138 gallons of bunker fuel were inside the tank directly breached when the Malaysian soybean freighter Selendang Ayu split in two Wednesday on an Unalaska Island shoal.

Traficant incarceration: Ousted congressman James A. Traficant has been transferred from a corrections facility in New York to a prison hospital in Minnesota, a prison spokeswoman said Monday.

Traficant was transferred last week, said Traci Billingsley, a spokeswoman for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. She declined to say why Traficant was taken to the Rochester Federal Medical Center or how long he will be there.

The Ohio Democrat was expelled from Congress two years ago after being convicted in federal court of racketeering, bribery and tax evasion. He is serving an eight-year prison sentence that is expected to end on Aug. 10, 2009.

SARS vaccine: The National Institutes of Health is launching a human trial to test the safety of an experimental vaccine against severe acute respiratory syndrome.

SARS, which was first recognized in 2002, killed 774 people worldwide before being brought under control by quarantine, patient isolation and travel restrictions.

Stories and photo from wire services

Corrections

■ A pull quote in Tuesday's edition that accompanied a story about airlifts in Iraq misspelled a servicemember's name. His name is Tech. Sgt. Todd Lunge.

■ A headline in Tuesday's edition about six U.S. soldiers being court-martialed for stripping parts from abandoned Army vehicles was incorrect. The action occurred in Kuwait.

Comics, horoscopes and advice — every day in Stars and Stripes

Former regime leaders to be tried next week

Saddam will not be among those to go on trial

BY NICK WADHAMS
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Trials against the 11 figures in Saddam Hussein's ousted regime will begin next week, interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Tuesday, but Saddam will not be among them.

Many of Iraq's former Baath Party members have been in jail for more than a year, and few have been able to meet with counsel.

Saddam's Jordan-based lawyers say they have not seen the former dictator, arrested a year ago Monday, and said holding trials so soon would be illegal.

"The Iraqi court will be in violation of the basic rights of the defendants, which is to have access to legal counsel while being interrogated and indicted," Ziad al-Khasawneh said.

Officials had given conflicting accounts about when the trials before the Iraqi Special Tribunal would begin, and have also suggested that Saddam would not be tried first. The Associated Press learned Tuesday that the proceedings next week would not involve Saddam.

"I can now tell you clearly and precisely that, God willing, next week the trials of the symbols of the former regime will start, one by one so that justice can take its path in Iraq," Allawi told the interim National Council, without saying who would be tried.

Allawi had previously said they would take place in October or November, while others have said they would begin no earlier than 2006. An Allawi spokesman later said he had no information about who would be tried first and said more details would be released Wednesday.

"There is a court process that involves investigative judges and a hearing for some of the former regime officials that is under preparation that we would expect to be held next week," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. "At that point, the accused and their attorneys do go to court, although that's not the actual trial."

Iraq's human rights minister, Bekhtiar Amin, said from Geneva that work was under way to bring some of Saddam's lieutenants to trial before him.

"I don't know for sure when Saddam Hussein in particular will be tried, but the trial is scheduled to start sometime next year, the first quarter of next year," Amin said. "I doubt that Saddam will be the first one to be tried, there are others whom they will start with and the work is ongoing right now."

Allawi also announced the arrest of a cousin of Saddam's, Izzi-Din Mohammed Hassan al-Majid. Al-Majid, who fled Iraq in 1995 and was granted indefinite leave to remain in Britain in 2000, was arrested in Fallujah and will be put on trial as soon as possible, Allawi said.

Government leaders have said recently the Special Tribunal is not yet prepared to begin the trials. They need to train judges and prosecutors, and sort through stacks of evidence, all under the pressure of a deadly insurgency that has been able to strike at will.

"The prosecution team, the defense counsel, the investigative judges, the documents are not ready," National Security Adviser Mouwafak al-Rubaie told the AP last week. "It will take time. If you want to get it right, it will take time."

But leaders have come under new pressure recently. On Monday, the U.S. military acknowledged that eight of Saddam's 11 top lieutenants went on hunger strikes over the weekend to demand visits in jail from the International Committee of the Red Cross, but they were eating again by Monday.

A lawyer for former Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said they were protesting the legality of their trials and their detention.

Paper given wrong Guard count for Iraq death analysis

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army National Guard said Monday it had given USA Today an inaccurate count of Guard troops in Iraq since the beginning of the war in March 2003, but still could not provide a precise count, the paper reported Tuesday.

USA Today used those numbers to construct an analysis that showed part-time troops from the Guard were more likely to die in Iraq than their counterparts in the active-duty Army.

Without precise figures, there is no way to accurately compare death rates.

The Guard said last week that 37,000 Guard troops had set foot in Iraq since the start of the war. On Monday, Guard spokesman Scott Woodham said 90,972 Guard troops had been ordered to Iraq, but he could not say how many had actually gotten there, and how many were on their way.

Woodham gave two explanations for the error. In a telephone interview with USA Today on Monday, Woodham said the National Guard Bureau made "an internal mistake" in compiling the numbers.

In a second conversation, Woodham said he "misunderstood the question" when asked how many Army Guard troops had deployed to Iraq since the beginning of the war, USA Today reported.

The proportion of battle deaths for Army Guard and Reserve in Iraq are still significantly higher than in past conflicts, Woodham said. Throughout the 12-year Vietnam War, for example, fewer than 100 Guard troops were killed, compared with the 145 who have died in less than two years in Iraq.

AP

U.S. soldiers inspect a car destroyed when a car bomb exploded in Baghdad on Tuesday.

Green Zone checkpoint hit again

Second suicide car bombing in two days kills 7, wounds 13

BY SLOBODAN LEKIC
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A suicide car bomber killed seven people at a Green Zone checkpoint early Tuesday, the second attack in two days near the same gate into the district that houses Iraq's interim government and the U.S. Embassy, officials said.

In other violence, the U.S. military said two U.S. Marines from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force based in western Iraq died in combat in Baghdad province Monday, bringing the number of Marines killed to 10 in three days. Seven other Marines died in action Sunday in Anbar, a vast province west of Baghdad including the battleground cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, and a 10th was killed Saturday. The military provided no details on their deaths, which brought to nearly 1,300 the number of American troops killed in Iraq since the invasion in March 2003.

Tuesday's blast at the Green Zone checkpoint killed seven people and wounded at least 13 people, said Dr. Hassan AbdelSatar from Baghdad's Yarmouk Hospital.

Police Lt. Rafid Abid said the attack was carried out by a suicide car bomber.

A mushroom-shaped cloud of black smoke rose from the site of the attack, which was near where a bomber struck Monday, killing 13 and injuring 15 people.

No U.S. troops were injured in either blast.

The U.S. Embassy and several other missions are located inside the zone, which occupies an area of four square miles on the west bank of the Tigris River. The area, comprising Saddam's palace and other administrative buildings, is a virtual fortress encircled by miles of 12-foot-high barricades, its gates guarded by U.S. Bradley fighting vehicles. The complex is off-limits to the public.

Several of Baghdad's main arteries dead-end straight into it, cut off by a triple layered sprawl of concertina wire, impassable concrete blast walls and sandbagged guard towers.

Poland announced Tuesday it will cut its troop strength in Iraq by nearly a third in the month following the vote, as part of long-standing plans to reduce its presence. Poland's current 2,400-member contingent will be cut to 1,700 from mid-February, with 700 soldiers remaining in Poland on standby, Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski told a news conference in Warsaw.

Elsewhere in Baghdad, Gen. Richard B. Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff announced the U.S. military will have a record-high 150,000 troops in Iraq through the Jan. 30 elections and "a little bit after." [See related story on Page 4.]

Myers predicted that last month's U.S.-led offensive to retake the western rebel stronghold of Fallujah would undercut the rebellion by denying guerrillas a sanctuary from which they could launch attacks with relative impunity. "They will try to move to other locations but I don't think they are going to find any location as satisfactory as Fallujah was for their operational planning and facilitation of what they were doing."

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Monday, at least 1,296 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,016 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is three higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Monday.

The British military has reported 74 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,158 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 907 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ One U.S. soldier was killed Monday in a vehicle accident near Balad, Iraq.

■ Seven Marines were killed Sunday in Anbar province.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Spc. Robert W. Hoyt, 21, Ashford, Conn.; killed Saturday in Baghdad when an explosive detonated near his convoy; assigned to the National Guard, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment, Bristol, Conn.

■ Army Staff Sgt. Marvin L. Trost III, 28, Goshen, Ind., and Army Spc. Edwin W. Roodhouse, 36, San Jose, Calif.; killed Dec. 5 when an explosive detonated near their vehicle in Habbaniyah, Iraq; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Greaves, South Korea.

Pentagon announces mid-'05 rotations for war

BY PATRICK DICKSON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has decided on its troop rotation plans for mid-2005, which will keep force levels at the same strength for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There are roughly 138,000 troops in Iraq and 18,000 in Afghanistan; another 12,000 are being sent to Iraq to provide security for elections.

Defense Department spokesman Lawrence Di Rita, speaking at a Tuesday Pentagon briefing, said the moves were part of the regular rotations, and would not significantly change the look of the force in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

The deployment would keep force levels at three brigades and a division headquarters element in Afghanistan, and 17 brigades and three division headquarters elements in Iraq.

"We are identifying the units, it's part of the ongoing rotation — there's no change to the level or the disposition of the forces, it's just the next rotation that's going in. We're notifying the units and notifying the families.

For Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, the troops set to rotate in include:

■ The 3rd and 4th Brigades and headquarters elements, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.

■ The 53rd Infantry Brigade and headquarters elements, Florida National Guard

For Operation Iraqi Freedom, the following units have been tapped to rotate in:

■ 4th Infantry Division — division headquarters and four brigades

■ 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, headquarters elements and four brigades, Fort Campbell, Ky.

■ 48th Infantry Brigade (Separate), Georgia National Guard

■ 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

■ 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.

■ 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kan.

The Pentagon alerted all units Friday, according to a senior Pentagon official.

Smaller units will also be deployed, but planners had not gotten to that level of detail as of Tuesday, according to the official.

Army Brig. Gen. David Rodriguez, deputy regional operations director for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said it would be two to three months before the combat support elements would be identified.

Asked whether the continued insurgency was the motivation behind the announcement, Di Rita would only say the Defense Department would continue to evaluate the situation to determine whether more or fewer troops will be needed in the years to come.

Speaking in Baghdad on Tuesday, Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said U.S. troop numbers will rise from 138,000 to 150,000 before next month's elections, which many Iraqis fear could be targeted by militants opposed to the occupation and bent on derailing the political process.

"Our troop levels will be at 150,000 for the elections and a little bit after," Myers said, adding that events would determine whether those numbers will be scaled down after the ballot.

The previous high for the U.S. force in Iraq was 148,000 on May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations were over, and most soldiers thought the war had been won. The initial invasion force included thousands of sailors on ships in the Persian Gulf and other waters, plus tens of thousands of troops in Kuwait and other surrounding countries.

Stripes reporter Lisa Burgess and the Associated Press contributed to this report. E-mail Pat Dickson at: dicksonp@stripes.osd.mil

McCain slams Rumsfeld on Iraq

BY BETH DEFALCO
The Associated Press

PHOENIX — U.S. Sen. John McCain said Monday that he has "no confidence" in Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, citing Rumsfeld's handling of the war in Iraq and the failure to send more troops.

McCain, speaking to The Associated Press in an hourlong interview, said his comments were not a call for Rumsfeld's resignation, explaining that President Bush "can have the team that he wants around him."

Asked about his confidence in the secretary's leadership, McCain recalled fielding a similar question a couple weeks ago.

"I said no. My answer is still no. No confidence," McCain said.

He estimated an additional 80,000 Army personnel and 20,000 to 30,000 more Marines would be needed to secure Iraq.

"I have strenuously argued for larger troop numbers in Iraq, including the right kind of troops — linguists, special forces, civil affairs, etc.," said McCain, R-Ariz. "There are very strong differences of opinion between myself and Secretary Rumsfeld on that issue."

When asked if Rumsfeld was a liability to the Bush administration, McCain responded: "The president can decide that, not me."

McCain, a decorated Navy veteran and former Vietnam prisoner of war, is a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, which has oversight of military operations and considerable influence over the Pentagon budget.

If Senate Republicans maintain their majority two years from now, McCain would be in line to become the committee's chairman, something he said he'd weigh when considering whether to run for president again.

"In a couple of years I might give it some consideration, but not right now," he said of a 2008 presidential bid.

Pentagon spokesman Larry Di Rita said McCain "has frequently expressed his views regarding troop levels in Iraq, and he is an important member" of the committee.

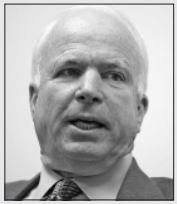
Rumsfeld has "relied upon the judgment of the military commanders to determine what force levels are appropriate for the situation at hand," Di Rita said.

Despite the troop levels, McCain believes military morale remains high, but he acknowledged that involuntary extensions of tours of duty were frustrating to soldiers.

He said Iraq must have a functioning independent government before U.S. troops leave.

"I believe we'll be in Iraq militarily for many years, which would not be a problem to the American people," he said. "I think what is not acceptable to the American people is an increasing flow of dead and wounded."

> *"I think what is not acceptable to the American people is an increasing flow of dead and wounded (U.S. troops from Iraq)."*
> **U.S. Sen. John McCain**



AP photos

U.S. Sen. John McCain, left, said Monday that he and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, right, had "very strong differences of opinion" on the issue of force levels in Iraq.

AP

President Bush stands with Presidential Medal of Freedom honorees, from left, former CIA Director George Tenet; retired Gen. Tommy Franks, who oversaw combat in Iraq and Afghanistan; and former Iraq administrator L. Paul Bremer on Tuesday at the White House.

Three of Bush's key players in Iraq receive Medal of Freedom

BY JENNIFER LOVEN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush awarded the nation's highest civilian honor Tuesday to three men central to his Iraq policy, saying they had played "pivotal roles in great events."

Bush presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom to retired Gen. Tommy Franks, who oversaw combat in Afghanistan and the initial invasion of Iraq, former CIA Director George Tenet and former Iraq administrator L. Paul Bremer.

Franks, of Midland, Texas, is a retired four-star Army general who commanded U.S. forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. He spoke on the president's behalf at the Republican National Convention and campaigned for Bush through the fall.

Bush said Franks "led the forces that fought and won two wars in the defense of the world's security and helped liberate more than 50 million people from two of the worst tyrannies in the world."

Tenet left the CIA in July after seven years as director. He has been criticized for intelligence failures before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and the never-proven prewar allegations that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

Bush credited him as "one of the first to recognize and address the threat to America from radical networks." He said that after Sept. 11, Tenet was "ready with a plan to strike back at al-Qaida and to topple the Taliban."

Bremer was the top civilian U.S. official in postwar Iraq, overseeing the transfer of power to an interim Iraqi government in June. "For 14 months Jerry Bremer worked day and night in difficult and dangerous conditions to stabilize the country, to help its people rebuild and to establish a political process that would lead to justice and liberty," Bush said.

This fall, Bremer suggested the United States had paid a price in Iraq in the immediate aftermath of major combat operations because it did not have enough troops in place to stop the looting.

The Medal of Freedom, established by President Truman in 1945 to recognize civilians for their efforts during World War II, was reinstated by President Kennedy in 1963 to honor distinguished service.

Guarding the most dangerous highway in Iraq

Soldiers adapt methods to keep up with insurgents' tactics near Baghdad airport

BY JOSH WHITE
The Washington Post

ON THE BAGHDAD AIRPORT ROAD — Spc. Edward Gonzalez spun the turret around quickly and locked it into place with a loud clank, training his machine gun on the traffic behind him. The radio had just crackled with a warning: A suspicious vehicle was moving in close on the Army convoy.

"What kind of car was it, again?" Gonzalez, 28, of Alice, Texas, belted out, ducking his head momentarily into the rolling armored Humvee, which has "Big Country" emblazoned on the windshield. First Lt. Jeffrey Porter, 25, of Tomahawk, Ky., dropped the radio and turned to his left, calmly describing a white 1995 Volkswagen Brasilia and telling his gunner he had been warned that the car might be rigged with explosives.

Some people call this road, the only way from the airport to Baghdad's Green Zone, the most dangerous highway in Iraq. Lately, it has become a magnet for enormous, fiery explosions. People boast that they've traveled it and are relieved when they make it from one end to the other. To the Army, it's just Route Irish.

"There he is, there he is," Gonzalez said. "He's coming up on the right side. He's ahead of the rest of the traffic. OK. He's pulling off at the exit. There he goes."

Every minute on this roadway is tense. From the beginning of November through last week, there were nearly 20 car bombings here targeting U.S. convoys and government officials, leading the U.S. Embassy to warn its staff not to travel the road.

Army officers and soldiers with the 4th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment are charged with protecting Route Irish, and they say the road isn't nearly as bad as it is portrayed. They acknowledge that the attacks have created a significant perception problem, scaring people away from the route and causing the U.S. military to increase its number of patrols.

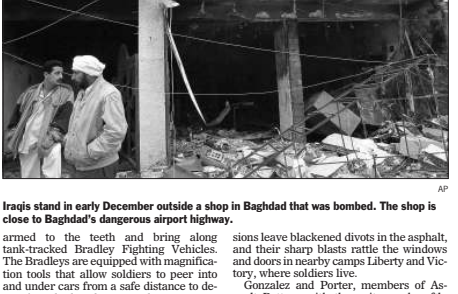
The 2nd Brigade of the Army's 10th Mountain Division is planning to bring in another battalion of soldiers from the United States specifically to boost the military presence on the airport road. The plans are being developed, officials said without providing specifics, but a few hundred more soldiers will probably be added soon.

Maj. James Fischer, the acting commander of the unit, said he believed the November car bomb attacks were part of a campaign of intimidation by insurgents. Several people were killed in the attacks, but most of the casualties were bombers.

"In the big scheme of war, it's nothing," Fischer, 39, of Jefferson, Wis., said of the attacks. "It's not as bad as it looks. "

While every death is a tragedy, he said, new procedures on the road have for the most part prevented additional casualties.

The Army previously sent regular convoys to patrol the road; now soldiers are armed to the teeth and bring along tank-tracked Bradley Fighting Vehicles. The Bradleys are equipped with magnification tools that allow soldiers to peer into and under cars from a safe distance to determine whether they are a threat.



AP

Iraqis stand in early December outside a shop in Baghdad that was bombed. The shop is close to Baghdad's dangerous airport highway.

The car bombs, however, are a different story. There is almost nothing the military can do to stop suicide bombers, short of identifying them early, forcing the vehicles off the road or attacking them. The soldiers use profiles — including certain makes and models of cars and nervous or erratic behavior — to intervene as early as possible. They fire warning shots before putting bullets through a car's engine block. As a last resort, they will kill a driver.

The explosions from the suicide missions leave blackened divots in the asphalt, and their sharp blasts rattle the windows and doors in nearby camps Liberty and Victory, where soldiers live.

Gonzalez and Porter, members of Assault Battery with the unit, speak softly when they mention their experience with a car bomb on Nov. 6, an attack that killed an American gunner in a Humvee directly behind theirs.

"As soon as I saw him, I knew it," Gonzalez said. "He was nervous. He swerved to the far right lane, and by the time he got to the convoy, I shot."

Gonzalez hit the driver in the chest with one round from his M4 rifle.

"I got two kids at home," Gonzalez said. "For a few days, I was worried about all of this. But it kind of fades with time."

Two days in August haunt Company C

Unit members accused of killing several Iraqis

BY KARL VICK
The Washington Post

BAGHDAD — Members of the U.S. Army's 41st Regiment uncovered an AK-47 during a routine search in the dangerous Baghdad slum of Sadr City on Aug. 31. Finding a weapon was not unusual, but Sgt. Michael P. Williams, 25, said he felt danger when he saw a smirking Iraqi man in the house where the gun was found, according to the testimony of fellow soldiers.

"I feel threatened," Williams declared, the soldiers recalled.

The "Iraqi went for his weapon."

Moments later, Williams shot the Iraqi man with two bullets to his head and chest, according to testimony last Friday at a military hearing, known as an Article 32 proceeding, intended to decide whether Williams would face court-martial in the killing. Other members of Company C, 1st Battalion, 41st Regiment, said the Iraqi did not have a weapon.

Williams' hearing, in a crowded meeting room on a military base in Baghdad, focused on one of a number of murder cases involving U.S. forces. Such hearings shed light on the conduct and leadership of American troops, as well as the rules of engagement they are supposed to abide by in Iraq, where armed conflict has gone on longer and in more treacherous settings than Pentagon planners initially anticipated.

On Friday, one member of Williams' unit, Staff Sgt. Johnny M. Horne Jr., sat weeping in an improvised courtroom not far from the Williams hearing. He pleaded guilty and later was sentenced to three years in prison for shooting a gravely wounded teenager on Aug. 18.

Two other members of Company C face murder charges arising from incidents in the warren of narrow lanes and squalid homes of Sadr City. In addition, at the regiment's headquarters in Fort Riley, Kan., two members of the 41st face charges of first-degree murder in the killings of two fellow soldiers.

Analysts say such cases raise important questions.

"Any time you have multiple serious offenses in a single unit you immediately think about the leadership of that unit," said Gary Solis, a former Marine officer who teaches the law of war at West Point.

> *"Any time you have multiple serious offenses in a single unit you immediately think about the leadership of that unit."*
>
> **Gary Solis**
> West Point teacher

The charges against Company C involved actions taken during two days in August at a particularly dangerous time for U.S. forces.

Three U.S. battalions spent most of the month retaking the holy city of Najaf, about 90 miles south of Baghdad, from the Mahdi Army militia of a Shiite cleric, Muqtada Sadr. In eastern Baghdad, other U.S. forces were grinding down the militia in its urban base, exchanging fire in Sadr City each night.

Most of the victims in Sadr City are nameless, identified in court papers and testimony as "Iraqi nationals." Qasim Hassan, the only individual named in testimony, was identified by a newspaper investigating the circumstances of his death.

Hassan was riding in the back of a garbage truck that was mistakenly identified as an insurgent vehicle. It was ripped to bits by two Company C units. After the incident, it was determined that the truck was operated by a businessman and was assigned to clean the street.

Still unidentified are three other victims: an Iraqi man cut down near the garbage truck while waving what appeared to be a white flag; the man Williams allegedly shot at point-blank range; and another unarmed man allegedly killed by a soldier who asked Williams, "Can I shoot this one?"

Other charges grew out of shootings on Aug. 31, as Williams' squad was conducting routine searches of houses elsewhere in Sadr City.

Under a law in effect since the U.S. occupation began, each Iraqi household is permitted one weapon. But in answer to questions by prosecutors, Spec. Tulafono Young testified that Williams spoke of plans to kill any Iraqi found with a weapon. A prosecutor said Williams had spoken of killing any Iraqi males of military age. Williams, who could face the death penalty if the case proceeds to court-martial, has not testified.

The shootings in Sadr City emerged when squad member Pfc. Gary Romriell, after a "crisis of conscience," slipped a note under the door of a commanding officer warning that "soldiers had committed serious crimes that needed to be looked at."

An Army investigator described Romriell as the black sheep of his squad in part because he opposed the war in Iraq. The private has since been transferred to another unit for his safety.

Young testified that Williams had said, "The first chance he gets, 'I'm going to kill Romriell.' "

Report: Army reprimanded officer after Afghan death

BY R. JEFFREY SMITH
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Army's Special Operations Command issued an administrative reprimand this year against one of four U.S. military officers in Afghanistan alleged in an Army document to have murdered a local man they believed was following their movements, according to Army officials and a newly disclosed internal document.

The case, which an Army document last June said involved alleged "murder, conspiracy, (and) obstruction of justice," was opened on Sept. 26, 2002, and closed on March 23 of this year. The document was obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union in a recent Freedom of Information Act lawsuit and released by the group last week.

The reprimand came in what defense officials said Monday was one of at least eight deaths of Afghans in U.S. military custody since U.S. troops first occupied the country in October 2001 — a higher number than previously disclosed. Two U.S. servicemembers have so far been charged with crimes related to two of the other deaths; the Army has already said charges may be brought against 28 people implicated in one of these deaths.

Lt. Col. Pamela Hart, an Army spokeswoman, said Monday that Army records showed the September 2002 death involved an Afghan known as "M. Sayari," but that she had no other information about what happened.

Courtesy of Dryden Flight Research Center

The X-38 research vehicle drops away from NASA's B-52B mothership after it's released from the B-52's wing pylon in July 1999. After nearly 50 years of service with NASA, the B-52 is being retired and will be put on display at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. The markings under the wing of the B-52B are a history of all the vehicles the plane has launched.

NASA retires B-52B aircraft after nearly 50 years in air

BY LEO SHANE III
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — After nearly 50 years of high-speed, high-altitude hauling work, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's B-52B air-launch "mothership" is finally being grounded.

The tremendous aircraft — it has a 185-foot wingspan and once carried a 53,100-pound payload to 50,000 feet — has played a critical role in the development of rocket engines and NASA's space shuttles.

But Alan Brown, spokesman for NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center in California, said mechanics have been salvaging parts from junked bombers and museums for years to keep the B-52B aloft, and the center simply does not have the finances or the need to continue those repairs.

"We really hate to see it retire," he said. "To see that thing still flying was incredible, when you knew it had been flying back in the 1950s. It has bridged so many eras here."

The plane's last flight was in November, when it carried the X-43A experimental scramjet engine on that machine's 7,000 mph, record-setting flight. Other experiments included the X-15 rocket plane, the precursor to NASA's early manned spacecraft.

Built in 1955, the aircraft was the 10th B-52 ever produced, but never dropped a single bomb, Brown said. Air Force officials loaned the plane to NASA in 1959 for space travel research, and will put the machine on permanent display at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., following Friday's handover.

The silver ship has seen more than 20 pilots over the last half-century but has been flown less than 2,500 hours, the least of any of the B-52s, Brown said.

NASA does have a modified B-52H that can conduct some air launch experiments in the future, but Brown said those will be few and far between. The newer aircraft doesn't have the strength or other payload modifications of the B-52B, and less expensive computer programs and smaller models will provide most of the data for future scientific research.

What those new devices won't have, Brown said, is the impressive history of the B-52B.

"It has been so identified with us for so many years," he said. "It really is an amazing, historic aircraft."

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Malaria season nears end in Iraq

Troops stopping meds as temperatures drop

BY RON JENSEN
Stars and Stripes

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq — Troops are now weaning themselves from the malaria medicine they've been taking throughout the spring and summer as doctors mark the end to malaria season.

"The malaria parasite has to have a certain temperature to grow in the mosquito's gut," said Air Force Capt. Tyler Watson, chief of public health for the 332nd Expeditionary Aeromedical Squadron at Balad.

As temperatures have cooled into the 30s at night sometimes, with daily highs often no greater than the 60s, the Anopheles mosquito and its hitchhiking parasite have taken a holiday, Watson said. The malaria season will begin again when temperatures warm up in April.

Watson said the season ended Nov. 30, but airmen will keep taking chloroquine weekly until the end of December. In January, they will begin daily doses of primaquine for two weeks.

The first medicine cleans the parasite from the blood; the second removes it from the liver.

For the Army, malaria season ended on Nov. 5, said Sgt. Carlton Overton, immunization noncommissioned officer in charge at the Troop Medical Clinic at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, which is connected to the air base.

"Climate will determine when the season ends," he said, and the Army determined it was cool enough by early November to quash the malaria threat.

Soldiers have already stopped taking chloroquine and are now taking primaquine.

Overton said the Army is also testing soldiers for the enzyme known as Glucose 6 Phosphate Dehydrogenase, or G6PD. If a person's G6PD enzyme is normal, they will take primaquine. If not, they will be given doxycycline, a one-a-day pill like primaquine.

The Air Force does similar screening when members enter the service.

Dr. (Lt. Col.) Paul Friedrichs, commander of the 332nd EAS, said it is not a lack of understanding that prevents Iraq from stamping out the problem.

"The doctors I've met from Iraq are well-trained. They know what they need to do," he said.

But they lack the medicines to prevent the disease and the resources to stamp it out at the source.

"That's the reason malaria is not eradicated [in Iraq]," he said.

The military preventive health experts identified and sprayed mosquito-breeding grounds in Iraq. Bed netting and repellent was provided troops. Uniforms were treated with permethrin to keep the critters at bay.

Friedrichs said there is resistance to the uniform treatment.

"I think there's always a concern about using a chemical on your uniform," he said, adding that the treatment is safe.

Overton cautioned that troops returning from the malaria-infested areas should be careful about becoming blood donors because of the medicine they've taken.

"They can not give blood back in the civilian sector for three years," he said. "They can donate to other soldiers who have been taking the pill."

Neither the Army nor Air Force has reported any U.S. cases of malaria in Iraq. Watson said the hospital has done some blood tests to rule out malaria for a couple of sick airmen.

But, he said, the disease may not show itself for some time. Symptoms may not surface for up to four years after the mosquito has bitten.

"We encourage people to look for symptoms after they leave the area," he said. "Nothing's 100 percent."

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Malaria

- Symptoms of malaria are much like the flu, including high fever, fatigue and chills;
- Although eradicated from many developed countries, it remains a serious health risk in many parts of the world;
- About 300 million people are affected by malaria each year and between 1 million and 1.5 million die from it worldwide;
- There were 1,337 cases of malaria, including eight deaths, reported for 2002 in the United States — even though malaria was official eradicated in the early 1950s;
- Of the cases in the States, all but five were attributed to the victim becoming infected in another country.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization

PHOTOS BY THE (JACKSONVILLE) FLORIDA TIMES-UNION/AP

Left: Sailors disembark from the USS John F. Kennedy on Monday at Mayport Naval Station in Mayport, Fla. Right: Cmdr. Todd Rich is greeted by his wife, Laura, after he and others returned from a six-month deployment in the Persian Gulf.

USS Kennedy back home from Middle East

The Associated Press

MAYPORT, Fla. — About 8,000 relatives and friends of the crew on the USS John F. Kennedy turned out on a chilly but sunny Monday to welcome them home from a 30,000-mile voyage to the Middle East that began June 7.

A Navy band played and cheers arose from the crowd several times as the aircraft carrier inched its way toward the dock. Many of the 2,800 crewmembers were manning the rail in Navy tradition.

A large contingent of Capt. Dennis FitzPatrick's family was among the crowd at Mayport Naval Station. They included his wife and three children, his parents, sister, mother-in-law, sister-in-law and a niece.

"He said he was ready to stay, but they're all ready to come back," his wife said of the ship's crew. She said his assignment on Oct. 5 as captain of the Kennedy "is the epitome of his career."

"Would I like to deploy again? Sure I would," FitzPatrick said.

But after six months in Mayport on readiness mode, the 36-year-old carrier will go to Norfolk, Va., for a 14-month overhaul to prepare it for another decade of service before it is decommissioned in 2018.

Rear Adm. Barry McCullough, who took over command of the Kennedy's carrier strike group a day before FitzPatrick got his assignment, praised the giant ship's crew and their families.

"It was a long trip home and we're glad to we here," he added. "I'm happy to be home for the holidays."

Among the spouses who got special attention were 70 wives who had given birth after the Kennedy departed.

Hungary to buy missiles

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Hungary has signed a contract with the U.S. government to buy missiles for its Gripen fighter jets, the Defense Ministry said Monday.

The contract for an unspecified number of Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM) was signed Friday. Financial terms were not disclosed.

The deal is part of Hungary's efforts to acquire weapons for the 14 Gripen JAS 39 jet fighters it is leasing from Sweden. The first batch of jets is expected to arrive in Hungary in March 2006.

The Gripen jets will replace the country's Soviet-built fleet of MiG 29s. In 1999, Hungary became one of the first former communist countries to join NATO, along with the Czech Republic and Poland.

Second-hand purchase

MADRID, Spain — Spain has agreed to acquire a second-hand battery of U.S.-made Patriot missiles to boost its defenses, the government said Sunday.

Spain's Socialist government will buy the weapons from Germany, fulfilling an accord undertaken by its conservative predecessor, according to a statement from Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero's office.

The purchase was approved at a Cabinet meeting on Friday but not widely reported until Sunday.

From The Associated Press

Gifts for troops reflect holiday spirit

BY JEROME L. SHERMAN
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

From $2 socks to a $2,500 surround sound system, holiday donations are reaching remote parts of Iraq and Afghanistan and bringing some much-needed cheer to U.S. troops far from homes and families.

A number of small groups have formed in recent months to collect and ship a wide variety of items requested by troops.

Gail Van Vranken, of Wheeling, W.Va., founded Boatsie's Boxes to Baghdad (**www.boatsie.com**) in May, and she has sent more than 550 boxes filled with underwear, insect repellent, sneakers, flashlights, magazines, baby wipes, sunscreen and anything else that might provide even just a bit of comfort for soldiers.

Meanwhile, Don Lindich, who writes a column about electronics that appears in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and other newspapers, has persuaded several companies to set aside some surplus equipment that military units can use in their makeshift recreation rooms.

"If you are serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, or in a military hospital and would like to receive some equipment," he writes on his Web site, **www.soundsupport.us**, "please contact me."

Van Vranken, 64, a retired real estate agent, first received a request for supplies from her son, Patrick, a sergeant in the Air Force, who forwarded her an e-mail message from a U.S. official at a Baghdad hospital that was lacking things like pillowcases and sheets.

"I picked up on it and started asking my friends for help," she said.

Theresa Parrish, left, and Brandi Shannon, whose husbands are in the Arizona Army National Guard, make care packages for troops in Iraq at the Arizona Army National Guard's Family Assistance Center in Phoenix on Friday. Theresa's husband is stationed near Baghdad; Brandi's husband served for a year in Iraq and is now home.

ARIZONA REPUBLIC/AP

It's been a full-time job ever since.

Van Vranken, who got the nickname "Boatsie" from her husband, a former sailor, set up donation boxes around Wheeling, at Veterans of Foreign Wars halls, churches and elsewhere. Friends and family members around the country have helped her collect more donations. She assembles dozens of packages in her basement almost every day, and the postal service comes by to pick them up and send them overseas.

Recently, she received 168 pairs of sweat pants donated by a church.

Patrick Van Vranken's Air Force unit went to Iraq a few months ago, and he and other soldiers have been helping distribute the donations from their base in Balad, about 40 miles north of Baghdad. The base is home to a military hospital that temporarily cares for wounded soldiers before they're taken to a hospital in Germany.

Earlier this month, she sent more than 2,500 stockings filled with goodies, and her son took some of them to a recent holiday ceremony that featured 200 troops standing around a fake tree singing Christmas carols and Santa Claus flying in on a helicopter.

"The chopper hovered over the ceremony and then dropped off Santa," Patrick Van Vranken wrote to his mother in an e-mail message. "All the troops in the area got a stocking, and I saw a lot of smiling faces."

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Iraqi official expects boycott of election

BY RAWYA RAGEH
The Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iraq's foreign minister said his interim government wants everyone to participate in next month's elections, but he expects pro-Saddam Hussein Baathists and Islamic extremists to boycott.

"Any attempt with these two groups (to get them to participate) is, I believe, a waste of time," Hoshyar Zebari said in a speech at a forum on the challenges facing the Arab world.

"We, as an Iraqi government, are working on including everybody ... but to be realistic we do not expect everyone to participate," he said.

Iraq's interim government has been under pressure to ensure the Jan. 30 elections are as representative as possible. But a host of hurdles, from fear voting places will be attacked by insurgents to political considerations, stand between Iraqis and the polls.

Iraq's Sunni Muslim neighbors are worried low Sunni Arab turnout will mean a runaway victory for Shiite Muslims who are the majority in Iraq but were long suppressed by Saddam's Sunni Muslim clan and Baath Party. Sunni Muslims are believed to be the bulk of the insurgents, some of whom have threatened to try to disrupt the polls.

"Currently, the Iraqi government's efforts are concentrated on providing security for nearly 9,000 polling stations," Zebari said, adding that one solution might be to stagger voting in some areas so as to concentrate security where needed.

Zebari also called on the United Nations to do more to guarantee the credibility of the elections.

"We keep nagging that we need more presence, more participation, more enthusiasm" from the United Nations, he said.

"If we fail, many will go down with us."

Zebari indicated, without elaboration, that Iraq also felt some of its neighbors threatened the success of the vote.

"Honestly, in order for us to be truthful, we are not comfortable" with them," he said. "Luckily, we as officials in this government, have dealt with them on an official and secretive basis, so we know their ways and schemes. They will not be able to deceive us."

He added that Arab and Islamic nations have not been living up to their promises of helping Iraq and have failed to provide even 500 troops to protect U.N. personnel needed for the elections.

Iraqi officials have repeatedly accused their neighbors of meddling or backing the insurgency that has been waging a fierce campaign against the U.S.-backed coalition that toppled Saddam.

British court wants inquiry into Iraq death

BY MICHAEL MCDONOUGH
The Associated Press

LONDON — A court ruled Tuesday that the British government should hold an independent inquiry into the death of an Iraqi civilian who was allegedly beaten to death by British troops.

The High Court ruled in favor of the family of Baha Mousa, 26, a Basra hotel receptionist who died in September 2003 after being arrested and taken to a British military base.

But judges Bernard Rix and Thayne Forbes rejected applications from the families of five other Iraqis allegedly killed by U.K. soldiers.

Mousa's family had asked the High Court to rule that European and British human rights laws applied to British soldiers in Iraq and that there should be an independent inquiry to determine whether he was unlawfully killed.

Government lawyers had argued that British troops serving in Iraq weren't subject to the human rights laws because they were outside European jurisdiction. Officials say all allegations of death and mistreatment by British forces are investigated by the military.

But the judges ruled that Mousa's death came within U.K. jurisdiction because he was in British custody when he died, unlike the other five Iraqis.

They also criticized the Royal Military Police investigation into Mousa's death, saying it was not "timely, open or effective."

A lawyer acting for Mousa's family welcomed the court ruling.

"Today is a historic day for human rights and the rule of law in the U.K.," attorney Phil Shiner said.

The Ministry of Defense said it would seek permission to appeal and was considering whether to do so.

In a statement, the ministry said Mousa's death was still being investigated by Army Prosecution Authority and so it could not comment for legal reasons.

The ministry welcomed the rulings in the five other cases that "the European Convention on Human Rights is not applicable because the claimants did not fall within the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom."

All six victims in the High Court case died in British-occupied southeastern Iraq after major combat was declared over on May 1, 2003, and before the handover of power to an Iraqi administration on June 28 this year.

Five victims allegedly were shot — two in their homes, one while driving, one at a funeral and one while working as a police officer. Mousa was the sixth.

A U.S. Navy Seabee Humvee departs a camp in Kuwait en route to Iraq in March. Twenty-one months after U.S. forces entered Iraq, the Defense Department is coming to terms with the equipment shortages caused by the prolonged fighting there. The Pentagon has prepared an unprecedented emergency spending plan totaling nearly $100 billion, and supply and repair depots in the States are struggling to keep up with demand.

SIEGFRIED BRUNER/U.S. Navy

Depots struggle to meet Humvee demand

BY JONATHAN WEISMAN
The Washington Post

TEXARKANA, Texas — In muddy gravel lots, along weedy railroad tracks and in grassy fields, the flotsam of war is washing up at a sprawling Army-run repair post: five- and 10-ton trucks, road graders, river boats, forklifts, coils of tank track, piles of road wheels and Humvees by the score, doors pocked with shrapnel scars, windows riddled with bullet holes or frosted white by explosive heat, their fenders gashed by rocket-propelled grenades, their crews' names still etched on the windshields.

When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was confronted by a soldier in Kuwait recently about why troops in Iraq had to scrounge for parts, he might have pointed to the Red River Army Depot on the outskirts of Texarkana for the answer. Here, in unadorned open-air factories, bustling hives of workers struggle through budget limits and a burgeoning repair load to keep the troops equipped.

Twenty-one months after U.S. forces entered Iraq, the Defense Department is only now coming to terms with the equipment shortages caused by the prolonged fighting there. The Pentagon has prepared an unprecedented emergency spending plan totaling nearly $100 billion — as much as $30 billion more than expected as recently as October — say senior defense officials and congressional budget aides. About $14 billion of that would go to repairing, replacing and upgrading an increasingly frayed arsenal.

"There's no lack of work and only more on the horizon," sighed Dennis Lewis, chief of the business office at the 29-square-mile depot. "There's no end in sight."

The full implications and costs of the original Iraq warplan are starting to come into focus at such places as Red River. Expectations for a short, easy war — a conflict from which the Army's supply systems could have easily rebounded — have given way to the reality of hundreds of battered Humvees cast aside here for want of money and time to repair them.

As the conflict continues, the country's battered war materiel is making its way back for repair — and so is the bill. The emergency spending request that President Bush will send to Congress early next year will include billions of dollars to "reset the force," in military parlance. The Army alone has requested $9.2 billion to repair, replace and upgrade equipment, congressional and Pentagon officials said. The Marine Corps may seek as much as $5 billion more.

> *"There's no lack of work and only more on the horizon."*
>
> **Dennis Lewis**
> Red River Army Depot

Those figures dwarf the "reset" requests in two previous war supplemental spending bills. In fiscal 2004, which ended Sept. 30, the military spent $2.2 billion to repair tanks, trucks and other equipment for land forces, said Amy Belasco, a defense budget specialist at the Congressional Research Service.

Earlier requests for force reset funding were so small because the military had planned for a shorter war, said Col. Curtis McCoy, the Army budget officer in charge of planning for equipment repair and replacement. By now, the Army expected to have fewer than 20,000 troops in Iraq, not the 138,000 currently there, he said.

"If [the war] had held the course as we thought it would have, we'd have a division left there, and this equipment would have all been home awhile ago," McCoy said. "That didn't happen, and there are going to be a lot more bills."

Instead, it will be a scramble just to keep the troops in the field equipped. Depots are confronting four to five times more equipment wear than the Army anticipated, McCoy said.

Last winter, the military's biggest shortage was the tanklike tracks of Bradley Fighting Vehicles. Red River went to three shifts, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, stripping frayed rubber off battered track, buffing the metal, then applying a new rubber sheath.

This year, the bottleneck is Humvees and small arms, Motsek said.

The depot has pushed to eight or nine Humvee upgrades a day, said David Hawkins, deputy director of operations, but must get to 14 within days to meet the Army's demand for 3,600 in the coming year.

But for now, the real bottleneck may lie in Washington. Those 4th Infantry Humvees will sit until the Army has the money.

"We'd like to produce them all today so the soldiers have their equipment," Lewis said. "But ... the reality is, there isn't the funding."

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

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IN THE STATES

Peterson jury calls for death

Maximum asked for man who killed pregnant wife

BY BRIAN SKOLOFF
The Associated Press

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — A jury decided Monday that Scott Peterson should be executed for murdering his pregnant wife, Laci, whose Christmas Eve disappearance two years ago was the opening act in a legal drama that captivated the nation.

A cheer went up outside the courtroom as the jury announced its decision after 11½ hours of deliberations over three days. The jury had two options in deciding the 32-year-old former fertilizer salesman's fate: life in prison without parole or death by injection.

Peterson clenched his jaw when the verdict was read and leaned over to speak with his attorney, Mark Geragos. Laci Peterson's mother, Sharon Rocha, cried quietly — her lips quivering. Scott Peterson's mother, Jackie, showed no apparent emotion.

A crowd of several hundred gathered outside the courthouse to hear the verdict.

Three jurors held a news conference following the verdict in which they described what they called a "very hard" decision.

"There are so many things, so many things," juror Richelle Nice said. "Scott Peterson was Laci's husband, Conner's daddy — the one person that should have protected them."

The jury had been told that Peterson did not wear his emotions on his sleeve. Nice told ABC's "Good Morning America" on Tuesday that she noticed Peterson becoming emotional during the penalty phase of his trial.

"Is it just that he doesn't show emotion for Laci and Conner?" she asked.

Judge Alfred A. Delucchi will formally sentence Peterson on Feb. 25. The judge will have the option of reducing the sentence to life, but such a move is highly unlikely.

If the judge upholds the sentence, Peterson will be sent to death row at San Quentin State Prison outside San Francisco, the infamous lockup where prisoners gaze out small cell windows overlooking the same bay where Laci Peterson's body was discarded.

But Peterson still might not be executed for decades — if ever — and it can take years for even the first phase of the appeals process to begin.

In a brief news conference after the verdict, Geragos said he was "very disappointed." "Obviously, we plan on pursuing every and all appeals, motions for a new trial and everything else," he said.

AP

"Scott Peterson was Laci's husband, Conner's daddy — the one person that should have protected them," juror Richelle Nice said Monday in Redwood City, Calif., after recommending death for Scott Peterson.

Water on Mars seen as likely

The Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. — The Mars rover Spirit found a mineral linked to water during its exploration of the Red Planet, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory said.

Scientists identified the mineral goethite in bedrock studied in the Columbia Hills.

Spirit and its twin, Opportunity, were sent to Mars to look for geologic evidence of a watery past. Both rovers, especially Opportunity, have found such evidence in their nearly year-long treks over the martian surface, but the goethite find is particularly important, a mission scientist said in a JPL statement Monday.

"Goethite, like the jarosite that Opportunity found on the other side of Mars, is strong evidence for water activity," said Goestar Klingelhoefer of the University of Mainz, Germany, lead scientist for the spectrometers on each rover. Goethite forms only in the presence of water, although it may be in liquid, ice or gaseous form.

Klingelhoefer's findings were being presented this week in San Francisco.

Spirit will continue to study the hills to determine whether water there ever pooled on the surface.

Report finds states not bioterror-proof

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — States are slowly getting better prepared to handle bioterrorism, but most still don't have statewide response plans and federal funding is declining, according to a new report.

The report echoed fears voiced by outgoing Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson earlier this month, when he said he couldn't understand why terrorists haven't attacked the country's food supply because it would be "so easy to do."

And the review follows a year in which the country faced a shortage of flu vaccines — normally a routine protection against a known problem.

Compiled by the nonprofit Trust for America's Health, the report issued Tuesday found only six states are adequately prepared to distribute vaccines and antidotes in an emergency, but it named only three of them: Florida, Illinois and Louisiana.

"More than three years after 9/11 and the anthrax tragedies, we've only made baby steps toward better bioterrorism preparedness, rather than the giant leaps required to adequately protect the American people," said three-term former Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr., now president of Trust for America's Health.

The report concluded that basic bioterrorism detection, diagnosis and response capabilities are not in place, and the country has a long way to go to protect the American public from such an attack.

One common problem was lack of funding. Federal bioterrorism aid has decreased by about $1 million per state in 2004, and about one-third of the states saw their public health budgets decline.

The report graded states on whether they met 10 criteria, including such elements as the amount of state spending and federal aid allocated to public health, the flu vaccine rates, and the number of scientists and laboratories available to test for anthrax or the plague.

No state met all 10 criteria, and only two — Florida and North Carolina — met nine of the 10. Two states, Massachusetts and Alaska, met only three criteria, and received the worst ranking.

Most states, including Rhode Island, met five or six criteria.

The most significant downfall among the states was the lack of adequate public health labs and laboratory scientists to handle serious outbreaks. The report found only 16 states have enough labs and 21 have enough scientists.

Handling a flu pandemic, especially in light of this year's shortage of flu vaccines, would be a problem for at least 20 states that have no public response plan in place.

How well is your state prepared?

A ranking of states by the Trust for America's Health, based on their preparedness to face bioterrorism risks.

States are ranked by how many of 10 criteria they met. The criteria, picked by the trust, include such elements as state spending on public health, flu vaccine rates and the number of scientists available to test for anthrax or the plague.

9: Florida, North Carolina

8: Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Virginia

7: Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont

6: Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin

5: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island

4: Indiana, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Wyoming

3: Alaska, Massachusetts

—The Associated Press

This is the second year in a row that the group has compiled the bioterrorism report card on the states. But changes in the grading make comparisons with last year's scores difficult.

LAX not lax on efforts to limit vulnerabilities

BY GREG KRIKORIAN
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Counterterrorism officials, prompted by a series of overseas attacks against commercial airliners, have quietly taken steps to protect jetliners at Los Angeles International Airport from terrorists armed with shoulder-launched missiles.

Although there is no credible intelligence indicating that terrorists have planned such an attack at LAX, the officials say the security measures are needed because portable weapons are easy to buy on the international arms market and are deadly, with infrared guidance systems that lock onto the heat emitted by jetliners' engines.

The security measures, instituted over the past year, include increased police patrols around the airport, new perimeter fencing, stepped-up training to help personnel spot the tubular weapons and expanded helicopter surveillance during terrorism alerts so a missile's route could be tracked in the event of an attack.

A Rand Corp. report commissioned by airport authorities said earlier this year that LAX is "a particularly attractive target" for terrorists and outlined ways of reducing the risk of attacks involving so-called man-portable air defense systems.

"I think the threat has been continually underestimated by the decisionmakers in Washington," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who has urged the Department of Homeland Security to accelerate plans for installing missile defense on commercial aircraft.

Terrorists have never fired a shoulder-launched missile at an airplane in the United States. But the small missiles, weighing less than 40 pounds, have been used to shoot down two dozen commercial aircraft around the world over the past three decades and could be smuggled into the United States. A successful attack could ground the entire commercial airline fleet, some experts say.

"The threat is real," John Miller, the Los Angeles Police Department's counterterrorism chief said in an interview after appearing at a counterterrorism conference last month at the University of Southern California. "With about 20,000 of these available on the black market, for $2,000 to $3,000 each, there is no indication it will not be tried again."

At the federal level, Boxer's most far-reaching solution calls for retrofitting the nation's commercial airliners with onboard lasers that destroy a portable missile's infrared guidance sensor.

Documents: NIH hid AIDS drug problems

Bush was unaware of nevirapine concerns when he announced plan for African babies

BY JOHN SOLOMON
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The government's research on using an AIDS drug to protect African babies was so flawed that health officials had to use blood tests after the fact to confirm patients got the medicine. Ultimately, they had to acknowledge the study broke federal patient protection rules.

But the National Institutes of Health never told the White House about problems it found in 2002 with its research on the drug nevirapine before President Bush unveiled a $500 million plan to distribute the medicine across Africa, documents obtained by The Associated Press show.

Instead, officials inside the government's premier health research agency scrambled to keep its safety experts' concerns from scuttling the use of nevirapine in Africa as a cheap solution to stopping babies from getting AIDS from infected mothers, the memos show.

"Everyone recognized the enormity that this decision could have on the worldwide use of nevirapine to interrupt mother-baby transmission," NIH's AIDS research chief, Dr. Edmund C. Tramont, reported March 14, 2002, to his boss, Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

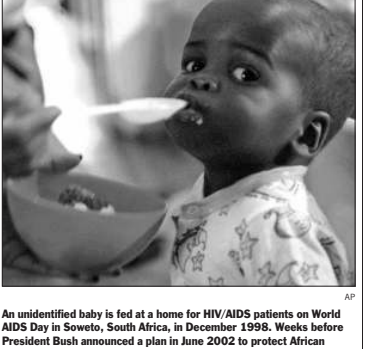
Since then, hundreds of thousand of doses of the drug have been administered to African mothers and babies under the Bush plan.

Up to half those babies may have been stopped from getting AIDS, officials said. But now concerns are emerging about whether patients who received those single doses have developed resistance to further AIDS treatment.

The documents show Tramont and other NIH officials dismissed the problems with the nevirapine research in Uganda as overblown and were slow to report safety concerns to the Food and Drug Administration.

A professional auditor hired by NIH who first helped disclose the problems said in an interview that most of the problems were fixable but NIH officials were in a rush to declare that things were OK.

"It seemed to me we were drawing conclusions too quickly across the board, especially the implementation of nevirapine in South Africa," said auditor Michael Hensley.



AP

An unidentified baby is fed at a home for HIV/AIDS patients on World AIDS Day in Soweto, South Africa, in December 1998. Weeks before President Bush announced a plan in June 2002 to protect African babies from AIDS, top U.S. health officials were warned that research on a key drug, nevirapine, was flawed and may have underreported severe reactions including deaths, government documents show.

Ultimately, NIH did stop the Uganda research for 15 months — from the spring of 2002 to the summer of 2003 — to review the science and take corrective actions.

NIH officials said they remain confident after re-reviewing the Uganda study and other research that nevirapine can be used safely in single doses by African mothers and children to prevent HIV transmission during birth.

But they acknowledged their Uganda research failed to meet required U.S. standards and have asked the National Academy of Sciences to investigate.

The White House said it remains confident in Bush's $500 million plan in 2002 to send nevirapine to Africa, a continent that accounts for more than two-thirds of the world's AIDS cases, with 27 million people infected.

Bush inauguration to feature military theme

BY JOHANNA NEUMAN
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — As he leaves the Capitol after taking the oath of office Jan. 20, George W. Bush is expected to exercise a familiar presidential prerogative — reviewing the troops.

Then the real embrace of the military begins.

Bush, who campaigned for re-election as a wartime president, will have more than the usual presence of military flourishes at his second-term inaugural ceremonies. With 138,000 U.S. troops serving in Iraq and casualties reported nearly every day, the White House wanted to showcase the role of the armed services in the war against terrorism as well as in the nation's premier display of a peaceful transition of power.

Officials are tight-lipped about details, awaiting a briefing this week from the Presidential Inaugural Committee. But the military theme will thread through the 10 days of inaugural events normally highlighted by pomp and circumstance, a time when the nation's capital turns into a lavish backdrop for the revelry of the winning party.

On the night of the inauguration, there will be a Commander in Chief Ball, open to troops who have just returned from Afghanistan or Iraq or are about to be deployed to either place.

Unlike the other eight official balls, this ball will be free to 2,000 enlisted personnel and noncommissioned officers and their families.

The president by tradition attends all nine balls, so the invited servicemembers will have an opportunity to socialize with their commander in chief. Contributors will pay as much as $250,000 to attend the balls and other inaugural events.

And there will be 2,100 military personnel playing in bands, appearing on floats or performing in the inaugural parade, with thousands more in ceremonial units, honor cordons and even announcing the names of participants to spectators lining the route.

Holiday decor risks

WASHINGTON — Holiday home decorators would be wise to save the eggnog until the lights are up and the ladders are safely stowed.

More than 5,800 Americans injure themselves in falls while decorating their homes every holiday season, according to a report issued Thursday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

Young and middle-aged men make up the bulk of the Christmas casualties, who hobble into emergency rooms around the country at an average rate of more than two per hour from Nov. 1 to Jan. 31, according to CDC statistics. Falls from ladders cause 43 percent of the injuries; falls from roofs cause 13 percent.

Those who have falls over the holidays tend to be younger, and about one in 10 of them end up in hospitals.

Strokes linked to anger

A new study from Israel suggests that anger and other negative emotions, along with sudden movement, really can be stroke triggers.

The study involved 200 people, with an average age of 68, who had been hospitalized for ischemic stroke (the most common type of stroke, caused by reduced blood flow to the brain due to a blockage in an artery) or a transient ischemic attack — "a mini-stroke" that quickly resolves on its own.

There are an estimated 560,000 ischemic strokes in the United States each year.

About 30 percent of the patients reported exposure to anger, other negative emotions such as fear, irritability or nervousness, or sudden changes in body position in response to a startling event in the two hours before their stroke.

Abortion lawsuit filed

WASHINGTON — A family planning group is asking a judge to halt what it says is a conflict between a law that requires health care providers to inform women about abortions and a new rule passed by Congress.

The conflict, according to the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association, could cost states, hospitals, clinics and doctors billions of federal dollars in grants.

Under Title X of the Public Health Service Act authorizing the largest federal-funded family planning program, the Department of Health and Human Services makes grants to states, localities, clinics and hospitals for family planning services.

But a provision in a bill signed last week by President Bush would block any of the measure's money from going to federal, state or local agencies that act against health care providers and insurers that refuse to provide abortions, make abortion referrals or cover them.

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Sports: DSN 349-8225; civ. (+49) (0) 6155/601225
Circulation: DSN 349-8437; civ. (+49) (0) 6155/601437
Advertising: DSN 349-8335/443;
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Printed in Italy by Editrice Telestampa

Stars and Stripes (USPS 017252) is published daily (except Christmas and New Year's) for 52 cents daily and $1 Sunday by the Stars and Stripes central office, 529 14th St. NW, Suite 350, Washington DC 20045-1301. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. Postmaster: Send address changes to European Stars and Stripes, Unit 29480, APO AE 09211.
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Women don't belong in infantry

In response to "Women Can Handle War" (Oct. 31), this subject is so delicate for any enlisted male to speak about, let alone write about.

So, leaving all personal opinions aside, I say if females want to go into infantry units, then let them in. But in doing so, you have to level the playing field completely, starting with physical fitness requirements and body fat requirements.

Living quarters in garrison should be integrated down to having Marines of the opposite sex as roommates. Females should also have to register for the selective service as all men do when they turn 18.

Right now it is overly obvious to most infantry noncommissioned officers that the military is more concerned with quantity not quality. It would rather have beefed up battalions with as many personnel as possible, regardless of how many of them have to be carried or excessively helped along the way.

Since we are already letting anyone who tells his recruiter that he wants infantry into the infantry, why limit it to kids who can barely hack it? Open the door completely to females, too.

Then do anonymous surveys of the units that have been integrated. See how many men complain about having to "pick up the slack" or do extra sandbag working parties, or carry gun systems that much farther on a hump.

See how many sexual harassment cases you have in those units, how many unwanted pregnancies you have. Watch and see how low morale gets.

Women have played a large role in the war on terrorism in support roles. No one can deny that. And yes, this is a different fight than America has had in the past. The war has changed, the world has changed and the military has changed. The only thing that has not changed is the fact that the United States has won every major fight it has been in for years and years. So I say either rewrite the whole program, or drop it.

If the U.S. war machine isn't broke, don't try to fix it.

Marine Sgt. Michael David Tilus
Al Qaim, Iraq

They weren't 'religionists'

In response to the letter writer afraid that a "holy roller" or "religionist" might use a weapon of mass destruction ("All religious fanatics a threat," Dec. 6), and his intolerance of religious views, I would like to rebut that with few facts he deigned to forget.

At this time, one of the terrorist states in the world is North Korea, known to probably have nuclear weapons and very willing to use them. In this totalitarian state a professing Christian would be killed or imprisoned to "re-educated" to their proper atheistic world view, maybe using the book the letter writer espoused as the truth. If that same Christian escaped into China, he would probably be immediately returned to North Korea where he would be summarily executed, or he would be imprisoned in China to be "re-educated" also.

But let's go back a little to the enlightened 20th century. Have you forgotten the 20 million to 30 million killed by Josef Stalin? I don't believe he was a religionist.

How about Adolph Hitler? Over 6 million there. Nope, he was not a religionist.

Hmmm, how about Chairman Mao Zedong? What is another 20 million here or there? No, not him either.

Let's see, how about Pol Pot in Cambodia? Only 2 million to 3 million, he was not a religionist either.

Let me see, how about the millions in South Vietnam, murdered because they were Christians or sent to re-education camps.

Sudan? Somalia? Ethiopia?

So is it possible, if a religionist had a weapon of mass destruction he would use it? Maybe, but I would submit to you that recent and past history, if you want to continue to look further back, will prove that it is not a religionist you should be looking for, but maybe one with a more enlightened atheistic world view, perhaps.

Maj. Tim Cutler
Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar

Column won't be printed

I would like to offer reassurance to the writer of "All religious fanatics are a threat." His concern is the notion of publishing in Stars and Stripes a Christian devotional column.

He avowed, "... I swear to resist and revolt against all attempts to impose your dangerous beliefs upon me and all free people ..." Mercifully, we are spared specifics as to how he would "revolt and resist."

Relax, specialist. I am certain Stripes will never publish this column. After eight months in-country, I have yet to read anything in this paper remotely encouraging for soldiers. Rather, if one were to base his assessment of the U.S. military's effort solely on Stripes' reporting, one would conclude (a) the military is routinely getting its backside kicked and (b) official U.S. military policy is to abuse, degrade and humiliate any insurgents captured. So encouragement of soldiers — of Christian faith or otherwise — is not an editorial objective.

Another reason such a column will never sully these pages follows: We often see ads about Stripes reporters with the proud claim "No one tells your story like we do." In the Dec. 6 issue I note articles by writers for The Associated Press, the Los Angeles Times, the New York Daily News, The Washington Post and Scripps Howard News Service. It was another issue of Stripes without a single article by a designated Stripes reporter. However, note the publications featured: they are all unabashedly liberal newspapers or news services — apparently consistent with the Stripes editorial policy. Liberal publications are decidedly not pro-Christian.

A final comment specialist. I do not need to read "The End of Faith" to ascertain whether our Founding Fathers desired to establish a nation with Christian ideals. I have read many of their letters and documents (their own words). George Washington said, "True religion affords government its surest support. The future of this nation depends on the Christian training of our youth. It is impossible to govern without the Bible."

For you may I recommend "The Faith of the Founding Fathers" by Edward H. Erwin for your edification.

Maj. Darrell R. Over
Camp Cooke, Iraq

Only infantry deserves CIB

Despite the pleas by all noninfantry soldiers out there who think because they perform a few tasks that they should be awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge for their service in this war: There is a time when the Army calls on its best to go do the job. And I can guarantee you it is not those who are out there crying about not getting one.

I had the chance to be part of the operation to take out the insurgents in Najaf this past August. All of these so-called infantrymen out there were doing maybe a patrol, maybe a raid, or even a snap traffic control point. Heaven forbid the Army asks you to perform basic soldiering skills. I guess you don't remember that you are a soldier first and your military occupational specialty second.

In regards to Najaf, our commanders called the best trained battalion in the 1st Cavalry Division, an infantry battalion, because he knew that was our job. The key word there is our "job." You may be asked to do things that are similar to our job, but I can assure you that you do nothing like us.

Ask around next time Najaf comes up. You will find out that only we should be awarded the CIB because only we can do the job we did.

Spc. Kenji Nihipali
Camp Striker, Baghdad

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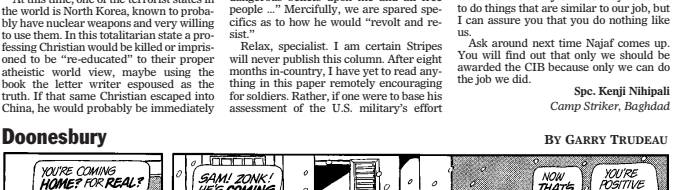


BY GARRY TRUDEAU

OPINION

Troops don't need to be shielded from truth

Clarence Page

WASHINGTON

If you don't like the message, as an old spin doctors' motto goes, knock the messenger. That's how some people are reacting to the soldier's question that knocked Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld off his game during a town-hall session in Kuwait.

Spc. Thomas J. Wilson, a scout with a Tennessee National Guard unit, wondered out loud why soldiers still have to fortify their canvas-covered Humvees with "hillbilly armor": scrap metal and ballistic-resistant glass that they dig out of landfills for protection. After a brief moment of stony silence, the comment brought a spontaneous eruption of "hooah!" and applause from other troops.

It also brought a remarkably condescending response from Rumsfeld, who may have become too accustomed to treating reporters like annoyingly curious children to shift gears to a tone appropriate for the combat men and women under his command.

"You go to war with the Army you have," he said, "not the one you might want or the one you might wish to have at a later time."

That was a curious comment, considering how much time the Defense Department has had to build up to "the Army we might want" since the end of what the administration calls "major fighting" last year.

Rumsfeld deliberately held down the manpower and support for Iraq against the strong advice of former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki and other generals who said that more troops and equipment would be needed. The Army we have is what Rumsfeld wanted, not what the generals said we needed.

Now, Rumsfeld assured the troops, the Pentagon is pushing its suppliers to produce armored vehicles as fast as possible. But his claim brought swift dispute from some of the makers of armor and Humvees. The factories have been running well below capacity, spokesmen said, but the Pentagon had not taken them up on the offers to produce more armored vehicles.

Meanwhile, improvised explosive devices at roadsides — against which our troops could use more armor — have caused about half of America's casualties.

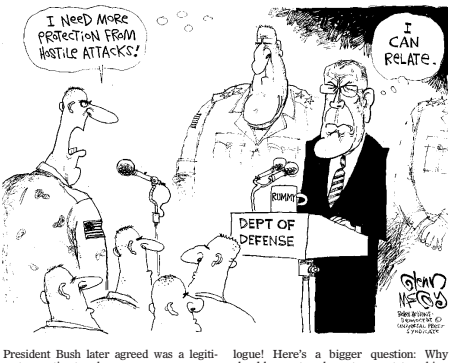
Yet, Rumsfeld added what may be the world's least necessary caveat: "You can have all the armor in the world on a tank; it can [still] be blown up." …

I don't know when Rumsfeld will take questions from soldiers again, but the day after you-know-what freezes over sounds about right.

Yet, hard as it may be to criticize Spc. Wilson for raising a question that undoubtedly weighs on the mind of each and every soldier in Iraq, some people are finding ways to criticize the combat newspaper correspondent who, it turns out, had a hand in Wilson asking it.

Edward Lee Pitts, a reporter with the Chattanooga (Tenn.) Times Free Press who is embedded with Wilson's Tennessee National Guard unit, took credit in an e-mail later leaked to Internet sites that after he learned that reporters would not have a chance to question Rumsfeld, he worked on questions in advance of the meeting with two soldiers from the unit. …

In a letter to readers, his newspaper acknowledged that the reporter should have mentioned his role in his reporting, but otherwise, his editors supported him, as they should. He did not deceive anyone. No one forced Wilson to ask the question, which



President Bush later agreed was a legitimate question to ask.

Yet, some partisan critics, apparently unable to defend Rumsfeld, attacked Pitts. "He created news in order to cover it," said conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh.

"We found out the whole thing today is a setup," Limbaugh added.

A setup to do what? Tell the truth? A Pentagon spokesman huffed that the meeting was "intended for soldiers to have dialogue with the secretary" and that no one should have "interfered with that opportunity, whatever the intention."

Hey, you want dialogue? You got dialogue! Here's a bigger question: Why should reporters have to resort to asking questions through soldiers in order to get an answer and, one hopes, some action from the top brass and the Bush administration on a long-standing problem like vehicle armor?

Our uniformed men and women in Iraq are not whining about this. They courageously take on dangerous missions every day. Afterward, they want to get home safe. The rest of us should support them with something more substantive than flag-waving. That's not too much to ask.

Clarence Page is a Chicago Tribune columnist.

Chaplains not in conflict as they minister in battle

Bill Tammeus

My interest in the work of military chaplains goes back to my childhood. The pastor of the church my family attended was an Army chaplain in World War II, having served in the South Pacific.

Now and then he'd tell stories about it. Something (maybe many things) traumatic must have happened to him in the war, because eventually he became, in author Kurt Vonnegut's apt term, unstuck in time. Although he was physically in the present, his mind was back in the South Pacific in the war, and he could speak of nothing else. He had to be sent to a mental institution. Eventually he left the ministry, emotionally and mentally wounded.

Despite (or maybe because of) this odd exposure to military chaplaincy, I have long admired the people who risk doing this work. I have never served in the military (which, even in the Vietnam era, didn't want someone with my severe near-sightedness and my diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis), but I know that the men and women who put on our nation's uniform need all the emotional and spiritual help they can get, especially on the battlefield.

I liked the way an article in the December issue of Christianity Today described the work such people do: "Chaplains are preachers, teachers and counselors, counted as vital players who quietly help hold the military together."

As much as I'm a stickler for separating church and state, I avoid the argument over whether government pay for chaplains is an unconstitutional breach of that wall. Military people, no matter what religion they follow (and sometimes even if they follow none), need chaplains to help them do their often-terrible work. And if there's a fair system for choosing chaplains of different faiths, I'm happy for the military to pay for that.

But I've always been curious about whether chaplains sometimes feel part of a killing machine. And, if so, how they live with themselves.

Not long ago, John W. Kiser, who grew up in my Kansas City church and now is an Army chaplain, was invited to Princeton Theological Seminary, the Presbyterian institution from which he got his theological degree, to preach on "Chaplains Day." In that sermon, John answered my question directly and well: "I do not see myself as an advocate of war but as a missionary of the gospel of peace. I am an advocate of soldiers to God, and for God to soldiers, even in the midst of warfare.

"I see war as a sign of a fallen, sinful world, but unfortunately necessary at times." …

John has served in Bosnia, Kosovo, Kuwait and Iraq. In fact, he was in Iraq the day Saddam Hussein was captured, and we shared e-mail that day about the joy the U.S. military personnel there were feeling.

"This is how the GIs [in World War II] must have felt when they knew Hitler was dead but even better," he wrote me. "We got him alive."

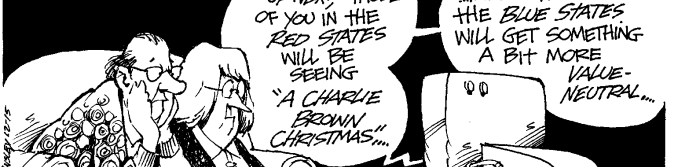
Over the years, the military chaplaincy has broadened to represent the growing spectrum of religions represented among our military. Even chaplaincy insignia have changed to acknowledge the reality that not all soldiers are Christian. Official insignia at one point added Judaic and then Islamic symbols, but now the move is not to single out any particular faith. In a country in which Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, neo-pagans, atheists, agnostics and others are increasingly prominent, that makes sense. …

I don't know whether there are atheists in foxholes, but I know chaplains are there. And I'm grateful for their service.

Bill Tammeus is a columnist for The Kansas City (Mo.) Star.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



IN THE WORLD

EU official: Radicals training in Iraqi camps

BY RAF CASERT
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Radical youths from Europe and the Arab world are being trained in Iraq, Europe's anti-terror chief said Tuesday, warning that such clandestine camps could multiply in unstable or failed states anywhere in the world.

"There are some who have gone to Iraq, as indeed there have been youngsters from outside Europe, from Arab countries, who have gone there to receive military training," EU counterterrorism coordinator Gijs de Vries said in an interview with The Associated Press.

De Vries refused to elaborate on the specifics, such as the numbers or countries of origin of those training in Iraq, saying the information was classified.

But he warned that action had to be taken to stop instability breeding terror.

"This is incidentally not just the case in Iraq," he said.

"Instability elsewhere in the world, in Africa for example, always makes it more difficult for the law to be upheld, for democracy to function, and therefore makes it easier for terrorists to hide and train."

Terror threat remains high in Europe

The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The European Union's anti-terror chief warned Tuesday that all of Europe remains vulnerable to terrorist strikes despite a lull in attacks since the March 11 Madrid train bombings and the foiling of plots in several countries.

"Overall, we can say that the threat of terrorism in Europe remains high," EU counter-terrorism coordinator Gijs De Vries said in an interview with The Associated Press. "We should take it very seriously indeed."

Spanish and British authorities say they have averted major terror attacks in recent months.

In October, 30 people were detained on suspicion of planning to drive an explosives-packed truck into Madrid's National Court.

British police said last week they had prevented an attack in London on the scale of the Madrid bombings.

"There have been other instances," De Vries said, but refused to give details. He warned that such success must not lead to complacency.

"I'm afraid the risk remains high, not only in the two countries that I mentioned but in other member states of the union as well," De Vries said.

Deadly train collision in India

AP

Indian army personnel and volunteers assist in rescue operations Tuesday near damaged cars of a passenger train in Khanpur, India, about 180 miles northwest of New Delhi, India. An express train crashed head-on into a local train, officials said. At least 31 people were killed.

Yushchenko advocates take campaign beyond Ukrainian capital city

BY ALEKSANDAR VASOVIC
The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Supporters of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko expanded a campaign to spread the so-called Orange Revolution beyond Ukraine's capital on Tuesday, organizing a convoy that will visit 15 cities in the coming days — including in eastern provinces that have been hostile to the candidate.

More than 50 supporters of the Pora (It's Time) youth movement will head to the pro-Russian eastern provinces, hoping to win over voters in areas where support for Yushchenko's opponent Viktor Yanukovych has been strong. Yushchenko and Yanukovych face off for the presidency in a Dec. 26 contest ordered by the Supreme Court after the two candidates' second-round vote on Nov. 21 was ruled fraudulent.

Yushchenko

The "friendship journey" — in which Yushchenko supporters flaunt the campaign's trademark orange color — is part of a campaign roiled by explosive revelations, including the confirmation by an Austrian clinic over the weekend that Yushchenko had been poisoned by dioxin. Prosecutors and a parliamentary committee quickly set up investigations — the second time each has examined the poisoning incident — and officials close to the Ukrainian leadership took charge of both.

Yushchenko fell ill in September and was rushed to the Austrian clinic on Sept. 10. His illness caused dramatic facial disfigurement.

"So far we don't have an independent source of information which could allow us to analyze the situation," said Mikhail Pohrebinsky, a Kiev-based political analyst with ties to President Leonid Kuchma.

Pro-Yushchenko lawmaker Yuriy Pavlenko speculated that Russian agents may have been involved — a popular local theory stemming from Russian President Vladimir Putin's backing of Yanukovych.

Many of the ruling political and business elite faced the loss of lucrative contracts made possible by high level connections if Yanukovych — Kuchma's hand-picked successor — lost the race, analysts said.

Many of those contracts involve Russia. All but one of Russia's major infrastructure links and natural gas exports to Europe pass through Ukraine.

Government opponents have faced attack before. More than two dozen Ukrainian politicians, high-ranking businessmen and journalists have died under suspicious circumstances during Kuchma's decade in power. All investigations into the deaths have proved inconclusive.

For his part, Yanukovych said he sympathized with his rival and that he wished him "no evil."

In an interview with The Associated Press, he demanded a thorough investigation and promised not to interfere in it. But he stressed that the impact of the dioxin could hamper Yushchenko's performance should he be elected.

"The fact of the matter is that Yushchenko is seriously ill," he said. "We can all see it."

While high concentrations of dioxin, a byproduct of industrial processes, remain in his blood, doctors said Yushchenko's organs have not been damaged and he is fit for the campaign trail. His prognosis depends on which dioxin he ingested — which is as yet unknown — and in what amount.

Associated Press writers Yuras Karmanau and Danica Kirka contributed to this story.

Pakistan, India begin talks aimed at avoiding accidental nuclear war

BY MUNIR AHMAD
The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistani and Indian negotiators opened talks Tuesday on how to avoid an accidental nuclear war between the two South Asian rivals, the foreign ministry said.

It is the second time since June the two sides have met to discuss their nuclear weapons. India and Pakistan also have launched a broader effort to resolve long-running disputes, including their competing claims over the Himalayan region of Kashmir.

Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman Masood Khan told reporters the two sides were discussing "new safeguards to avoid any accidental nuclear war" — including giving advance notification of missile tests.

Both delegations expressed optimism about the talks, scheduled to last two days. "We are happy to be in Islamabad," said Meera Shanker, head of the Indian delegation. "We are in favor of result-oriented talks."

The head of the Pakistani side, Tariq Usman Haider, also said he hoped for "result-oriented" negotiations that would benefit the "governments and peoples of both the countries."

During the June meeting, India and Pakistan agreed to extend a moratorium in nuclear tests and to set up a telephone hot line between the top bureaucrats in their foreign ministries. These agreements were expected to be finalized at this week's talks.

Onlookers get a view of the world's tallest traffic bridge last Thursday, in Millau, France. The viaduct soars over a valley in southern France. President Jacques Chirac on Tuesday inaugurated the bridge, which stands about 890 feet at its highest point and is scheduled to open to vehicular traffic on Thursday.

AP

France unveils world's tallest roadway bridge

BY PERRINE LATRASSE
The Associated Press

MILLAU, France — Piercing the sky above the verdant hills of southern France, a roadway bridge hailed as the tallest in the world was officially inaugurated Tuesday.

Celebrated as a work of art and an object of French national pride, the Millau bridge will enable motorists to take a drive through the sky — 891 feet above the Tarn River valley for 1.6-mile stretch through France's Massif Central mountains.

Designed by British architect Norman Foster, the steel-and-concrete bridge with its streamlined diagonal suspension cables rests on seven pillars — the tallest measuring 1,122 feet, making it 53 feet taller than the Eiffel Tower.

The bridge, which has an airy and fluid appearance, was designed to have the "delicacy of a butterfly," Foster said in an interview with regional daily newspaper Midi Libre.

"A work of man must fuse with nature. The pillars had to look almost organic, like they had grown from the earth," said Foster, who also designed London's Millennium Bridge.

Colorado's Royal Gorge Bridge, towering 1,053 feet above the Arkansas River, is the world's tallest suspension bridge — but it is designed for pedestrians. The Kochertal viaduct in Germany was the highest roadway, at 607 feet, officials said.

President Jacques Chirac, surrounded by workers in hard hats, lifted a French flag covering a plaque on the bridge in the town of Millau on Tuesday.

"This exceptional opening will go down in industrial and technological history," Chirac said, praising the bridge's designers and builders for creating "a prodigy of art and architecture — a new emblem of French civil engineering."

The bridge will serve as a symbol of "a modern and conquering France," he said.

Millau, whose skyline is dominated by the bridge, had until now been best-known outside France as the place where anti-globalization crusader Jose Bove dismantled a McDonald's restaurant.

The bridge, nearly three years in construction, opens to vehicles on Thursday.

The $523 million bridge was commissioned to open a new north-south link between Paris and the Mediterranean and is expected to relieve bottlenecks caused by trucks and tourists headed to the Riviera.

Some 28,000 vehicles a day are expected to cross the bridge in the summer months, and about 10,000 a day the rest of the year, according to France's Eiffage construction company, which built it.

Toll fees for motorists will vary from $6.50 in winter and $8.62 in summer. Trucks will have to pay $32.24 year-round.

Italian travel back in fashion for holidays

ROME — More than 11 million Italians are expected to hit the road over the Christmas and New Year's holidays, reversing a trend to stay close to home that had emerged over the past three years, a hotel association said Tuesday. The figures are back to 2000 levels, with a spike of 20 percent over 2003, said the report by Federalberghi-Confturismo.

"The desire for vacations is back," Federalberghi President Bernabo Bocca said in presenting the survey, Italian news agencies reported, saying he blamed the recent reluctance to travel in part on international tensions and fears of terrorist attacks.

London subway strikes planned

LONDON — Drivers on a London subway line will stage one-day strikes on Dec. 24 and Jan. 5, their union said Tuesday, disrupting travel over the busy Christmas period.

Drivers on the Piccadilly Line, which runs from Heathrow Airport through central London, voted 77-15 to walk out on the two dates in their dispute over the demotion of a driver accused of running red signals, the Aslef union said.

In a separate ballot, drivers on the District Line voted to work to rule Jan. 5 in a dispute over working conditions.

Italy cracks down on Brazil sex tourism

ROME — Italian authorities arrested four people in a crackdown on travel agents who organized child sex tourist trips to Brazil, police said Tuesday.

Rome police official Alberto Intini said the trips were organized by a travel agency in the Brazilian city of Fortaleza, which sent clients to local bars, discos or hotels where child prostitution was practiced.

Police arrested the Italian owner of the travel agency as he was boarding a plane from Italy to Brazil last week, Intini said. They arrested his Brazilian wife and the owners of two other Italian travel agencies in a pre-dawn raid on Tuesday.

Tom Wolfe wins Bad Sex writing award

LONDON — It's the literary award no author wants to win, and this year it's gone to Tom Wolfe.

The Literary Review gave Wolfe its annual Bad Sex award Monday for his best-selling novel "I Am Charlotte Simmons."

Judges said the book's sex scenes were "ghastly … inept … unrealistic." The nearly 700-page novel is set at fictional Dupont University in Pennsylvania, chronicling the bright, naive Charlotte Simmons' entry into a hedonistic world filled with heavy drinking and casual sex.

From The Associated Press

Rare rhinos born in Singapore

Baby white rhino Sudi stands next to his mother Monday in Singapore. Both Sudi and Mandela, another baby rhino born in October at the zoo, weigh about 88 pounds.

AP

LOOK FOR
HOLIDAY GREETINGS
FROM FOLKS BACK HOME

in your December 16th
STARS AND STRIPES Middle East edition

STARS AND STRIPES.
Your Hometown Newspaper

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

UVA investigation

VA RICHMOND — Federal education officials are investigating a complaint that the University of Virginia's undergraduate admissions policy discriminates against white applicants.

The complaint was filed after the Charlottesville university denied admission to a white male student from New York for a spot in the fall 2003 incoming class.

"Many kids with far less qualifications had already been accepted to the university in the name of diversity," the student's father said in the complaint. "If my son had been a girl or a minority with his grades, test scores and extracurricular activities he would have been admitted to the University on his own with no problem."

U.Va. spokeswoman Carol Wood declined to discuss the investigation by the U.S. Department of Education's civil-rights office. She said, however, that diversity is just one of many factors the university uses in determining admission.

Stopping meds blamed

MN MINNEAPOLIS — When the Rev. Joe Roberson heard that his grandson was accused of running the streets naked and scuffling with police, he had a good guess at what happened.

"I believe he just quit taking his medications," Roberson said about his grandson, Michael Porter, 19, who was seriously injured when a police dog bit him in the groin.

Porter, who remains in serious condition, was eventually subdued with a Taser gun.

Roberson said Porter had been taking medication to help him cope with his father's unexpected death about two years ago. Porter has been charged with four counts of felony assault and gross misdemeanor assault. He is accused of wandering through Minneapolis streets, sometimes wearing only a robe, at other times wearing nothing.

Expensive legal fees

VA CHESAPEAKE — The city's successful defense of lawsuits accusing officials of failing to warn pregnant women about a harmful byproduct in Chesapeake tap water totaled $2.4 million, according to documents released by the city.

All but $300,000 went to pay two law firms: Williams Mullen, which has offices in Virginia Beach, and Breeden, Salb, Beasley & Duvall of Norfolk.

The firms began defending the city four years ago against hundreds of individual civil suits that collectively were seeking an estimated $1.8 billion from the city. The cases never made it to trial.

Last month, the Virginia Supreme Court ruled that Chesapeake was immune from such lawsuits.

Fire on the set

AZ TUCSON — A fire broke out on the set of a TV movie being filmed at the Tucson Convention Center, injuring five people and forcing the evacuation of thousands arriving for a concert in another part of the building.

The fire started on the set of ABC's "Desperation," written by horror writer Stephen King. It damaged the set, made to look like a mine shaft, but not the convention center.

Three people were injured by falling debris and received first- and second-degree burns on their faces and hands. They were taken to hospitals. Two others were treated for smoke inhalation, according to fire officials.

The cause of the fire was under investigation.

Program losing money

WY CHEYENNE — The University of Wyoming's family practice residency programs in Casper and Cheyenne are losing $1 million a year and do not offer high enough pay to attract top quality applicants, UW President Philip Dubois told a legislative committee. Dubois is asking lawmakers for about $2.5 million to help the programs.

Bare-bones crossing

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's administration proposed abandoning an expensive suspension design for the eastern stretch of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge in favor of a plainer, cheaper concrete skyway.

"We need a safe bridge completed as soon as possible at a reasonable cost," said Sunne Wright McPeak, secretary of California's Business, Housing and Transportation Agency. "This is a time of very constrained resources for the state of California."

The bare-bones skyway design could shave between $300 million and $400 million off a project whose price tag ballooned from $2.6 billion to $5.1 billion, McPeak said. She predicted the bridge could be completed by 2011 or 2012.

At issue is a 2,100-foot stretch of the bridge's eastern span that will connect Yerba Buena Island to a 1.5-mile-long concrete skyway already under construction.

Christmas plunder

Philip J. VanVleet, left, and his father, Phil C. VanVleet, of Hannawa Falls, N.Y., pull their Christmas tree out of the woods after it was cut fresh at the Van deWater tree farm in Canton, N.Y.

Man gets 6 years in jail

MD BALTIMORE — A judge ordered a six-year prison sentence for a man who shot and killed a 15-year-old boy who was allegedly trying to steal a bicycle from the man's home.

Edward Day, 57, tearfully told Baltimore Circuit Judge John Glynn that he did not intend to shoot David Stewart with a double-barrel shotgun in the July 2002 incident.

Glynn sentenced Day to 13 years in prison, suspending all but six years. Day will get credit for having served two years and five months, mostly in home confinement.

Day had pleaded guilty to manslaughter and a weapon charge in the fatal shooting. Prosecutor Wes Adams described the shooting as an act of "impulsive, angry, intentional behavior."

Defense attorney Kenneth Ravenell argued for leniency, describing Day as a Vietnam veteran who was badly affected by his time in the war.

Grant money returned

MO KANSAS CITY — An agency that runs Head Start for thousands of low-income preschoolers with an $18 million federal grant has relinquished the funds after audits revealed the agency was millions of dollars in debt, officials said.

Without the Head Start component of its $28 million budget, KCMC Child Development Corp. — which also provides nutrition, day care and summer school programs with other funding — probably will have to close, the agency's board chairman said.

Stirred about shaking

CT SOUTHBURY — No matter what the deal, don't expect this city official to shake on it.

First Selectman Mark Cooper held a news conference to announce that he won't be shaking hands with anyone until flu season is over sometime next year.

Cooper said if anyone offers their hand, he will politely decline and give them a brochure on how to stay healthy this winter. He says he wants to set an example by limiting his contact with people.

"Flu season has started, and I don't want to pass along those germs," he said.

Braving the winter

Snow rests on thick canvas coats worn by merino sheep in a field west of Kalispell, Mont.

In the line of duty

Spencer, Wis., firefighter Derek Griepentrog works on the roof of Randy and Pat Klimmer's home after a fire started in their home.

Taking flight

Geese take flight at sunset above the Miles Community College Rodeo Arena in Miles City, Mont.

Wild imaginations

Kindergartners, from left, Kieara Bryant, Asia Woodley, Cheyanne Ainesworth, Taylor Zamora, Lacey Smith and Brooklyn O'Daniel use their imaginations to ride the Polar Express down a hill at Eisenhower Elementary School in Independence, Kan.

Cookie monsters

First-grader Cady Thomas slides a reindeer cookie to a classmate to be completed as Cameron DeKuiper works on the deer antlers in Ludington, Mich.

Best kind of delivery

Air Force Pave Hawk crewmember Staff Sgt. Leonardo Cruz starts unloading a delivery of toys for the Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" program at Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas.

Doctor indicted

TX DALLAS — A doctor under investigation for as many as 11 patient deaths was indicted on three felony counts of prescribing drugs without a medical purpose, prosecutors said.

Several patients of Dr. Daniel Maynard, ranging in age from 29 to 62, died of drug overdoses, toxic effects of mixed drugs and congestive heart failure, authorities have said.

Maynard wrote nearly 55,000 prescriptions in 2002, records show.

That year he wrote more prescriptions for the sedative diazepam than any other Texas doctor, and the second-most prescriptions for Tylenol with the narcotic codeine, according to the records.

A spokeswoman for the Dallas County district attorney's office said the investigation of Maynard was continuing.

Police raided the osteopath's Dallas home and clinic in October 2003 to seize patients' records. The state medical board stripped Maynard of his license to practice a few days later.

Drought fears eased

CO DENVER — The state appears to be bouncing back from a five-year drought, thanks in part to above-average snowpack that has been good news for farmers and skiers alike.

"I think it is too early to say the drought is over. But now I would bet against it becoming a 10- or 20-year drought," federal climatologist Klaus Wolter said.

The Upper Colorado River basin was at 110 percent of average; the South Platte, a major source of water for Denver and northeast Colorado, was at 112 percent, and the Yampa-White River basin in northwest was at 111 percent.

Even the hardest-hit part of Colorado, in the southwest, is improving.

Drugged moms bill

IN LEBANON — State Rep. Jeff Thompson and State Sen. Jeff Drozda are sponsoring a bill that would allow prosecutors to charge women who are on drugs while giving birth and pass the narcotic to their babies.

Currently, authorities can only ask a judge to remove the child from the home. Thompson said he'd like to see the crime become a felony, but the bill would be easier to pass through the legislature as a misdemeanor.

Reward value raised

CT NEW HAVEN — The reward for a key suspect in a 1983 Wells Fargo robbery was raised to $1 million, the FBI said. The agency is seeking Victor Manuel Gerena, a former Wells Fargo guard accused in the $7 million armored car robbery in West Hartford. The robbery was allegedly carried out by 16 members of a Puerto Rican nationalist group.

Man burned in home fire

KY OWENSBORO — Henry Head Jr., 41, was treated for severe burns after a fire at his home, where investigators found items used for meth-making. Daviess County sheriff's Detective Bill Thompson said investigators found material often used for manufacturing methamphetamine. Head already pleaded guilty to first-degree possession of a controlled substance and possession of methamphetamine in September.

Water protection

VT MONTPELIER — Two environmental groups want special protection for more than 60 bodies of water in the Green Mountain National Forest, but the requests are generating opposition.

The state Natural Resources Agency, representatives of the timber and ski industries and the U.S. Forest Service say they're not sure the extra protection is necessary.

"We're really surprised at the level of opposition, that there isn't more support," said Jamey Fidel of the Vermont Natural Resources Council.

The council and the Conservation Law Foundation are advocating for stronger conservation promises on the lakes, ponds, brooks and wetlands.

Metro budget plan

DC WASHINGTON — For the first time in the transit agency's history, Metro management unveiled a budget plan that tops $1 billion. The budget does not increase riders' fares, but does call for a considerable payment increase from jurisdictions served by Metro. General Manager Richard White said most of the growth in expenses is due to new programs and increases in payroll, pensions and fuel costs.

Death investigated

AZ PHOENIX — Kevin Keogh, the city's longtime finance director, died after apparently falling or jumping from a moving car. Witnesses told police that Keogh, 50, climbed onto the top of his moving Mercedes-Benz, stretched out his arms and then jumped or fell. Investigators don't know whether the death was intentional, but the cruise control was set at about 50 mph.

Church consolidation

IA LE MARS — A shortage of priests will force six Roman Catholic Churches to consolidate into one central parish in Le Mars. The six current churches would close after the construction of a new church that may seat 1,000. All four priests currently serving the churches have endorsed the proposal. The consolidation allows for two priests to serve the new parish.

Harbor spill

MA BARNSTABLE — A man suffered a fatal heart attack while refueling a ferry, resulting in a spill that dumped nearly 2,000 gallons of diesel fuel into Hyannis Harbor, a Coast Guard official said.

The man was gassing up the Grey Lady, a high-speed ferry operated by Hy-Line Cruises between Cape Cod and Nantucket.

According to Chief Petty Officer David Gilbert, he had a heart attack and died, but the fuel kept flowing, dumping an estimated 1,900 gallons into the harbor.

The harbor was closed and a containment boom was placed around the spill.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Winfrey, Cruise host Nobel concert

Oprah Winfrey didn't have to think twice when she was asked to host this year's Nobel Peace Prize Concert with **Tom Cruise**.

Winfrey

Cruise

"I'm here because, first of all, when the Nobel Committee calls, you try to answer with a yes," she told reporters before Saturday's show. Plus, she added, "I like to go wherever Tom Cruise might be. You have the Nobel Committee and Tom Cruise — who's gonna say no to that?"

The concert, in Oslo, Norway, was held to honor Kenyan environmentalist **Wangari Maathai**. The show was broadcast live in more than 100 countries and featured musical artists such as British teen soul singer **Joss Stone**, opera vocalist **Andrea Bocelli**, jazz singer **Diana Krall**, and pop singers **Cyndi Lauper** and **Patti Labelle**.

The 64-year-old Maathai, Kenya's deputy environment minister, was honored as founder of the Green Belt Movement, which has sought to empower women, improve the environment and fight corruption in Africa for almost 30 years. She is the first environmentalist and first African woman to be awarded the coveted Nobel Peace Prize.

"What a momentous occasion this is for not just African women, but particularly for African girls," Winfrey said. "In Maathai, African girls have a role model they can look at and say, 'I want to be like her.' "

The concert will be broadcast in the United States on Dec. 23 by E! Entertainment Television.

Regis Philbin to sub for Dick Clark

Regis Philbin will fill in as host of ABC's "New Year's Rockin' Eve 2005" for **Dick Clark**, who suffered a mild stroke last week, the network announced Monday.

Philbin

Philbin, co-host of the syndicated "Regis & Kelly," has made subbing for ailing entertainers something of a specialty, coming to **David Letterman**'s aid when Letterman was ill in 2000 and 2003.

Clark, 75, remains hospitalized following his stroke, spokesman **Paul Shefrin** said, but is "getting better every day."

In a statement, Clark said his doctors advised against the New Year's Eve duties, saying it was too soon.

Philbin will be joined by singer **Ashlee Simpson**, who's hosting the West Coast part of the show. Besides Simpson, performers include **Big & Rich, Ciara, Earth, Wind & Fire, Good Charlotte** and **Billy Idol**.

Wax nativity scene attacked

A waxwork nativity scene that features soccer star **David Beckham** and his pop star wife, **Victoria**, as the parents of **Jesus** has been damaged in an attack, Madame Tussauds London museum said Monday.

The museum piece, which has drawn criticism from Christian leaders who say it's disrespectful, was damaged Sunday when a male visitor pushed over the figures of the Beckhams before running out, museum spokeswoman **Diane Moon** said.

Wax nativity at Madame Tussauds

The exhibit had been closed off and police and museum staff were investigating security footage to track down the vandal, Moon said.

The nativity features was representations of (in photo, from left) actors **Samuel L. Jackson, Hugh Grant** and **Graham Norton** dressed as shepherds, the Beckhams as Joseph and Mary, British Prime Minister **Tony Blair, The Duke of Edinburgh** and **President Bush** as the Three Wise Men and singer **Kylie Minogue** as the angel.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

BRAVO/AP

Supermodel Heidi Klum is host and executive producer of "Project Runway," a new series on Bravo. The show promises to pick the next big thing among a group of aspiring designers.

Labor of love

Heidi Klum is giving back to fashion, modeling world with 'Project Runway'

BY SAMANTHA CRITCHELL
The Associated Press

Heidi Klum got her start in fashion through a German modeling contest and now she's returning the favor: She is the host and executive producer of "Project Runway," Bravo's new TV series that promises to pick the next hot fashion designer.

"I had a soft spot to do this, I wanted to give someone a chance who might not have had it," she says.

After 11 years in the business, Klum says she knows the fashion playing field isn't necessarily even.

"Look at Zac Posen. He had a huge break because he knew some people to get in. He's so talented and he thinks so innovatively, but there probably are a lot of Zac Posens around," Klum says.

(Posen, at 23, won the Council of Fashion Designers of America award for emerging talent earlier this year.)

"Project Runway," which follows 12 contestants through a series of fashion challenges, is more of a documentary than a reality show, according to Klum. Most of the episodes were shot in advance but the three finalists will have a runway runoff during New York Fashion Week in February.

"We're going to show the public what it's like to be a designer. I think people will be interested to see what it's really like, how talented designers are. What we're looking for is who is talented, not who is the funniest, not who is good looking," Klum explains.

The judges should be able to spot talent. The roster includes Michael Kors, whose upcoming spring 2005 collection has already enjoyed glowing reviews; Nina Garcia and Anne Slowey from Elle magazine; Constance White, style director for eBay; and Klum, who has worn designer duds in almost every major fashion magazine in the world.

As a model, it's her job to wear whatever is thrown at her, but Klum, 31, says some of the outfits she's worn for photo shoots are hardly her taste. "For the cover of Time (Style & Design), I looked like Tweety Bird. We needed instructions on how to put the dress on, but those things have to be there in fashion so we have something to talk about. ... If everything was a black spaghetti-strap dress, fashion would be boring."

The task for the "Project Runway" participants is to balance creativity, quality and salability, all in a limited amount of time and with minimal resources.

Daniel Franco, a 32-year-old from Los Angeles, says, win or lose, having his designs on TV is the best marketing tool he could have imagined — even better than the hallowed pages of Vogue, Harper's Bazaar or Elle.

"Fashion programs allow designers to get their personalities out there and that's what people are buying. The Midwest seems to relate to personality and hopefully if they like your personality, they'll buy your clothes," Franco says.

Franco, who has studied fashion for six years, including creating his own master's program at Otis College of Art and Design, describes his look as somewhere between designer ready-to-wear and couture.

> *"I had a soft spot to do this, I wanted to give someone a chance who might not have had it."*
>
> **Heidi Klum**
> 'Project Runway' host and executive producer

"If David Bowie's music were fashion designs they'd look like mine. They're a look into the future; they're innovative, very conceptual, a slender aesthetic for the modern athletic body," he says.

The aspiring designers featured on "Project Runway" aren't quite amateurs — Franco, for example, has been featured on Jane Pauley's talk show twice as a fashion expert — but they are still searching for their big break. The prize of having their designs photographed for Elle by publication director and shutterbug Gilles Bensimon and getting $100,000 in seed money and a mentorship from Banana Republic would go a long way toward achieving that goal.

But just because they're on television and hung out with Klum and Kors, don't expect someone like Wendy Pepper, a 40-year-old mother, to go Hollywood — or even New York.

"I'm going to stay in Middleburg (Va.). I have my own shop here and my basic operations will always stay here. I will work elsewhere but my child is in school here so we're staying," Pepper says.

Her experience on the show, however, is helping her run her existing clothing business better.

"I saw that you need to exude confidence and have vision. I had been able to coast along in a little town where everyone knew what I did and I've made a living in fashion for 20 years," Pepper says.

She also learned that to be famous in fashion, you need to be able to convince someone that they're buying into a bigger picture, not a single garment. "It's all about reputation, and you need to be consistent," she says.

The time limits were the biggest thimble in her side during the taping and she says not all of her pieces turned out the way she would have liked. "You're looking at something that's falling apart and being held together by Velcro and staples, but you need to sell it as the most beautiful thing you've ever seen," Pepper says with a laugh.

YOUR MONEY

Adware file can be hard to track down

Q. I run Windows XP with Norton virus protection. When I do a scan of my computer, it shows that I have one infected file, which Norton identifies as MediaTicketInstaller.ocx, an adware file. Norton asks if I want to delete the file, but when I respond "yes" it fails to delete it. Other files will be deleted properly if they are detected as possible infections.

Norton tells me that the file is in the Windows/Downloaded Programs folder. However, I cannot find it in that folder when I use Windows Explorer, nor can I find it using Start and Search and then plugging in the file name.

So how can I find the file, since Norton keeps telling me it is in my computer? —Roy Messer @pacbell.net

A. Did it ever occur to you that Symantec Corp.'s vaunted Norton AntiVirus could be wrong? It didn't occur to me either, Mr. M. At least that was the case until I hunkered down to research your problem and found that it's bugging a lot of folks.

They all say the antivirus program does a first-rate job of finding this nasty bit of spyware/adware but, like you, they can't find it and delete it.

That's because the authors of this bit of vandalism apparently found a way to use the Windows System Registry to cloak the file so it cannot be found even if users set their computers to show all hidden and system files and do searches as you did.

Here's the drill for making registry fixes: First, make a backup of this utterly essential Windows file that handles a huge proportion of everything a computer does. Click on Start and then Run and type the command regedit to open the registry.

Now look under the File commands for Export and pick it to send a copy of the intact registry to your hard drive. If you get in trouble following my advice, you can restore the registry by clicking on that backup icon.

Now highlight the first line in the registry and tap Control + F and type the search term mediaticket. Using Find Next will take you to up to a half-dozen instances of the file in the registry and you will find that each of them has been assigned a value, which you can find by clicking on the entry. Use the edit box this brings up to remove the value, which is a code that hides the files every time your machine is set to find hidden files.

Now go back to the Start/Search button you had been using and search again. This time MediaTicketInstaller.ocx will be visible for deletion.

Ask Jim

Jim Coates

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/asklim.

Gift guide for co-workers

Don't forget etiquette when shopping for office mates

BY MARY ELLEN SLAYTER
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Sparkly ruby pendant for Mom — check.

Sturdy snow boots for Dad — check.

A copy of your favorite kid's book for your 6-year-old niece — check.

The holiday shopping list looks pretty good so far. Now, what are you getting your boss? Almost half of us plan to give a holiday gift to at least one business associate this year, according to a poll conducted by Harris Interactive Inc. for Office Depot Inc. The survey also found that 90 percent of us are baffled about the etiquette associated with workplace gift-swapping.

We spend so much time with our co-workers, it's not surprising that we wonder if we should get them gifts. But what kinds of gifts? The expectations surrounding holiday giving vary so much from office to office that it is difficult to generalize.

However, here are 11 tips to help you indulge in the holiday spirit without running afoul of the law or good taste:

■ Check the rules. Some organizations have strict regulations about what kinds of gifts their employees can give and receive. In government agencies, this can be a matter of law, and repercussions for violating cost ceilings or reporting requirements can be severe.

■ Give to the group. Instead of individual gifts to your office mates, give something everyone can enjoy. Food is generally well-received. If you're a good cook, bake a tasty treat. If not, surprise everyone with coffee and pastries from a bakery one afternoon. Besides saving you money, and the time it would take to wrap gifts, this approach has another advantage: If people have diet restrictions — due to diabetes or a food allergy, for example — they can simply pass on the offering without making a big fuss.

■ Keep it secular. Not everyone is Christian, but people of all faiths will usually welcome a cheerful "Happy Holidays." If you send out greeting cards to colleagues, choose those without an overtly religious message. They may be different from the ones you send close friends and family.

■ Nix the "family newsletters." Even if year-in-the-life essays are your favorite holiday tradition, please don't send them to business associates. The contents of such letters usually are of interest only to family members.

■ Forget about booze. What seems like a generous gift to you could be an unfortunate trigger for a recovering alcoholic, or just plain useless to someone who doesn't drink for personal, medical or religious reasons.

■ Keep it modest. Remember, if half of us plan to give gifts, that means the other half do not. People should not feel guilty if they don't have the means or desire to reciprocate. The more expensive the gifts you dole out, the more likely you will make someone in your office uncomfortable.

■ No knickknacks. Please. Most of us can barely see our desks as it is. The last thing we need is another coffee mug, paperweight, clock or pen-and-pencil set.

■ Stick to what you know. Or rather, who you know. If you have never met someone, don't feel compelled to give him a holiday gift.

■ Be inclusive. Publicly anyway. If you plan to give gifts to only a few co-workers with whom you are particularly close, do it outside work.

■ Keep it clean. This should go without saying. Do not consider gag gifts that rely on sexual innuendo or ethnic stereotypes to be funny. Do not give anything that could remotely be considered intimate.

■ Be generous down the chain. Give your assistant or intern at least as nice a gift as the one you give your boss.

MONDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES

52-week High	52-week Low	Name	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD % Chg	52-wk % Chg
10,753.63	9,706.48	Dow Jones Industrials	10,638.32	+95.16	+.90	+3.15	+9.64
3,748.05	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,724.96	+38.93	+1.06	+23.87	+26.24
335.20	252.47	Dow Jones Utilities	325.03	+5.34	+1.67	+21.78	+27.79
7,108.61	6,087.23	NYSE Composite	7,102.41	+73.90	+1.05	+10.28	+15.07
1,417.41	1,105.38	Amex Index	1,399.05	+6.97	+.50	+19.22	+24.96
2,164.63	1,750.82	Nasdaq Composite	2,148.50	+20.43	+.96	+7.24	+12.00
1,157.46	1,053.41	S&P 500	1,196.68	+10.68	+.90	+7.60	+12.23
646.34	548.29	S&P MidCap	645.80	+4.50	+.70	+12.12	+15.64
644.84	515.90	Russell 2000	638.03	+5.79	+.92	+14.57	+19.20
11,788.44	10,244.15	DJ Wilshire 5000	11,790.29	+98.31	+.84	+9.17	+13.53

NYSE

MOST ACTIVE ($1 OR MORE)

Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Lucent	675971	3.71	-.09
SprintFON	167307	18.64	+.30
Pfizer	365134	27.16	+.67
Motorola	344166	17.15	+.80
TimeWarn	303506	18.93	+.45
Agere	286809	1.36	-.15
GenElec	279770	37.48	+.79
JPMorgCh	148295	38.35	+.62
NortelN lf	146978	3.78	+.02
Citigrp	134211	46.77	+.86

AMEX

MOST ACTIVE ($1 OR MORE)

Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
SPDR	358258	120.37	+1.82
iShares	116605	32.58	+.29
Microsoft	92323S	27.25	+.17
NasdI00Tr	107906	40.28	+.35
Intel	563884	22.63	+.07
Cisco	542798	19.37	-.15
PeoplesehS	505791	26.42	+2.47
NestleSC	486629	29.99	+.23
Conexant	341138	1.87	--
SunMicro	325364	5.38	+.13

NASDAQ

MOST ACTIVE ($1 OR MORE)

Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Oracle	1802312	14.03	+1.35
JuniperN	1522004	8.84	+.45
Microsoft	923235	27.25	+.17
NasdI00Tr	107906	40.28	+.35
Intel	563884	22.63	+.07
Cisco	542798	19.37	-.15
PeoplesehS	505791	26.42	+2.47
NestleSC	486629	29.99	+.23
Conexant	341138	1.87	--
SunMicro	325364	5.38	+.13

KEY DEFENSE STOCKS

Name	Div	PE	Last	Chg	YTD %Chg
Alliant Techsystem	--	17	66.45	+.64	+15.0
Armor Holdings	--	30	42.04	+1.64	+75.8
Boeing	1.00	15	52.67	+.25	+25.0
Computer Sciences	--	19	57.75	+1.48	+29.4
Engineered Sup Sys	.64	22	54.95	+1.05	-.2
General Dynamics	1.44	18	107.69	+1.19	+19.1
General Electric	.88	24	37.48	+.79	+21.0
Halliburton	.50	--	38.84	+.37	+49.4
Harris Corp.	.48	29	63.48	-.38	+67.3
Allied Signal	.83	22	36.45	+1.14	+9.0
L-3 Communications	.40	22	74.85	+.94	+45.7
Lockheed Martin	1.00	22	60.40	+.95	+17.5
Northrop Gr	.92	20	56.80	+.85	+18.8
Raytheon	.80	45	39.72	+.37	+32.2
Rockwell Intl.	.66	21	46.56	+.85	+30.8
Sequa Corp.	--	37	69.99	+.49	+24.5
Texas Instruments	.10	24	23.69	+.86	-19.4
Textron Inc.	1.40	32	73.60	+.46	+29.0
United Technologies	1.40	19	102.87	+1.84	+8.5

KEY MUTUAL FUNDS

Name	NAV	Chg.	YTD %Ret.
Fidelity Invest: Growinc	38.41	+.32	+9.1
Fidelity Invest: GrowCo	65.36	+.52	+10.4
Amer Century Inv: Ultra	29.18	+.24	+9.5
Fidelity Spartan: EqIdx	42.38	+.38	+9.4
Putnam Funds A: GroInc p	19.11	+.17	+9.4
Fidelity Invest: A Mgr	16.22	+.07	+4.5
Fidelity/Temp Frnk A: SMCpGrA	31.38	+.25	+10.5
AIM Investments A: Const p	22.61	+.20	+5.1
Fidelity Invest: USBI	11.29	--	+4.4
Fidelity Invest: Overse	34.15	+.60	+9.6
Fidelity Advisor T: GrOpgT	39.21	+.23	+5.9
Fidelity Advisor T: EqInT	28.36	+.34	+10.1
Scudder Funds S: GrowCS	21.83	+.22	+8.8
Putnam Funds A: GlbEqty p	8.19	+.09	+9.8
AIM Investments A: Weingr p	12.92	+.10	+7.0
AIM Investments A: ChartA p	12.70	+.10	+6.8
Merrill Lynch I: BalCapI	28.09	+.17	+7.2
Scudder Funds S: Intl FdS	43.10	+.65	+12.2
Fidelity Advisor T: OvrseaT	17.14	+.31	+9.0
Lord Abbett A: DevGtA p	15.62	+.19	+4.1
Scudder Funds S: Income S	13.03	--	+5.1
Merrill Lynch I: USGvMtg	10.33	--	+3.4
Scudder Funds S: Devel	19.17	+.11	+1.8
Putnam Funds A: GlGvA p	13.16	+.06	+8.6

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

Euro costs	$1.3667
Dollar costs	0.7317
British pound	$1.98
Japanese yen (Dec. 16)	102.00
South Korean won (Dec. 15)	1,029.00

Commercial rates

Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound	$1.935
Canada (Dollar)	1.228
Denmark (Krone)	5.26
Egypt (Pound)	6.2251
Euro	$1.3314/0.7511
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7719
Hungary (Forint)	185.01
Iceland (Krona)	61.63
Israel (Shekel)	4.3573
Japan (Yen)	104.73
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2947
Norway (Krone)	5.81
Philippines (Peso)	56.31
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.59
Singapore (Dollar)	1.6456
South Korea (Won)	1,061.70
Switzerland (Franc)	1.09
Thailand (Baht)	39.73
Turkey (Lira)	1,416,500.00

(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	$435.55
Silver	$6.70

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.00
Discount rate	3.00
Federal funds market rate	2.1875
3-month bill	2.25
30-year bond	4.82

Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America

Cents and Sensibility
Money tip of the day

Office party networking

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — Office parties and other social events during the holidays can be excellent opportunities for networking.

But networking during the holidays can be quite different from making contacts during the rest of the year, says career coach Robin Ryan, author of "What to Do With the Rest of Your Life."

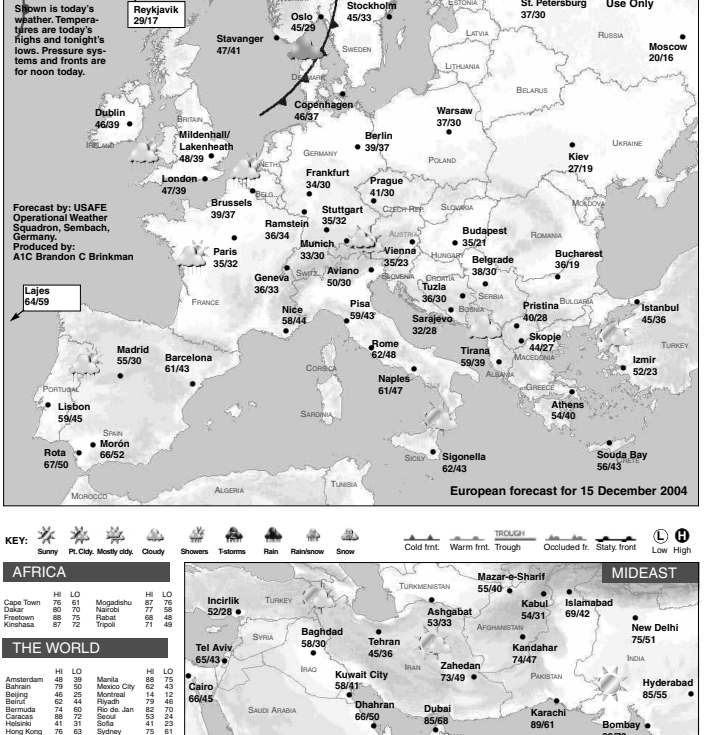
Networking at holiday events is more informal because people are primarily there to have fun. Don't expect to land yourself a new job by the end of the year, Ryan says. Keep your advances light and chatty. Ask, "Would it be OK if I called you after the first of the year?"

For the currently unemployed, don't let embarrassment about not having a job keep you from attending social events and networking. If people ask you what you do, simply tell them you'll be making a career move in the new year.

Limit your drinking. Have at most one or two drinks over the course of an evening. "Alcohol does not make you more social, and it can cost you a job," says Ryan. "People will think of you, 'Great for a party, but not great as an employee.' " Now contacts aside, keep in mind that at office parties your bosses also will be watching.

Dress appropriately. Remember that you're looking to advance your career, not derail it. Ladies, "don't pick the lowest-cut, sexiest thing you own," advises Ryan. You want to come across as professional, and sex-kitten apparel won't earn you brownie points with anyone. Gentlemen, "don't be a slob." Pick slightly dressier attire than you would normally wear to work.

Mingle. Don't spend the entire party tracking down people you already know or people you want to talk with. By excluding or snubbing people, you might miss out on fun — or some unexpected networking connections.



KEY: Sunny, Pt. Cldy., Mostly cldy., Cloudy, Showers, T-storms, Rain, Rain/snow, Snow, Cold frnt., Warm frnt., Trough (TROUGH), Occluded fr., Stnary. front, Low (L), High (H)

EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Mostly cloudy with rainshowers. Highs in the upper 30s, Thursday lows in the mid 30s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy with rainshowers. Highs in the mid to upper 40s, Thursday lows in the upper 30s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Cloudy with fog. Highs in the low to mid 30s, Thursday lows in the upper 20s to low 30s.

France: Mostly cloudy with fog and isolated rainshowers. Highs in the upper 30s to upper 50s, Thursday lows in the low 30s to mid 40s.

Northern Germany: Mostly cloudy with morning fog and rainshowers. Highs in the mid to upper 30s, Thursday lows in the low 30s.

Southern Germany: Partly to mostly cloudy with morning fog. Highs in the mid 30s, Thursday lows in the low 30s.

Hungary: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 30s, Thursday lows in the low 20s.

Northern Italy: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the 50s, Thursday lows in the lower 30s to lower 40s.

Southern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 60s, Thursday lows in the lower to upper 40s.

Kosovo: Cloudy with fog. Highs in the low 30s, Thursday lows in the upper 20s.

Norway: Cloudy with rainshowers. Highs in the mid 40s, Thursday lows in the upper 20s to lower 40s.

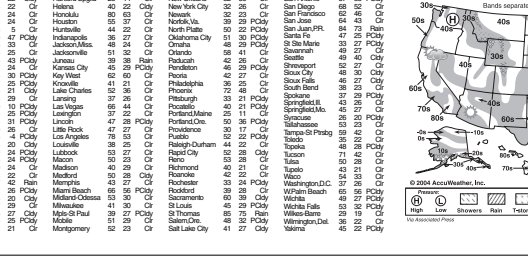
Portugal, Spain: Partly cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the upper 50s to mid 60s, Thursday lows in the lower 30s to lower 50s.

Turkey: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s to low 50s, Thursday lows in the low 20s to mid 30s.

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	76	61	Mogadishu	87	76
Dakar	80	70	Nairobi	77	58
Freetown	88	75	Rabat	68	48
Kinshasa	87	72	Tripoli	71	49



THE WORLD

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Amsterdam	48	39	Manila	88	75
Bahrain	79	61	Mexico City	62	43
Beijing	46	25	Montreal	14	12
Beirut	62	44	Riyadh	79	46
Bermuda	74	60	Rio de. Jan	82	70
Caracas	88	72	Seoul	53	24
Helsinki	41	31	Sofia	41	23
Hong Kong	75	61	Sydney	75	61
Lisbon	59	45	Tokyo	58	41

SUN & MOON

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	6:59am	7:00am
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:18am	8:19am
Sunset (Baghdad)	4:57pm	4:58pm
Sunset (Frankfurt)	4:24pm	4:24pm

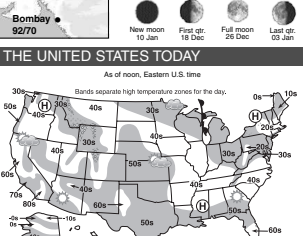
New moon 10 Jan · First qtr. 18 Dec · Full moon 26 Dec · Last qtr. 03 Jan

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

	Hi	Lo	Otlk
Abilene,Tex.	54	34	PCldy
Akron,Ohio	33	21	Cldy
Albany,N.Y.	24	12	Clr
Albuquerque	51	31	PCldy
Allentown,Pa.	34	17	Clr
Amarillo	54	28	PCldy
Anchorage	32	25	Cldy
Asheville	40	17	Clr
Atlanta	46	26	Clr
Atlantic City	38	20	Clr
Austin	56	31	PCldy
Baltimore	37	20	Clr
Baton Rouge	63	29	Clr
Billings	46	28	Cldy
Birmingham	46	22	Clr
Bismarck	43	22	Cldy
Boise	41	26	PCldy
Boston	28	21	Clr
Bridgeport	32	22	Clr
Brownsville	64	52	PCldy
Buffalo	33	24	PCldy
Burlington,Vt.	19	11	PCldy
Caribou,Maine	15	-1	Clr
Casper	42	19	Cldy
Charleston,S.C.	48	28	Clr
Charleston,W.Va.	34	21	Clr
Charlotte,N.C.	44	20	Clr
Chattanooga	44	22	Clr
Cheyenne	43	23	Cldy
Chicago	40	28	Clr
Cincinnati	36	24	Clr
Cleveland	35	24	Clr
Colorado Springs	47	22	Cldy
Columbia,S.C.	44	22	Clr
Columbus,Ga.	51	24	Clr
Columbus,Ohio	35	24	Clr
Concord,N.H.	23	5	Clr
Corpus Christi	60	47	PCldy
Dallas-Ft Worth	53	33	Clr
Dayton	35	25	Clr
Daytona Beach	55	43	PCldy
Denver	47	24	Clr
Des Moines	45	30	PCldy
Detroit	37	25	PCldy
Duluth	35	21	Cldy
El Paso	58	29	Clr
Elkins	30	10	PCldy
Erie	35	25	PCldy
Eugene	46	31	PCldy
Evansville	40	26	Clr
Fairbanks	6	-4	PCldy
Fargo	36	20	Cldy
Flagstaff	49	24	PCldy
Flint	36	24	PCldy
Fort Smith	50	24	Clr
Fort Wayne	36	22	Clr
Fresno	57	42	Rain
Goodland	46	25	PCldy
Grand Junction	43	20	Cldy
Grand Rapids	37	29	Cldy
Great Falls	43	27	Cldy
Green Bay	35	25	PCldy
Greensboro,N.C.	42	21	Clr
Harrisburg	35	20	Clr
Hartford Spgfld	25	14	Clr
Helena	40	22	Cldy
Honolulu	80	63	Clr
Houston	55	37	Clr
Huntsville	44	22	Clr
Indianapolis	36	27	Clr
Jackson,Miss.	48	24	Clr
Jacksonville	51	32	Clr
Juneau	39	38	Rain
Kansas City	45	29	PCldy
Key West	62	60	Clr
Knoxville	41	21	Clr
Lake Charles	52	36	Clr
Lansing	37	26	Clr
Las Vegas	66	44	Clr
Lexington	37	22	Clr
Lincoln	47	28	PCldy
Little Rock	47	27	Clr
Los Angeles	78	53	Clr
Louisville	38	25	Clr
Lubbock	53	27	Clr
Macon	50	23	Clr
Madison	40	29	Clr
Medford	52	28	Cldy
Memphis	43	27	Clr
Miami Beach	66	55	PCldy
Midland-Odessa	53	30	Clr
Milwaukee	41	30	Clr
Mpls-St Paul	39	27	PCldy
Mobile	51	29	Clr
Montgomery	52	23	Clr
Nashville	43	22	Clr
New Orleans	52	36	Clr
New York City	32	26	Clr
Newark	32	23	Clr
Norfolk,Va.	39	29	PCldy
North Platte	50	22	PCldy
Oklahoma City	51	30	PCldy
Omaha	48	29	PCldy
Orlando	58	41	Clr
Paducah	42	26	Clr
Pendleton	46	29	PCldy
Peoria	42	27	Clr
Philadelphia	36	25	Clr
Phoenix	72	48	Clr
Pittsburgh	33	21	PCldy
Portland,Me	20	12	PCldy
Portland,Maine	25	11	Clr
Portland,Ore.	50	36	PCldy
Providence	30	17	Clr
Pueblo	52	22	PCldy
Raleigh-Durham	44	22	Clr
Rapid City	52	28	Cldy
Reno	53	28	Clr
Richmond	40	21	Clr
Roanoke	42	22	Clr
Rochester	33	24	PCldy
Rockford	40	29	PCldy
Sacramento	60	39	Cldy
St Louis	46	29	PCldy
St Thomas	85	75	Rain
Salem,Ore.	48	32	PCldy
Salt Lake City	41	27	Cldy
San Angelo	54	31	PCldy
San Antonio	57	38	PCldy
San Diego	68	52	Clr
San Francisco	62	46	Clr
San Jose	64	43	Clr
San Juan,PR.	84	73	Rain
Santa Fe	47	25	PCldy
St Ste Marie	33	27	PCldy
Savannah	49	27	Clr
Seattle	49	40	Cldy
Shreveport	52	27	Clr
Sioux City	48	30	Cldy
Sioux Falls	46	27	Cldy
South Bend	38	25	Clr
Spokane	37	29	PCldy
Springfield,Ill.	43	26	Clr
Springfield,Mo.	45	27	Clr
Syracuse	26	20	PCldy
Tallahassee	53	23	Clr
Tampa-St Pnsbg	59	42	Clr
Toledo	35	22	Clr
Topeka	48	28	PCldy
Tucson	71	42	Clr
Tulsa	50	28	Clr
Tupelo	43	21	Clr
Waco	54	33	Clr
Washington,D.C.	37	26	Clr
W.Palm Beach	65	50	PCldy
Wichita	49	27	PCldy
Wichita Falls	53	32	PCldy
Wilkes-Barre	29	19	Clr
Wilmington,Del.	36	22	Clr
Yakima	45	22	PCldy

THE UNITED STATES TODAY

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time



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

Holiday Mathis

Venus is packing up her Louis Vuitton bags as she prepares for her dramatic exit from Scorpio's bedroom. It's the end of the affair and the start of an adventure. Our love lives reflect this departure in a subtle shift. Instead of going deep into relationships, we'd rather go wide. Romance now means travel, variety and newness.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (December 15). Determined action is easier than ever to take this year as new inspiration amps up your drive to succeed. Romance takes over your life in the new year, and you'll be making decisions based on the best thing for you and loved ones. Lucky love signs are Pisces and Taurus. A career change is in store in the spring, but make your move carefully. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 32, 4, 18 and 27.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The favor (sale, referral or perk) goes to the one who asks for it. You're probably pushing your luck, but how else are you going to know exactly how far your luck extends? If you don't, someone else will.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). A single event has a happy outcome for several people, including you. Even if you have to rearrange your schedule, spend time with your main squeeze. Stolen moments bind you blissfully together.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The attention you get when you apply your talent to otherwise menial tasks is enough to puff up your ego slightly! It's challenging to avoid gossip and yet still be informed as to what your people are up to.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Sure, your involvement in a noble venture is its own reward. Though you're not looking for praise, it would be nice if the people you relate to were as responsible as you are. Be a giver looking for other givers, not takers.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You have an unencumbered channel of expression — the ideas are flowing. It's part of the reason someone thinks you're foxy! Before making a move, this shy person will wait for a sign from you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll dream of making your living at something new! Talk about your aims with a Libra or Cancer. The more fiscal responsibility you accept, the more money you'll make! Turn in that rebate before it's too late.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your understanding of complexities is impressive. If someone doesn't "get" you, it's nothing to take personally. Being interested in what others might consider mundane is a sign of intelligence!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Streamline your life by refusing to add extra work and unnecessary possessions. Simplifying things helps you unleash your creative powers, and it's full steam ahead! Your satisfaction comes from doing, not dreaming.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's a super-seductive glow about you. Many people want to partner with you, and you'll have to make a choice. Keep your social options open, as one could drop off at the last minute.

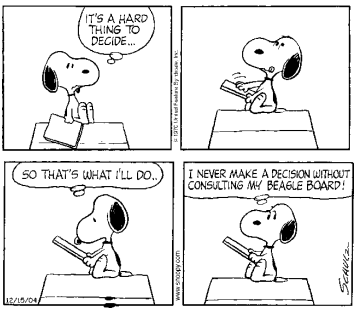
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Scholarly pursuits bring fabulous opportunities. Take a professional gamble, or go with a whim. Spend time with pals who have more money, clout or ambition — their gains rub off on you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You are at a romantic crossroads. Choose the path carefully and with your heart. Make conscious choices so you don't have to repeat mistakes made unconsciously. Loved ones live up to your definition of their roles.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're capable, and everyone can see this, so you receive many requests. Be specific about what you are willing or not willing to give. Nothing relieves stress more than spending time with someone who adores you!

Creators Syndicate

Peanuts

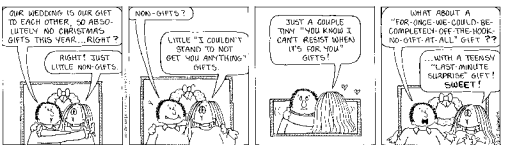


Calvin and Hobbes

Jump Start

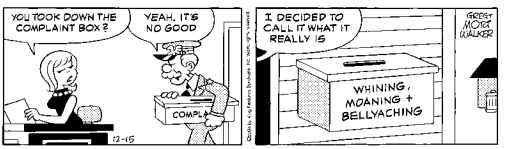
Zits

Cathy



Hi and Lois

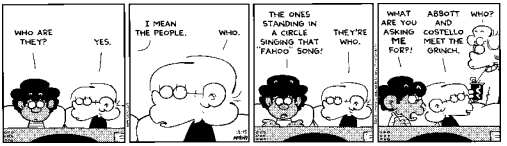
Beetle Bailey



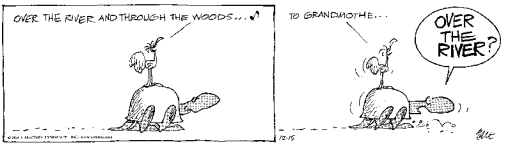
Red and Rover

Better or Worse

Foxtrot



B.C.



Baby Blues

Spider Man

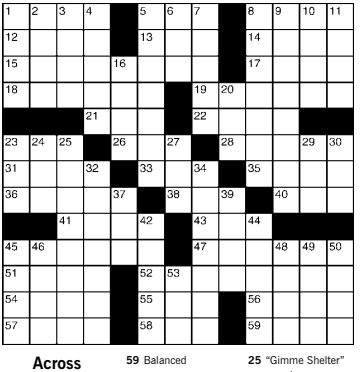
Blondie

Dilbert

Hagar

Garfield

Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

1 One with a handle on the highway system?
5 Seat of the Catholic Church
8 Basilica section
12 Roughly
13 Marseilles monarch
14 Harbor structure
15 Texas city
17 Bog material
18 Presidential middle name
19 Hold protectively
21 Pickpocket
22 Steerer's place
23 Monokini's lack
26 Fresh
28 Dentist's advice
31 Soother
33 Roulette bet
35 Wield the shears
36 Asian pepper plant
38 Style of jazz
40 Take a whack at
41 "Sad to say, ..."
43 Neither's mate
45 Fleet
47 Eucalyptus eaters
51 Province of Spain
52 Fulton's boat
54 Chinese dynasty
55 Indispensable
56 Tactic
57 Initial chip
58 Brillo rival
59 Balanced

Down

1 "The Georgia Peach"
2 La — tar pits
3 Actor Morales
4 "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," e.g.
5 Thrive
6 A billion years
7 Coven member
8 Horrifies
9 Region of Italy
10 Close up tight
11 Art Deco VIP
16 Chow —
20 Ump
23 Consumer-aid org.
24 "Norma —"
25 "Gimme Shelter" speedway
27 Symbol of intrigue
29 General address?
30 Austin Powers, e.g.
32 Hodgepodge
34 Obstinate sorts
37 Young fellow
39 Indigent
42 What St. Ives wives had
44 Freeway accesses
45 — mater
46 Hold your horses?
48 Showgirl "At the Copa"
49 Unsigned (Abbr.)
50 Eye woe
53 MGM mascot

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

12-15 **CRYPTOQUIP**

T FQLCR UW MKZQC TX MC'R DTLC QKUC UKZC MFW. "IK GMFIL WKO, T'U FDZCFRW QGOXXCR."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A LUMBERJACK HAS FINISHED WORK, DO YOU RECKON HE MIGHT ENJOY A BIT OF LAGER?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals I

Tour of duty is enough drama

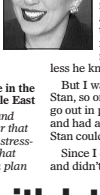
Dear Abby: I am a female member of the military, stationed for the past nine months in Iraq. I recently received a letter from a friend who is having problems in her marriage. She has asked to move in with me when I return to the states in about three months. She says it's only until she gets back on her feet.

There's no way I can let that happen. She has too much drama in her life, and I have grown accustomed to living by myself. When I get home, all I want is peace and quiet. How can I tell her that I don't want a roommate without hurting her feelings?

— Peace in the Middle East

Dear Peace: Be direct, and don't go into detail. Tell her that your tour of duty has been stressful — it's the truth — and that when you return home you plan to live alone. Do not talk about the drama in her life. Talk about the drama that's been going on in your life. You have a right to peace of mind, and your friend should not expect you to straighten her life out for her. After a tour in Iraq, you've done enough.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: I was seeing someone in the apartment complex where I live. It was the maintenance man, "Stan." At first, we kept it quiet because of problems I have with my ex, "Mac." Mac and I have children together and he always finds ways to destroy my new dates — so the less he knows, the better.

But I was falling in love with Stan, so one night we decided to go out in public. Mac found out and had a friend of his tell me Stan could lose his job.

Since I can't afford to move and didn't want Stan to lose his job, I started avoiding him. It's been six weeks, and I feel I have lost the best thing that ever happened to me. Please tell me what to do.

— Grieving in Michigan

Dear Grieving: The first thing to do is pick up the phone and contact the office of the building. Without being specific, inquire if there is any formal policy regarding residents fraternizing with staff.

If there is a rule that forbids it, rather than avoiding Stan, I advise you to have a serious chat with him. If you both want to pursue a relationship and moving isn't an option, perhaps he should find a job with another building.

Good maintenance men are hard to find.

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

Trouble with late-in-life relationship

Dear Annie: I am a single, successful professional woman in my 40s.

Annie's Mailbox

I've never had a boyfriend because I'm always focusing on my work.

Last year, I met "Scott" while returning from a business trip. He sat next to me on the plane.

Scott was traveling with his son, a college student. I was impressed by his warm heart toward his son and invited them to join me for lunch at a restaurant. Ever since, Scott and I have exchanged letters and little presents.

Scott has all the qualities that I expect from a gentleman, but there is a problem. His children appear to be "forever" students and have no plans to graduate. I'm not even sure they have goals. Scott's love for his children is so deep that he doesn't mind their behavior.

I am not comfortable with that.

I find it ironic that the same warm relationship that impressed me so much at the beginning is now an obstacle. Scott is in his late 50s and will soon retire. I am not young either, but as a never-married woman, my dream is to have a prince, not an old widower. I don't want to lose him, but I am…

— Confused in NYC

Dear Confused: If you think of Scott as an "old widower," please do him a favor and cut him loose. Scott may be a great guy, but he comes with children. As their sole parent, he undoubtedly feels exceptionally protective and responsible for them. If you cannot understand and accept this aspect of his character, you will come to resent him. Searching for a "prince" is inevitably disappointing.

You might consider some additional dating experiences to make your dreams more realistic.

Dear Annie: I read with interest the dilemma of "Grosse Pointe," who asked if there was a support group for the wives of retired husbands.

During the past several years, we have developed a loosely organized group of friends and relatives who refer to themselves as WORMs or Wives of Retired Men. We find potential members every time we go to the supermarket and see a woman being "organized" by her retired husband. We e-mail one another, and each of us tells our best retired story for the month. The one who wins gets to be president the next month.

The group gives us a chance to vent, without harming our partners or relationships, and we get a good laugh and know we are not alone.

"Grosse Point" should find some friends in the same boat and have lunch once a month.

— Another Annie in Idaho

Dear Idaho: A good suggestion.

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

Creators Syndicate

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

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

ETHUC

UPMEL

HUDOLS

ZEEWEH

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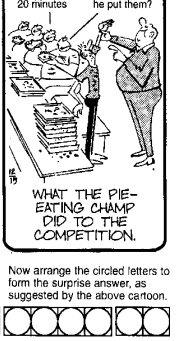
www.jumble.com



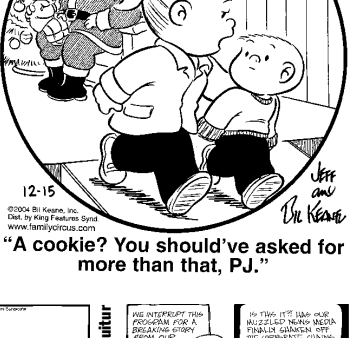
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A:

(Answers tomorrow)

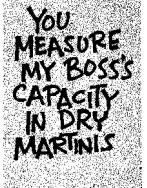
Yesterday's Jumbles: GUILD MUSIC INTACT MARTIN
Answer: The hot dog vendor fired his helper because he didn't — CUT THE MUSTARD

Family Circus



"A cookie? You should've asked for more than that, PJ."

GRAFFITI

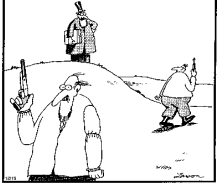


Dennis the Menace

"My Mom says you can tell a lot about a person by the way they untangle Christmas lights."

The Far Side

©Gary Larson



"… four … five … six … Oh, heck—just turn and shoot."

Non Sequitur

SCOREBOARD

AFN TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—College basketball: Illinois-Chicago at Duke (dd).

AFN-Sports, noon—NBA: Denver at Philadelphia (dd).

AFN-Sports, 3:30 p.m.—NFL: NFL's greatest games, 1987 AFC championship game, Cleveland at Denver.

AFN-Sports, 6 p.m.—NBA: L.A. Lakers at Seattle (dd).

Thursday

AFN-Sports and Radio, 2 a.m.—NBA: Detroit at New York.

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—College basketball: Dayton at Northwestern (dd).

AFN-Sports, noon—NBA: Orlando at San Antonio (dd).

AFN-Sports, 6:30 p.m.—NBA: Utah at Phoenix (dd).

All Times Central European Time; dd indicates delayed broadcast. All listings are subject to change. Visit **www.myafn.net** for more information.

College basketball

Men's AP Top 25

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' men's college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 12, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and last week's ranking:

	Record	Pts	Prvs
1. Illinois (35)	9-0	1,738	1
2. Kansas (22)	7-0	1,664	2
3. Georgia Tech (12)	6-0	1,604	3
4. Oklahoma St. (3)	7-0	1,503	4
5. North Carolina	7-1	1,426	8
6. Wake Forest	6-1	1,397	6
7. Duke	6-0	1,360	9
8. Syracuse	6-1	1,339	14
9. Kentucky	6-1	1,152	10
10. Pittsburgh	7-0	1,139	11
11. Connecticut	4-1	1,016	7
12. N.C. State	7-0	1,007	12
13. Louisville	5-1	835	13
14. Texas	6-1	764	14
15. Arizona	6-2	688	15
16. Iowa	8-1	677	18
17. Alabama	8-1	576	18
18. Washington	7-1	543	16
19. George Washington	6-1	494	21
20. Saint Joseph's	7-2	429	22
21. Michigan St.	5-2	370	20
22. Gonzaga	7-1	332	25
23. Maryland	5-2	313	23
24. Virginia	6-1	212	19
25. Cincinnati	6-0	211	—

Others receiving votes: Marquette 175, Wisconsin 69, Boston College 64, Oklahoma 44, Notre Dame 30, Creighton 21, Florida 15, New Mexico 9, Holy Cross 8, Mississippi 7, Pacific 4, Miami 3, UAB 3, Wichita St. 3, Old Dominion 2, West Virginia 2, American U. 1, Iowa St. 1, Wis.-Milwaukee 1.

AP Men's Top 25 fared

Monday

1. Illinois (9-0) did not play. Next: vs. Valparaiso, Sunday.
2. Kansas (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. South Carolina, Saturday.
3. Georgia Tech (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. Jarvis Christian, Wednesday.
4. Oklahoma State (7-0) did not play. Next: at UNLV, Saturday.
5. North Carolina (7-1) did not play. Next: at Virginia Tech, Sunday.
6. Wake Forest (7-1) beat Temple 67-64. Next: vs. Elon, Wednesday.
7. Duke (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. Illinois-Chicago, Tuesday.
8. Syracuse (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Drexel, Saturday.
9. Kentucky (6-1) did not play. Next: at No. 13 Louisville, Saturday.
10. Pittsburgh (7-0) did not play. Next: vs. Coppin State, Saturday.
11. Connecticut (4-1) did not play. Next: vs. Rice, Sunday.
12. North Carolina State (7-0) did not play. Next: vs. Louisiana-Lafayette, Wednesday.
13. Louisville (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. North Carolina A&T, Tuesday.
14. Texas (6-1) did not play. Next: vs. Texas-Arlington, Wednesday.
15. Arizona (6-2) did not play. Next: at Marquette, Saturday.
16. Iowa (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Western Carolina, Saturday.
17. Alabama (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Tennessee State, Saturday.
18. Washington (7-1) beat Pepperdine 90-61. No. 12 North Carolina State, Sunday.
19. George Washington (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. Towson, Saturday.
20. Michigan State (5-2) beat New Orleans 74-59. Next: at Xavier, Saturday.
21. Michigan State (5-2) did not play. Next: vs. Delaware State, Saturday.
22. Gonzaga (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. No. 3 Georgia Tech, Saturday.
23. Maryland (5-2) did not play. Next: vs. Florida A&M, Sunday.
24. Virginia (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. Loyola Maryland, Thursday, Dec. 23.
25. Cincinnati (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. Northwestern State, Saturday.

Monday's men's scores

EAST
College of N.J. 87, N.Y. Tech 80
FDU-Florham 103, Hunter 61
Geneva 72, Grove City 53
Lafayette 95, St. Northridge 89, OT
Medgar Evers 73, Brooklyn 58
Moravian 93, Drew 33
Wake Forest 67, Temple 64
Washington & Jefferson 77, Union, N.Y. 68
Westminster, Pa. 76, La Roche 88
Yeshiva 74, Lehman 64
York, Pa. 81, Juniata 55

SOUTH
Catawba 97, North Greenville 71
Florida A&M 85, Southern U. 81
Goshen 83, Palm Beach Atlantic 74, OT
LSU 82, McNeese St. 79
Mississippi 87, Nicholls St. 55
Mississippi St. 74, New Orleans 59
North Georgia 89, Emmanuel 74
S. Carolina St. 77, Savannah St. 55
VMI 70, Bluefield 70
Valdosta St. 102, Carver 40

MIDWEST
Carleton 82, Wis.-La Crosse 68
Carthage 73, Concordia, Wis. 45
Hannibal-LaGrange 61, Culver-Stockton 72
Olivet Nazarene 129, East-West 48
Wis.-Stout 70, Bethany Lutheran 46

SOUTHWEST
Houston Baptist 99, Texas A&M-Int'l 89
Lamar 66, Air Force 59, OT
Tarleton St. 80, W. Texas A&M 63
Texas A&M Commerce 74, Oklahoma 50

FAR WEST
Oregon St. 69, Bethune-Cookman 56
San Diego 75, E. Washington 56
Stanford 56, Denver 52

AP Women's Top 25

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' women's college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 12, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and last week's ranking:

	Record	Pts	Prvs
1. LSU (45)	9-0	1,125	1
2. Stanford	7-0	1,065	2
3. Duke	8-1	955	3
4. Texas	8-1	908	4
5. North Carolina	8-1	908	5
6. Baylor	7-1	875	6
7. Notre Dame	9-1	875	7
8. Connecticut	4-1	826	8
9. Tennessee	5-2	791	9
10. Ohio St.	8-1	753	10
11. Michigan St.	8-1	677	12
12. Texas Tech	5-1	611	13
13. Minnesota	8-1	506	16
14. Florida State	7-1	450	17
15. Georgia	7-3	445	11
16. UCLA	6-1	416	18
17. Vanderbilt	7-1	385	14
18. Maryland	7-1	339	19
19. Houston	8-0	303	22
20. Purdue	6-2	292	21
21. DePaul	6-2	260	15
22. Rutgers	7-1	220	20
23. Arizona St.	6-2	109	—
24. Iowa	6-0	109	—
25. Kansas St.	7-1	42	25

Others receiving votes: Arizona 46, Utah 36, TCU 30, Georgia Tech 29, Oregon 20, Richmond 16, Tulsa 16, N.C. State 12, Villanova 10, Wis.-Green Bay 8, Charlotte 7, Iowa St. 5, West Virginia 4, Chattanooga 3, Florida 1, Illinois 1.

AP Women's Top 25 fared

Monday

1. LSU (8-0) did not play. Next: at No. 16 Minnesota, Tuesday.
2. Stanford (7-0) did not play. Next: at Missouri State, Saturday.
3. Duke (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Jacksonville State, Wednesday.
4. Texas (4-2) did not play. Next: at North Texas, Thursday.
5. North Carolina (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Georgia State at Myrtle Beach, S.C., Sunday.
6. Baylor (7-1) did not play. Next: at Washington, Wednesday.
7. Notre Dame (9-1) did not play. Next: at Marquette, Sunday.
8. Connecticut (4-1) did not play. Next: at No. 23 Arizona State, Tuesday, Dec. 21.
9. Tennessee (5-2) did not play. Next: at Louisiana Tech, Wednesday.
10. Ohio State (9-1) beat Pennsylvania 70-57. Next: at Oregon, Sunday.
11. Michigan State (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Sunday.
12. Texas Tech (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. Arkansas State at Las Vegas, Saturday.
13. Minnesota (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. No. 1 LSU, Tuesday.
14. Boston College (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. Saint Joseph's, Wednesday, Dec. 22.
15. Georgia (7-3) did not play. Next: at Iona, Sunday.
16. UCLA (6-1) did not play. Next: at Illinois, Sunday.
17. Vanderbilt (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. BYU at Malibu, Calif., Monday.
18. Maryland (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. Coppin State, Monday.
19. Houston (8-0) did not play. Next: at Hawaii, Thursday.
20. Purdue (6-2) did not play. Next: vs. No. 3 Duke at Indianapolis, Saturday.
21. DePaul (6-2) did not play. Next: at Northern Illinois, Wednesday.
22. Rutgers (5-2) lost to Temple 71-60. Next: vs. Clemson, Saturday.
23. Arizona State (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. New Mexico, Saturday.
24. Iowa (8-0) did not play. Next: at Drake, Saturday.
25. Kansas State (5-2) did not play. Next: vs. Alabama at Springfield, Mo., Saturday.

Monday's women's scores

EAST
Hartford 65, Fairfield 55
Iona 64, Sacred Heart 54
Lehman 67, Centenary, N.J. 53
Moravian 79, Drew 68
N.Y. Tech 52, S. New Hampshire 44
Ohio St. 70, Penn St 57
Temple 71, Rutgers 60

SOUTH
Armstrong Atlantic 86, Fayetteville St. 78
Charleston Southern 66, Benedict 58
Delta St. 86, Central Baptist 29
Florida A&M 52, Savannah St. 48
Kennesaw 86, West Georgia 79

MIDWEST
Louisiana Tech 62, Alcorn St. 61
Louisiana-Lafayette 85, Prairie View 24
Miami 69, UCF 50
North Georgia 60, Emmanuel 47
Xavier, NO 75, Nicholls St. 60

SOUTHWEST
Augustana, Ill. 70, Cornell, Iowa 42
Chadron St. 100, Colo.-Colo. Springs 71
Dubuque 99, Harris-Stowe 48
Edgewood 50, Loras 55
Lawrence 74, Milwaukee Engineering 36
Michigan Tech 76, Finlandia 43
Nebraska-Omaha 76, Colorado-Pueblo 50
North Dakota 96, Minn.-Crookston 65
Rockford 61, Greenville 46
Upper Iowa 76, Wis.-LaCrosse 73

SOUTHWEST
Houston Baptist 104, Texas A&M-International 62
Oral Roberts 103, St. Gregory's 40
Tarleton St. 70, W. Texas A&M 60

FAR WEST
Air Force 67, N. Colorado 49
E. Washington 65, UC Irvine 50

College football

Bowl glance

Tuesday, Dec. 14
New Orleans Bowl
Payout: $750,000
North Texas (7-4) vs. Southern Mississippi (6-5)

Tuesday, Dec. 21
Champs Sports Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
Payout: $850,000
Georgia Tech (6-5) vs. Syracuse (6-5)

Wednesday, Dec. 22
GMAC Bowl
Mobile, Ala.
Payout: $750,000
Memphis (8-3) vs. Bowling Green (8-3)

Thursday, Dec. 23
Fort Worth (Texas) Bowl
Payout: $750,000
Cincinnati (6-5) vs. Marshall (6-5)

Las Vegas Bowl
Payout: $575,000
Wyoming (6-5) vs. UCLA (6-5)

Friday, Dec. 24
Hawaii Bowl
At Honolulu
Payout: $750,000
UAB (7-4) vs. Hawaii (7-5)

Monday, Dec. 27
MPC Computers Bowl
At Boise, Idaho
Payout: $750,000
Fresno State (8-3) vs. Virginia (8-3)

Motor City Bowl
At Detroit
Payout: $750,000
Toledo (9-3) vs. Connecticut (7-4)

Tuesday, Dec. 28
Independence Bowl
At Shreveport, La.
Payout: $1.1 million
Iowa State (6-5) vs. Miami (Ohio) (8-4)

Insight Bowl
At Phoenix
Payout: $750,000
Oregon State (6-5) vs. Notre Dame (6-5)

Wednesday, Dec. 29
Houston Bowl
Payout: $1.1 million
Texas-El Paso (8-3) vs. Colorado (7-5)

Alamo Bowl
At San Antonio
Payout: $1.4 million
Ohio State (7-4) vs. Oklahoma State (7-4)

Thursday, Dec. 30
Continental Tire Bowl
At Charlotte, N.C.
Payout: $750,000
Boston College (8-3) vs. North Carolina (6-5)

Emerald Bowl
At San Francisco
Payout: $750,000
New Mexico (7-4) vs. Navy (9-2)

Holiday Bowl
At San Diego
Payout: $2 million
California (10-1) vs. Texas Tech (7-4)

Silicon Valley Classic
At San Jose, Calif.
Payout: $750,000
Troy (7-4) vs. Northern Illinois (8-3)

Friday, Dec. 31
Music City Bowl
At Nashville, Tenn.
Payout: $780,000
Alabama (6-5) vs. Minnesota (6-5)

Sun Bowl
At El Paso, Texas
Payout: $1.5 million
Purdue (7-4) vs. Arizona State (8-3)

Liberty Bowl
At Memphis, Tenn.
Payout: $1.35 million
Boise State (11-0) vs. Louisville (10-1)

Peach Bowl
At Atlanta
Payout: $2.2 million
Miami (8-3) vs. Florida (8-3)

Saturday, Jan. 1
Cotton Bowl
At Dallas
Payout: $3 million
Tennessee (9-3) vs. Texas A&M (7-4)

Outback Bowl
At Tampa, Fla.
Payout: $2.75 million
Wisconsin (9-2) vs. Georgia (9-2)

Gator Bowl
At Jacksonville, Fla.
Payout: $1.6 million
Florida State (8-3) vs. West Virginia (8-3)

Capital One Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
Payout: $5.187 million
Iowa (9-2) vs. LSU (9-2)

Rose Bowl
At Pasadena, Calif.
Payout: $14.5 million
Michigan (9-2) vs. Texas (10-1)

Fiesta Bowl
At Tempe, Ariz.
Payout: $14.4 million
Utah (11-0) vs. Pittsburgh (8-3)

Monday, Jan. 3
Sugar Bowl
At New Orleans
Payout: $11-14 million
Auburn (12-0) vs. Virginia Tech (10-2)

Tuesday, Jan. 4
Orange Bowl
At Miami
Payout: $11-14 million
Southern Cal (12-0) vs. Oklahoma (12-0)

Saturday, Jan. 15
Gridiron Classic
At The Villages, Fla.
North vs. South

East-West Shrine Classic
At San Francisco
East vs. West

Saturday, Jan. 22
Senior Bowl
At Maui, Hawaii
Aina vs. Kai

Saturday, Jan. 29
Senior Bowl
At Mobile, Ala.
North vs. South

NCAA Div. I-AA playoffs

Semifinals
Friday, Dec. 10
James Madison 48, William & Mary 34

Saturday, Dec. 11
Montana 34, Sam Houston State 13

Championship
Friday, Dec. 17
At Finley Stadium/Davenport Field
Chattanooga, Tenn.
James Madison (12-2) vs. Montana (12-2)

NCAA Div. III playoffs

Semifinals
Saturday, Dec. 11
Mary Hardin-Baylor 38, Mount Union, Ohio 30
Linfield, Ore.-Pacific (Ore.) 56, N.J. 0

Championship
Saturday, Dec. 18
Stagg Bowl
At Salem Stadium
Salem, Va.
Mary Hardin-Baylor (13-1) vs Linfield, Ore. (12-0)

NAIA playoffs

Championship
Saturday, Dec. 18
At Jim Carroll Stadium
Hardin County, Tenn.
St. Francis, Ind. (13-0) vs. Carroll, Mont. (11-2)

AP All-America Team

FIRST TEAM
Offense

Quarterback — Matt Leinart, Southern California, junior.

Running backs — Adrian Peterson, Oklahoma, freshman; J.J. Arrington, California, senior.

Wide receivers — Braylon Edwards, Michigan, senior; Taylor Stubblefield, Purdue, senior.

Tight end — Heath Miller, Virginia, junior.

Center — David Baas, Michigan, senior.

Guards-Tackles — Jammal Brown, Oklahoma, senior; Alex Barron, Florida State, senior; Elton Brown, Virginia, junior; Michael Munoz, Tennessee, senior.

Kicker — Mike Nugent, Ohio State, senior.

All-purpose — Reggie Bush, Southern California, sophomore.

Defense

Linemen — Erasmus James, Wisconsin, senior; David Pollack, Georgia, senior; Shaun Cody, Southern California, senior; Marcus Spears, LSU, senior.

Linebacker — Derrick Johnson, Texas, senior; Matt Grootegoed, Southern California, senior; A.J. Hawk, Ohio State, junior.

Defensive backs — Carlos Rogers, Auburn, senior; Antrel Rolle, Miami, senior; Marlin Jackson, Michigan, senior; Ernest Shazor, Michigan, senior.

Punter — Brandon Fields, Michigan State, sophomore.

SECOND TEAM
Offense

Quarterback — Alex Smith, Utah, junior.

Running backs — Cedric Benson, Texas, senior; Carnell Williams, Auburn, senior.

Wide receivers — Dante Ridgeway, Ball State, junior; Mark Clayton, Oklahoma, senior.

Tight end — Alex Smith, Stanford, senior.

Center — Marvin Philip, California, junior.

Guards-Tackles — Chris Kemoeatu, Utah, senior; Marcus McNeil, Auburn; junior; Dan Buenning, Wisconsin, senior; Jonathan Scott, Texas; junior.

K — Tyler Jones, Boise State; senior.

All-purpose — Chad Owens, Hawaii, senior.

Defense

Linemen — Jonathan Goddard, Marshall, senior; Dan Cody, Oklahoma, senior; Matt Roth, Iowa, senior; Ryan Riddle, California, senior.

Linebackers — Ahmad Brooks, Virginia, sophomore; Michael Boley, Southern Mississippi, senior; Kevin Burrett, Tennessee, junior.

Defensive backs — Corey Webster, LSU, senior; Thomas Davis, Georgia, junior; Junior Rosegreen, Auburn, senior; Morgan Scalley, Utah, senior.

Punter — Matt Dodge, Utah, senior.

THIRD TEAM
Offense

Quarterback — Jason White, Oklahoma, senior.

Running backs — Jamario Thomas, North Texas, freshman; DeAngelo Williams, Memphis, junior.

Wide receivers — Mike Hass, Oregon State, junior; Bobby White, UAB, senior.

Tight ends — Trey Haverty, Texas Tech, senior.

Center — Ben Wilkerson, LSU, senior.

Guards-Tackles — Eric Pettitt, Pittsburgh, senior; Sam Mayes, Oklahoma State, senior; Wesley Britt, Alabama, senior; Tyson Lee, Few, Louisville, junior.

Kicker — Andrew Weckbach, Eastern Michigan, sophomore.

All-purpose — Ted Ginn Jr., Ohio State, freshman.

Defense

Linemen — Mathias Kiwanuka, Boston College, junior; Mike Patterson, Southern California, senior; Travis Johnson, Florida State, senior; Bernard Babineaux, Iowa, senior.

Linebackers — Barrett Ruud, Nebraska, senior; Lofa Tatupu, Southern California, junior; Leroy Hill, Clemson, senior.

Defensive backs — Antoine Meuswem, Oregon State, senior; Jamaal Brown, Virginia, senior; Charles Gordon, Kansas, sophomore; Jason Allen, Tennessee, junior.

Punters — Daniel Sepulveda, Baylor, sophomore

Deals

Monday's transactions

AUTO RACING
CHICAGOLAND SPEEDWAY—Named Meier Ravich director of public relations.

EVERNHAM MOTORSPORTS—Named Richard Labbe crew chief for Jeremy Mayfield's team and Chris Andrews crew chief for Bill Elliott's team.

BASEBALL
American League
ANAHEIM ANGELS—Agreed to terms with RHP Esteban Yan on a two-year contract.

BALTIMORE ORIOLES—Named Kennie Steenstra pitching coach for Delmarva of the South Atlantic League.

CHICAGO WHITE SOX—Waived RHP Dan Wright for the purpose of granting his unconditional release. Traded OF Carlos Lee to Milwaukee for OF Scott Podsednik, 1B Juan Vizcaino and a player to be named.

DETROIT TIGERS—Agreed to terms with INF Jose Hernandez on a one-year contract.

TAMPA BAY DEVIL RAYS—Acquired RHP Angel Garcia from Pittsburgh for cash.

National League
ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS—Agreed to terms with C Kelly Stinnett on a minor league contract. Designated LHP Shane Reynolds for assignment. Released RHP Ben Grieve.

FLORIDA MARLINS—Agreed to terms with RHP Todd Jones on a one-year contract.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS—Traded RHP Marcos Carvajal to Colorado for two minor league players to be named or cash. Acquired RHP Alex Zumwalt from Atlanta to complete earlier trade.

MONTREAL EXPOS—Agreed to terms with OF Will Cordero on a one-year contract and OF Jeffrey Hammonds on a minor league contract. Designated RHP Ron Calloway for assignment. Waived LHP Chad Bentz for the purpose of granting his unconditional release.

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS—Agreed to terms with C Mike Matheny on a three-year contract.

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
NBA—Fined Portland coach Maurice Cheeks $7,500 for failing to leave the court in a timely manner in a Dec. 9 game at Utah.

DALLAS MAVERICKS—Placed G-F Jake Jackson on the injured list. Activated G Dajuan Wagner from the injured list.

INDIANA PACERS—Signed F Michael Curry. Waived F Tremaine Fowlkes.

FOOTBALL
National Football League
CHICAGO BEARS—Signed G Jason Shivers off St. Louis' practice squad.

NEW YORK JETS—Signed G Jason Neyrs to the practice squad. Released C Drew Caylor from the practice squad.

COLLEGE

ARMY—Named Kevin Anderson athletic director.

BYU—Named Bronco Mendenhall football coach.

CONNECTICUT—Announced F Marcus White has left the basketball program and will leave school at the end of the semester.

DRAKE—Announced the resignation of Randy Mackinnon women's volleyball coach.

EAST CAROLINA—Named Junior Smith running backs coach.

FLORIDA—Named Charlie Strong and Greg Mattison defensive assistant coaches, Steve Addazio tight ends coach, Mike Locksley running backs coach and recruiting coordinator, Billy Gonzales wide receivers coach, John Hevesy offensive line coach, Steve Muller quarterbacks coach and Chuck Heater assistant coach.

INDIANA STATE—Named Lou West football coach.

MISSISSIPPI—Named Mark Johnson men's assistant basketball coach.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE—Announced RB T.A. McLendon will skip his final season and make himself eligible for the NFL draft.

PHILADELPHIA—Announced the resignation of Lynn Thomas, baseball coach, effective at the end of the 2005 season.

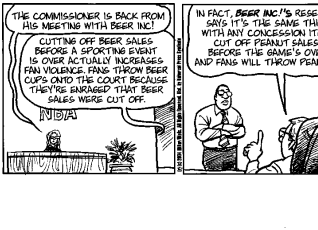
RICE—Named Joe Barroso men's soccer coach and Kim Banner women's soccer coach.

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN—Named Robert McFarland football coach.

UNLV—Named Noah Brindise offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach, Keith Uperesa offensive line coach and Mike Bradeen defensive backs coach.

WASHINGTON—Named Tyrone Willingham football coach and signed him to a five-year contract.

TANK MCNAMARA



NHL owners set to counter rollback offer

Any proposal with a salary cap will widen rift with players' association

The Associated Press

TORONTO — The NHL was set to make a new proposal to locked-out players on Tuesday that could hopelessly stall labor negotiations if the offer included a salary cap.

The sides resumed talks at 1 p.m. EST with the league reportedly poised to reject the latest offer by the union, which featured a 24-percent salary rollback but no linkage between revenues and player salaries. The union deems a salary cap unacceptable.

The Canadian sports television network TSN reported Monday that NHL executive vice president Bill Daly told the 30 team owners the league will turn down the union's offer made last week. TSN cited a memo from Daly to the owners.

"While the immediate 'rollback' of 24 percent offered by the union would materially improve league economics for the 2004-05 season, there is virtually nothing in the union's proposal that would prevent the dollars 'saved' from being redirected right back into the player compensation system, such that the league's overall financial losses would approach current levels in only a matter of a couple of years," Daly said in Sunday's memo.

The league wants cost certainty, a system that will provide a direct link between revenues and player costs. The players' association might quickly break off talks if the NHL's proposal includes that.

If that happens, the NHL will be closer to becoming the first North American sports league to lose an entire season to a labor dispute. There might be a month left to salvage the season. The last NHL lockout ended with a deal on Jan. 11, 1995, allowing for a 48-game regular season.

But the sides might be too far apart to get a season in this time. The memo obtained by TSN "cynically" questioned the motives of the NHLPA's salary rollback offer.

"We believe the union's offer was more about trying to unify the players and ensure player solidarity with what they would perceive as a very substantial proposal than it was about making a good faith effort to reach agreement with us," Daly reportedly wrote.

The players' proposal also contained a luxury tax, a revenue sharing plan, a lower cap on entry-level contracts and bonuses, and an offer to allow teams to take players to arbitration.

The NHL hasn't given the players' association an offer since July 21, when it presented six possible concepts to provide a framework for the league's first new collective bargaining agreement in a decade.

All six were rejected by the players on Aug. 17, and negotiations that followed over the next month failed to move the sides closer to resolving the philosophical difference of a salary cap.

Talks broke off Sept. 9 when owners turned down an offer, and the lockout — in its 90th day — was imposed a week later by commissioner Gary Bettman. Players and owners stayed apart from early September until last Thursday.

Lou Lamoriello, the New Jersey Devils General Manager who is on the NHL's negotiating committee, had no comment on the TSN report other than to say, "I'd rather just let things be and then wait until tomorrow."

Ted Saskin, the NHLPA senior director, wouldn't respond.

"It would not assist the collective bargaining process to comment on excerpts from a leaked league document," Saskin said. "We will comment on the NHL's response to our proposal when it is finally delivered to us.

"If Gary Bettman thinks the only way to do it is his way, that's most unfortunate because I think this is a very creative solution."

Even an immediate rollback of salaries for each year of every existing player contract might not entice Bettman and some hard-line owners to cut a deal without cost certainty.

"If they want to make general managers powerless to set a budget and decide what they want to do, and just have a budget set in New York that is supposed to apply to Toronto, Nashville etc., that's not going to fly with the players," Saskin said. "I know that's not a recipe for a solution."

Ottawa Senators owner Eugene Melnyk reportedly told Bettman that the salary rollback offered by players wasn't enough to end the lockout.

"It's not a solution," Melnyk, who pulled the Senators out of bankruptcy, told The Ottawa Sun. "It's a one-shot deal that doesn't work."

Wake edges Temple

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Trent Strickland scored all nine of his points in the final nine minutes and No. 6 Wake Forest went 5-for-6 from the free throw line over the final two minutes to hold off Temple 67-64 on Monday night.

Men's Top 25 roundup

Eric Williams, who along with fellow starter Chris Paul, was disciplined for 5 minutes for being late for the team bus on the way to the game, had 17 points for the Demon Deacons (7-1), while Justin Gray added 15.

Paul, the leading vote-getter on the AP's preseason All-America team, and Williams were held out of the starting lineup for being 2 minutes late for the bus. Paul finished with nine points and eight assists for the Demon Deacons, who were coming off a nine-day break for exams.

Mardy Collins had a season-high 25 points for Temple (3-5). Dustin Salisbery's three-pointer hit the rim with one second to play.

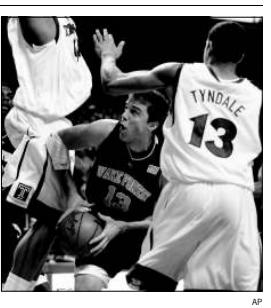
"Trent Strickland is a winner. He stepped up big for us on both ends of the court. We have to give him a game ball," Paul said. "He gets the emotion going for us."

In Monday's other Top 25 game:

No. 20 Mississippi St. 74, New Orleans 59: In New Orleans, Shane Power scored 17 points and Mississippi State extended its road winning streak to 13 games.

Lawrence Roberts and Jamall Edmondson each scored 14 points, Ontario Harper added 11 and Winsome Frazier finished with 10 for the Bulldogs (8-2), who have won six of seven.

New Orleans' Bo McCalebb, who ranks 10th in the nation with a 22.5 point average, was limited to 16. New Orleans (3-4) had its two-game winning streak stopped.



AP

Wake Forest's Vytas Danelius, center, struggles to find room under the basket Monday against Temple's Keith Butler, left, and Mark Tyndale.

Air Force defeated by Lamar in OT

The Associated Press

BEAUMONT, Texas — Teddy Davis' two free throws started an 8-0 overtime run that led Lamar to a 66-59 victory over Air Force on Monday.

Jason Grant hit two free throws with 42 seconds left in regulation to give Lamar a 50-47 lead. But Air Force's Nick Welch drove in for a layup, was fouled and completed the three-point play.

Welch scored a game-high 20 points. Antoine Hood added 13 points for Air Force (6-4).

Raymond Anthony led Lamar (4-2) with 15 points on five-of-10 shooting, including four three-pointers.

The Falcons' next game is at Iowa on Dec. 28.

BYU promotes assistant Mendenhall to head coach

The Associated Press

PROVO, Utah — Defensive coordinator Bronco Mendenhall was hired Monday as the football coach at Brigham Young.

Mendenhall replaces Gary Crowton, who stepped down two weeks ago after his third losing season.

"I'm ready to take this program to where it should be," Mendenhall said during a news conference.

Mendenhall and longtime BYU assistant Lance Reynolds, who has been interim coach since Crowton's resignation, were the in-house candidates to replace Crowton.

BYU also interviewed Utah defensive coordinator Kyle Whittingham, but he accepted an offer to take over for Urban Meyer at Utah. Meyer took the job at Florida.

N.C. State RB McLendon going pro

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina State tailback T.A. McLendon, an injury-prone runner who never matched the promise he showed as a freshman, will skip his senior season and enter the NFL Draft.

NCAA briefs

He scored 35 touchdowns for the Wolfpack, third-best in school history.

After being picked ACC rookie of the year with 1,101 yards rushing and 16 touchdowns, he missed four games as a sophomore, then struggled with shoulder and hamstring ailments this season.

Oregon State aide hired as Army's AD

WEST POINT, N.Y. — Former Oregon State associate athletic director Kevin Anderson is the new athletic director at Army and the first black to hold the post at the academy.

Anderson served as executive associate athletic director for external affairs at Oregon. He replaces Rick Greenspan, who left the academy in September for a similar post at Indiana University.

"I love the tradition and I love what the academy is all about — the mission of developing leaders who are not only going to lead on the field, but also lead this country after they graduate," Anderson said.

Anderson will start in his new post in January.

Glanville interested in NMSU job

LAS CRUCES, N.M. — Jerry Glanville says he is interested in becoming head football coach at New Mexico State University.

The head coach of the Houston Oilers from 1985 to 1989 and the Atlanta Falcons from 1990 to 1993, said via telephone from his home in Cumming, Ga., that his first goal would be "not to be on anybody's schedule as homecoming opponent."

Brian Faison, NMSU athletic director, declined comment on the viability of Glanville as a job candidate.

Missouri LB charged with rape

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Missouri freshman linebacker Alvin Newhouse was charged Monday with forcible rape and forcible sodomy, police said.

University police Capt. Brian Weimer said the victim came to police Sunday, accusing Newhouse of raping her early that morning in his Graham Hall dorm room.

Weimer said Newhouse, 19, was arrested at 1:35 a.m. Monday.

Newhouse was being held Monday on $60,000 bail.

Woman drops sexual assault lawsuit against Univ. of Colorado

DENVER — A former University of Colorado soccer player dropped her federal lawsuit Monday, one of three at the heart of the sex-and-recruiting scandal surrounding the university's football team.

The lawsuit, filed in January, alleged the athletic department retaliated against the woman after she talked to police about a football recruiting party where two other women say they were raped. She also claimed the department ignored her complaints of racial discrimination by her coach and teammates.

Suns improve league-best record to 18-3

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — The triple-digit scores, and the victories, keep piling up for the Phoenix Suns.

The latest was a 121-100 thumping of the Orlando Magic on Monday night, improving the Suns' record to 18-3, the best start in the 37-year history of the franchise.

"Their record is not a fluke," Magic coach Johnny Davis said. "They're that good. They actually put five guys on the floor who are capable of scoring 30 points on any given night."

The Suns, the NBA's highest-scoring team by a long shot, kept the throttle down even though Steve Nash was on the bench for long stretches with foul trouble.

His backup, young Brazilian Leandro Barbosa, scored 19 points in 19 minutes.

"We've been trying to encourage him and get his confidence going," Nash said, "and tonight he was terrific."

Roundup

Phoenix has won 14 of 15 for the first time in eight seasons.

"It means a lot," Amare Stoudemire said. "It's down to where I know we're not pretenders, we're contenders."

But teammate Quentin Richardson downplayed his team's record with so many left to play.

"It's definitely a nice thing, but all of this means nothing if we start going downhill," he said. "We can talk about all that stuff at the end of the year. We've got a lot more goals than just a great start."

Richardson had 26 points, including six three-pointers, as the NBA's highest-scoring team scored at least 120 points for the fourth time this season.

Stoudemire added 21 points, Shawn Marion had 19 points and 10 rebounds and Joe Johnson scored 18.

Nash, limited to 27 minutes, scored a season-low six points but had 10 assists. That's what made Barbosa's performance so impressive.

"That's important for us because that gives Steve some rest," Suns coach Mike D'Antoni said. "It doesn't make us so dependent that we can't do without him."

Grant Hill scored 23 points, Steve Francis 18 and Cuttino Mobley 15 for Orlando. Dwight Howard had 18 rebounds but was just 2-for-10 shooting.

The Magic played for the second night in a row, while Phoenix had been idle since Friday.

Nash was sitting with four fouls when the Suns outscored the Magic 18-8 to go up 88-77 on Marion's two free throws with 45.3 seconds left in the third quarter. Barbosa scored five, including a three-pointer, in the surge, which came after Orlando had cut the lead to 70-69.

Richardson sank two three-pointers and Nash one in an 11-5 spurt to start the fourth quarter to give Phoenix a 99-84 lead with 9:16 to go. The Magic never got closer than 13 again.

Heat 106, Wizards 83: At Miami, Shaquille O'Neal scored a season-high 40 points, and the Heat overcame the loss of leading scorer Dwyane Wade for their fifth straight victory.

Wade sprained his left ankle grabbing a loose ball with 3:18 left in the first half, and did not return. A Heat spokesman said Wade's second-half absence was "more precautionary than anything else."

Cavaliers 92, Grizzlies 86: At Memphis, Tenn., LeBron James had 31 points, eight assists and seven steals for Cleveland.

Mavericks 94, Bulls 93: At Chicago, Michael Finley hit the winning shot with 3.2 seconds left and scored 27 points for Dallas.

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlantic Division				
New York	10	10	.500	–
Boston	9	11	.450	1
Philadelphia	8	12	.400	2
New Jersey	7	13	.350	3
Toronto	7	16	.304	4½
Southeast Division				
Miami	16	7	.696	–
Washington	12	7	.632	2
Orlando	13	8	.619	2
Charlotte	4	14	.222	9½
Atlanta	4	16	.200	10½
Central Division				
Cleveland	13	8	.619	–
Detroit	10	10	.500	2½
Indiana	10	10	.500	2½
Milwaukee	6	12	.333	5½
Chicago	4	15	.211	8

Western Conference

	W	L	Pct	GB
Southwest Division				
San Antonio	17	5	.773	–
Dallas	15	8	.652	2½
Houston	9	12	.429	7½
Memphis	9	14	.391	8½
New Orleans	1	18	.053	14½
Northwest Division				
Seattle	17	4	.810	–
Minnesota	13	7	.650	3½
Denver	12	8	.600	4½
Portland	10	9	.526	6
Utah	9	12	.429	8
Pacific Division				
Phoenix	18	3	.857	–
Sacramento	14	6	.700	3½
L.A. Lakers	12	8	.600	5½
L.A. Clippers	11	9	.550	6½
Golden State	5	14	.300	11½

Monday's games

Miami 106, Washington 83
Cleveland 92, Memphis 86
Dallas 94, Chicago 93
Phoenix 121, Orlando 100
Boston 134, L.A. Clippers 127, 2OT

Tuesday's games

Denver at Philadelphia
New Orleans at Charlotte
Indiana at Atlanta
New York at New Jersey
Sacramento at Milwaukee
Portland at Minnesota
Golden State at Dallas
L.A. Clippers at Utah
L.A. Lakers at Seattle

Wednesday's games

Denver at Boston
Miami at Washington
Portland at Cleveland
Minnesota at Toronto
Chicago at Memphis
Detroit at New York
Golden State at New Orleans
Atlanta at Houston
Orlando at San Antonio
Utah at Phoenix

Thursday's games

Cleveland at Detroit
Milwaukee at Chicago
L.A. Lakers at Sacramento

Monday
Heat 106, Wizards 83

WASHINGTON — Jamison 5-17 1-4 12, Jeffries 2-3 1-2 5, Haywood 2-3 2-4 6, Arenas 5-18 6-6 18, Hughes 5-22 2-2 12, Hayes 3-6 0-0 7, Peeler 2-4 0-0 4, Brown 6-9 4-5 16, Ruffin 1-1 1-2 3, Dixon 0-2 0-0 0, Profit 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 31-86 17-25 83.

MIAMI — E.Jones 6-13 1-3 14, Haslem 4-8 12-12 9, O'Neal 15-23 10-16 40, D.Jones 3-7 4-4 12, Wade 0-4 0-0 0, Butler 6-9 3-4 16, Anderson 1-1 0-0 2, Doleac 1-5 4-6 6, Dooling 0-3 1-2 1, Laettner 2-6 0-0 4, Wang 1-2 0-0 2. Totals 39-81 24-35 106.

Washington	**16**	**16**	**30**	**21 — 83**
Miami	**20**	**23**	**28**	**35 — 106**

Three-Point Goals—Washington 4-17 (Arenas 2-6, Hayes 1-2, Jamison 1-4, Dixon 0-1, Hughes 0-2, Peeler 0-2), Miami 4-12 (D.Jones 2-6, E.Jones 1-3, Butler 1-3). Fouled out—Haywood. Rebounds—Washington 52 (Jamison 10, Miami 64 (O'Neal 12). Assists—Washington 19 (Jamison 5), Miami 25 (D.Jones 9). Total fouls—Washington 27, Miami 23. Technicals—Miami defensive Three Second. A—19,600 (19,600).

Cavaliers 92, Grizzlies 86

CLEVELAND — Gooden 5-8 1-2 11, James 14-22 2-4 31, Ilgauskas 4-12 3-4 11, Marinis 6-14 3-4 18, Newble 4-6 0-0 9, Harris 0-6 0-0 0, Snow 1-4 0-0 2, Varejao 1-2 0-0 2, S.Williams 2-3 2-2 6, Diop 1-1 0-0 2. Totals 38-78 11-16 92.

MEMPHIS — Battier 1-4 2-3 5, Gasol 8-14 3-9 19, Wright 8-11 0-0 16, Watson 2-9 0-0 5, Miller 6-11 1-1 16, Posey 2-7 0-0 5, Jones 0-1 0-0 0, Burks 3-3 1-1 7, Swift 4-10 5-6 13, Tsakalidis 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 34-71 12-20 86.

Cleveland	**28**	**21**	**23**	**20—92**
Memphis	**21**	**30**	**22**	**13—86**

Three-Point Goals—Cleveland 5-12 (McInnis 3-6, Newble 1-1, James 1-3, Harris 0-1), Memphis 6-9 (Miller 3-3, Battier 1-2, Watson 1-2, Posey 1-2). Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Cleveland 47 (Ilgauskas 9), Memphis 43 (Wright 10). Assists—Cleveland 23 (James 8), Memphis 25 (Watson 7). Total fouls—Cleveland 25, Memphis 22. Technicals—Cleveland Defensive Three Second, McInnis, Gooden, Memphis Defensive Three Second. A—15,516 (18,119).

Mavericks 94, Bulls 93

DALLAS — Howard 7-13 1-1 16, Nowitzki 4-18 13-19 21, Dampier 4-5 1-2 9, Finley 10-20 4-4 27, Antoine Walker 3-9 0-0 6, Bradley 1-1 0-0 2, Daniels 2-8 0-1 5, Terry 1-4 0-0 2, Harris 0-0 0-0 0, Henderson 1-1 0-0 2, Booth 1-2 2-2 4. Totals 34-82 21-29 94.

CHICAGO — Deng 7-16 2-4 16, Davis 1-2 1-2 3, Curry 9-12 2-4 20, Hinrich 5-15 0-0 12, Duhon 2-6 0-0 4, Chandler 5-7 2-2 12, Gordon 6-12 0-0 14, Nocioni 3-8 0-0 6, Piatkowski 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 41-78 7-12 93.

Dallas	**20**	**26**	**19**	**29—94**
Chicago	**23**	**23**	**24**	**23—93**

Three-Point Goals—Dallas 5-17 (Finley 3-5, Daniels 1-2, Howard 1-4, Terry 0-1, Armstrong 0-2, Nowitzki 0-3), Chicago 4-18 (Gordon 2-5, Hinrich 2-6, Deng 0-2, Duhon 0-2). Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Dallas 46 (Howard 10), Chicago 52 (Chandler 11). Assists—Dallas 17 (Daniels 4), Chicago 29 (Hinrich, Duhon 9). Total fouls—Dallas 20, Chicago 22. Technicals—Chicago Defensive Three Second, Curry. A—16,191 (21,711).

Suns 121, Magic 100

ORLANDO — Hill 9-21 5-6 23, Howard 2-10 1-3 7, Battie 1-4 0-0 2, Francis 5-14 4-6 18, Mobley 6-16 1-2 15, Kasun 3-3 2-2 8, Turkoglu 2-10 1-1 5, Nelson 3-6 2-3 8, Garrity 3-7 1-2 7, Augmon 1-2 3-4 5, Stevenson 1-3 0-0 2, Bradley 1-1 0-2 2. Totals 36-94 26-32 100.

PHOENIX — Richardson 10-20 0-0 26, Marion 8-14 3-4 19, Stoudemire 9-14 3-8 21, Nash 2-7 0-0 6, Johnson 7-17 2-2 18, S.Hunter 3-4 3-4 9, Barbosa 6-8 4-6 19, Jacobsen 0-2 0-0 0, Ndiaye-Kaba 1-2 1-3, Tabuse 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 46-90 16-25 121.

Orlando	**23**	**26**	**30**	**21—100**
Phoenix	**28**	**28**	**32**	**33—121**

Three-Point Goals—Orlando 2-14 (Mobley 2-6, Francis 0-2, Garrity 0-3, Turkoglu 0-3), Phoenix 13-30 (Richardson 6-12, Barbosa 3-4, Nash 2-3, Johnson 2-7, Jacobsen 0-1, Marion 0-3). Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Orlando 57 (Howard 18), Phoenix 60 (Marion 10). Assists—Orlando 15 (Francis 6), Phoenix 30 (Nash 10). Total fouls—Orlando 26, Phoenix 22. Technicals—Phoenix Defensive Three Second. A—14,228 (18,422).

Celtics 134, Clippers 127 (2OT)

BOSTON — Welsch 4-9 1-1 10, LaFrentz 0-4 0-0 0, Blount 6-12 2-2 14, Allen 10-21 4-7 26, Walker 33, Payton 6-11 2-4 15, Davis 11-18 11-11 34, Jefferson 4-7 2-4 10, McCarty 2-4 0-0 5, Allen 5-15 2-4 12, Banks 0-3 0-0 0, Perkins 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 92-100 27-32 134.

L.A. CLIPPERS — Simmons 9-19 4-5 22, Brand 8-17 5-10 24, Moore 3-5 4-4 10, Maggette 10-21 17-19 38, Jaric 0-3 0-0 0, Kittles 4-11 1-2 11, Wilcox 5-8 4-5 14, Brunson 3-7 2-2 8, Ross 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 42-91 40-47 127.

Boston	**26**	**26**	**25**	**32**	**17—134**
L.A. Clippers	**32**	**30**	**23**	**24**	**7 11—127**

Three-Point Goals—Boston 7-15 (Pierce 3-5, Welsch 1-1, Payton 1-1, Davis 1-2, McCarty 1-3, Allen 0-1, Banks 0-2), L.A. Clippers 3-13 (Kittles 2-3, Maggette 1-5, Brunson 0-3). Fouled out—Pierce, Jefferson. Rebounds—Boston 49 (Jefferson 8), L.A. Clippers 62 (Brand 18). Assists—Boston 27 (Payton 9), L.A. Clippers 30 (Brunson 7). Total fouls—Boston 37, L.A. Clippers 28. Technicals—Boston Defensive Three Second. A—16,007 (18,964).

Celtics defeat Clippers in 2OT

BY KEN PETERS
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Ricky Davis and his Boston teammates simply refused to lose.

Down by 12 points in the fourth quarter, the Celtics rallied for a 134-127 double-overtime victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Monday night.

"It showed the toughness of the guys. To come back and win is mentally tough," Davis said after scoring seven of his 34 points in the second overtime.

"[The Clippers] were shooting the ball well, but we just got stops at the right times. That's what we've got to do," Davis added.

Davis had 19 points in the fourth quarter to rally the Celtics from a 12-point deficit, then had two points in a low-scoring first overtime when each team had just seven points.

Gary Payton scored six of his 15 points in the second extra period to help Boston pull it out.

Paul Pierce had 34 points for the Celtics before fouling out with 3:35 left in regulation and Boston down 103-98.

Celtics coach Doc Rivers liked his team's determination.

"Paul Pierce fouled out, there were just a lot of reasons why we should have gone home, and our guys just fought," Rivers said.

Corey Maggette led the Clippers with a career-high 38 points, four more than his previous best.

"This is all so far a learning process," Maggette said of the Clippers. "We're all just learning."

Elton Brand, back from a one-game suspension, added 24 points and had 18 rebounds for Los Angeles. Bobby Simmons had 22 points.

Payton went 3-for-4 and the Celtics were 7-for-9 from the floor in the second overtime. Meanwhile, Maggette missed his three shots and the Clippers were just 3-for-8.

In the first overtime, Maggette hit a three-pointer with 48 seconds remaining to even it at 116, then the teams traded turnovers and the game went to the second extra period.

Davis' scoring spurt in the fourth quarter brought the Celtics back from a 102-90 deficit with 8 minutes remaining. He evened it at 109 with a pair of free throws with 8.7 seconds left.

Los Angeles led 85-77 heading into the fourth quarter.

Clippers coach Mike Dunleavy tried to put some positive spin on the defeat.

"We have to use this loss to gain experience and learn from our mistakes," Dunleavy said. "There is no sense in pointing the finger at anyone. We win as a team, we lose as a team.

"We did a lot of good things, but we just had some unlucky things happen. Tonight could be one of the most important games of the year, depending on how we respond."

Blazers coach Cheeks fined $7,500 for failing to leave court

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Portland Trail Blazers coach Maurice Cheeks was fined $7,500 by the NBA on Monday for failing to leave the court in a timely manner after a loss to the Utah Jazz last week.

The Jazz beat the Blazers 92-87 in overtime Friday night after a crucial call went against Portland down the stretch. With 1.3 seconds left in regulation and the game tied at 78, Portland's Zach Randolph ran into Utah's Mehmet Okur as he launched a three-pointer from the top of the key. Randolph sprinted to the other end of the floor in disbelief after a foul was called, and Okur made all three free throws.

After a timeout, Portland's Damon Stoudemire received a pass in the corner and sank a three-pointer as the horn sounded to send the game to overtime.

NBA briefs

Hornets' Garcia out for season with injured knee

NEW ORLEANS — Hornets guard Alex Garcia will miss the rest of the season because of a torn knee ligament, the latest injury to hit a team reeling with a 1-18 record.

He twisted his left knee Sunday against Washington and left the game in the third quarter. The tear of the anterior cruciate ligament was diagnosed Monday by the Charlotte Bobcats' team doctor, the Hornets said. Garcia had an MRI in Charlotte, where the Hornets were to play the Bobcats on Tuesday night.

Garcia averaged 5.5 points and 2.3 assists in 18.3 minutes through eight games, including three starts. He recently returned after missing seven games because of a strained left groin.

Jamaal Magloire, Jamal Mashburn, Baron Davis, David West and Rodney Rogers are on the injured list, and forward Lee Nailon missed his second consecutive game Sunday because of groin strain.

Pacers sign veteran F Curry

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana Pacers signed veteran forward Michael Curry on Monday as the team continues to adjust its suspension- and injury-depleted roster.

The 6-foot-6 Curry, who has played in 10 NBA seasons and is the president of the players' union, started 152 games for Pacers coach Rick Carlisle during 2001-03 when Carlisle was coaching in Detroit.

He averaged 2.9 points and 1.2 rebounds in 70 games for Toronto last season, but has not played this year.

Huskies make history with two high-profile black head coaches

Willingham joins basketball coach Romar at Washington

BY TIM KORTE
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Tyrone Willingham and Lorenzo Romar are recognized as accomplished college coaches, the biggest reason Washington administrators are glad to have them working the sidelines.

The fact that both men are black and supervising the school's two most visible athletic programs is "a little bit extra," in the words of university president Mark Emmert.

It's also historic.

Willingham was introduced Monday as Washington's new football coach, two weeks after being fired at Notre Dame. Romar is in his third season as coach of the men's basketball team.

Washington is the first school from a Bowl Championship Series conference to have two black men overseeing the two major sports since Temple of the Big East had Ron Dickerson as its football coach with longtime basketball coach John Chaney from 1993-97.

"We're delighted to have in Lorenzo Romar and Tyrone Willingham two first-rate coaches who are wonderful people of great character," Emmert said.

AP

The University of Washington chose former Notre Dame coach Tyrone Willingham, above, as its new head football coach on Monday. It is a return to the Pac-10 for Willingham, who previously coached at Stanford.

Willingham's hiring is newsworthy for another reason. He's the first black head coach to be fired by one high-profile football program and then quickly resurface at another.

"That is honestly significant," Willingham said. "With the old landscape, there have been limited opportunities for one to truly be able to get back into the system. I think that's a very positive step."

Romar, hired by former athletic director Barbara Hedges, leads a basketball team that reached the NCAA tournament last spring. The basketball Huskies, No. 18 in this week's poll, are expected to contend for this season's Pac-10 title.

Both Willingham and Romar said their positions at Washington represent progress for blacks, but insisted that job qualifications should always mean more than skin color.

"I'm excited as an alum and a current employee of the University of Washington that our university is making progress and not using color as the No. 1 factor on whether they're going to hire someone," Romar said. "It's about who is the best qualified. Who is the best fit?

"This may be the most important hire in the history of Husky football," Romar said. "You can't make it a political hire."

Said Willingham: "I am proud to be African American, but we should get to the point where that's not the focus, where it's really the body of work that a man does. I'm looking forward to increasing my body of work."

Emmert and athletic director Todd Turner, who both are white, said race wasn't a factor in Willingham's hire.

They simply wanted the best coach, and Willingham's name topped their list when Keith Gilbertson stepped down after a 1-10 season.

Emmert said the university would have used the same approach in hiring a college dean.

"This is the man we wanted as our coach," Emmert said.

Willingham's firing at Notre Dame, after the third year of a five-year contract, raised questions about whether he was given enough time to succeed and drew criticism from the Black Coaches Association.

Willingham was one of only five black head coaches in Division I-A last season. That number dropped to two after Tony Samuel was fired at New Mexico State, Fitz Hill resigned at San Jose State and Willingham was let go.

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AP

U.S. skier Bode Miller, above, won a men's World Cup slalom on Monday night at Sestriere, Italy, and joined Marc Girardelli as the only male skiers to win races in all four alpine disciplines in one season.

U.S. skier Miller runs into record book again

American becomes second man to win races in all four alpine disciplines in same season

BY ANDREW DAMPF
The Associated Press

SESTRIERE, Italy — The lights were on. The Olympic course was glistening.

The setting was perfect for Bode Miller to put his name in the record book once more.

The World Cup leader won a night slalom Monday to join Marc Girardelli as the only male skiers to win races in all four alpine disciplines in one season.

"I don't feel any different than before," Miller said. "These are the kinds of things you tell your kids about."

Earlier this season, Miller won super-G and downhill races for the first time. He won a giant slalom Sunday at Val d'Isere, France.

"At this point, I just really enjoy what I'm doing. I think being compared to some of the guys they're comparing me to is a unique opportunity," Miller said. "If you're happy with what you're doing, records don't mean as much. I think it's just fun to ski four events."

Miller covered the course for the 2006 Turin Olympics in a two-run time of 1 minute, 39.03 seconds for his sixth victory in 10 races this season. That increased his lead on Austrian rival Hermann Maier in the overall standings to 391 points.

Miller's ultimate goal is to become the first American man to win the overall title since Phil Mahre in 1983.

Silvan Zurbriggen of Switzerland was second, a distant 1.27 seconds behind, for the first World Cup podium finish of his career. Kalle Palander of Finland was third, 1.41 seconds back.

Girardelli became the first man to win slalom, giant slalom, super-G and downhill races in the same season in 1988-1989, over a two-month span. Miller compiled his victories in only 16 days.

Girardelli still has the edge on Miller, however. He also won a combined — a paper event based on the results of a slalom and downhill — that season. Miller will have a chance to match that in the first combined event this season in Wengen, Switzerland, on Jan. 14.

Leinart, three other Trojans on AP All-America team

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Southern California's defense has just as many All-Americans as its star-studded offense.

Heisman Trophy winner Matt Leinart and three of his USC teammates made The Associated Press All-America team announced Monday.

Tailback Reggie Bush, defensive lineman Shaun Cody and linebacker Matt Grootegoed joined their quarterback on the first team. Bush, also a Heisman finalist, was picked as the all-purpose player.

"The defense tends to get overlooked a little bit with our high-tech offense," Leinart said. "Our defense is why we're undefeated."

USC was tied with Michigan for the most first-teamers and had six players total on the three AP All-America teams, the most of any school.

Two more Trojans defenders, defensive tackle Mike Patterson and linebacker Lofa Tatupu, made the third team.

USC's defense ranks third in the nation in total defense at 271.5 yards per game and second in average scoring defense at 12.5 points.

"It's really a tribute to the kind of season we've had," said Leinart, in New York on Monday for the Heisman banquet. "It just speaks volumes for our program."

The junior left-hander has passed for 2,990 yards and 28 touchdowns this season, leading the top-ranked Trojans (12-0) to a perfect regular season and becoming USC's sixth Heisman Trophy winner.

Oklahoma tailback Adrian Peterson, the Heisman runner-up who has run for 1,843 yards and 15 TDs, is the first freshman AP All-American since North Carolina cornerback Dre' Bly in 1996.

Peterson was joined on the first team by Sooners tackle Jammal Brown.

They'll line up against Leinart and USC in the Orange Bowl on Jan. 4 with a national title at stake.

Oklahoma quarterback Jason White, a first-team All-American and the Heisman Trophy winner last season, was a third-team selection Monday. Utah quarterback Alex Smith was the second-team QB.

The second-ranked Sooners (12-0) put wide receiver Mark Clayton and defensive end Dan Cody on the second team for a total of five players on the three teams.

Michigan's four AP All-Americans is the most in school history.

Wide receiver Braylon Edwards, center David Baas and defensive backs Marlin Jackson and Ernest Shazor made the first team for the Big Ten co-champs.

"Whenever you have the best defensive back in the country on your team and you get to go against him every day, it only gets you better," Edwards said.

The Big Ten had the most first-teamers with nine.

Jackson and Edwards were among 20 seniors on the first team.

"It was exceptionally fun," said Edwards, who caught 87 passes for 1,221 yards. "I believe this whole season has definitely paid off for me."

AP All-America list, Page 24.

Martinez picks Mets over Red Sox

New York moves to finalize deal after outbidding Boston with four-year deal

BY RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Look who landed Pedro Martinez. That's right, the other team in New York.

Martinez closed in on a four-year deal with the Mets, and the Boston Red Sox resigned themselves Monday to losing the three-time Cy Young Award winner.

"He was a great member of the Red Sox team for seven years, and a certain Hall of Famer," Boston President Larry Lucchino told The Associated Press in an e-mail. "He will be missed, and we are disappointed to have lost him to the Mets and the National League."

Baseball free agent roundup

Martinez's agent, Fernando Cuza, told the Mets he will attempt to work out a deal with them after New York guaranteed a fourth year, a person involved in the talks said on condition of anonymity.

"Nothing has happened yet," Martinez said from the Dominican Republic on Monday night.

For once, the Mets and new general manager Omar Minaya snatched the spotlight from the star-studded Yankees across town by making the biggest splash at baseball's winter meetings, which ended Monday with many top players still searching for teams.

There were just five trades and seven free-agent signings finalized during the four-day session, but several clubs struck preliminary agreements with free agents that will be completed later this week.

Richie Sexson and Seattle appeared to be working their way toward a deal, but the first baseman's agent, Casey Close, said Baltimore was still in the hunt.

"Nothing is conclusive at this moment. We'll have to see where this thing goes the next 24, 48 hours," Close said. "It's all speculative as to what people's perspectives are."

The agent for Carlos Delgado, another first baseman, held preliminary talks with the Yankees and was speaking to the Mariners, who told an agent they might try to sign both Sexson and Delgado.

The White Sox traded slugger Carlos Lee to Milwaukee for speedy outfielder Scott Podsednik, reliever Luis Vizcaino and a player to be named. Four free-agent agreements also were announced, topped by catcher Mike Matheny's $10.5 million, three-year deal with San Francisco.

Right-hander Esteban Yan agreed to a $2.25 million, two-year contract with Anaheim, right-hander Todd Jones finalized a $1.1 million, one-year deal with Florida and outfielder Wil Cordero got a $600,000, one-year contract from the Washington-bound Expos, who also agreed to a minor league deal with outfielder Jeffrey Hammonds.

In an agreement awaiting a physical, second baseman Jose Hernandez agreed to a $1.8 million, one-year contract with Cleveland. Late Sunday night, Toronto and free-agent third baseman Corey Koskie reached preliminary agreement on a $17 million, three-year contract.

As teams headed home, many top free agents remained on the market, including Carlos Beltran, Adrian Beltre, Magglio Ordonez, Derek Lowe, Eric Milton, Jason Varitek, Orlando Cabrera, J.D. Drew, Edgar Renteria and Moises Alou.

Among the deals awaiting completion were Carl Pavano's four-year contract with the Yankees, a deal worth about $39 million, and David Wells' two-year agreement with Boston.

Minaya expressed confidence about the negotiations with Martinez, but wouldn't detail the discussions.

"The good news is that we're still in dialogue," Minaya said.

"Every day that goes by and we are having dialogue is a good day."

Minaya then returned to New York, and the sides will work by telephone to finalize the contract language. Cuza did not want to comment on the talks.

Martinez helped pitch Boston to its first World Series title since 1918, but Red Sox General Manager Theo Epstein said he refused to increase the team's offer in the past two days.

"We wish Pedro nothing but the best going forward both on the field and off the field," Boston owner John Henry said in an e-mail. "He pitched with every ounce of his being for the Red Sox over the course of 216 games. Some of those performances were among the most memorable in Red Sox history. Who will ever forget the 1999 All-Star game? He has earned everything that he has accomplished, including his World Series ring and his reputation as one of the greatest who ever lived."

Martinez, 33, must pass a physical before the Mets complete the deal. He would join a rotation that includes two-time Cy Young winner Tom Glavine, Kris Benson, Steve Trachsel and Victor Zambrano.

The Mets have faded badly since losing to the Yankees in the 2000 World Series, finishing last in the NL East in 2002 and 2003, then going 71-91 last season.

New York initially offered Martinez a $37.5 million, three-year contract with a $12.5 million team option for 2008.

Boston's final proposal was a $40.5 million, three-year deal that contained a club option for 2008, a baseball official said, also on condition of anonymity. The Red Sox thought the Mets' offer was for $56 million over four years, the official said, but a Mets official said that figure was not correct.

An agent who spoke with the Mets said New York's proposal was worth about $52 million.

"We put our best foot forward and made an offer that makes sense to the club," Epstein said. "We think it's a fair and generous offer."

Martinez's departure leaves the Red Sox to defend their title with a rotation that currently includes Curt Schilling, Wells, Tim Wakefield and Bronson Arroyo.

AP

Boston pitcher Pedro Martinez, left, and slugger Manny Ramirez smile during a game last season against the New York Yankees. Martinez is close to signing a four-year deal with the Mets.

Schilling's ankle won't be ready for Opening Day

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Red Sox ace Curt Schilling said his right ankle isn't recovering from surgery as quickly as he expected and he doesn't think he'll be ready to pitch by Opening Day.

"I'm going to be late, I think, starting the season," Schilling told WEEI-AM on Tuesday.

Schilling said he had a cast removed from the ankle over the weekend and learned for the first time that he wouldn't be able to rotate his ankle for four to five weeks. That means he won't be able to resume throwing when he had planned.

"So I'm looking at least another month before I start throwing, which puts me a month behind," he said.

Schilling and team officials had expected to be ready by spring training.

The right-hander had surgery on Nov. 9 to repair a ruptured tendon sheath on his ankle. The injury appeared to have ended his season in the middle of Boston's World Series run. But team doctors, in an unprecedented procedure, made a wall of stitches in Schilling's ankle to keep the tendon in place.

Schilling started Game 6 in the ALCS and, with blood seeping through his sock, beat the New York Yankees. Boston eventually won the series.

Schilling didn't elaborate on when he thought he might return and left open the possibility that he might be ready sooner than expected. The Red Sox open at Yankee Stadium on April 4.

Winter meetings deals

By The Associated Press

1. Pittsburgh traded LHP Arthur Rhodes to Cleveland for OF Matt Lawton.
2. Milwaukee traded RHP Dan Kolb to Atlanta for RHP Jose Capellan and RHP Alex Zumwalt.
3. Toronto traded C Kevin Cash to Tampa Bay for RHP Chad Gaudin.
4. Chicago White Sox traded OF Carlos Lee to Milwaukee for OF Scott Podsednik, RHP Luis Vizcaino and a player to be named.
5. Tampa Bay acquired RHP Angel Garcia from Arizona for cash.

Signings

(Major league free agents who signed major league contracts only)

1. Arizona signed RHP Russ Ortiz to a $33 million, four-year contract.
2. Anaheim signed OF Steve Finley to a $14 million, two-year contract.
3. Texas signed OF Richard Hidalgo to a $5 million, one-year contract.
4. Florida signed RHP Todd Jones to a $1.1 million, one-year contract.
5. Anaheim signed RHP Esteban Yan to a $2.25 million, two-year contract.
6. Montreal signed OF Wil Cordero to a $600,000, one-year contract.
7. San Francisco signed C Mike Matheny to a $10.5 million, three-year contract.

D-backs reopen Unit trade talks

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The Arizona Diamondbacks called the New York Yankees again Monday in an effort to restart trade talks on Randy Johnson.

Jeff Moorad, the Diamondbacks' incoming chief executive officer, called Yankees President Randy Levine, a baseball official said on condition of anonymity.

Moorad asked if anything was new on Johnson, but did not make a new proposal, and the discussion ended there, the official said.

New York ended trade discussions Dec. 1, calling the Diamondbacks' asking price for the Big Unit excessive.

Arizona's last proposal was to trade Johnson to New York for pitcher Javier Vazquez, setup man Tom Gordon, pitching prospect Brad Halsey and the difference between the $17 million Johnson is due for the remaining year in his contract and the $35.5 million Vazquez is owed in his deal, which has three seasons left.

Johnson's agents have asked Arizona to deal the 41-year-old left-hander to a contending team.

Poll: Fans want steroid users banned

BY ROB GLOSTER
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A majority of fans say players who test positive for steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs should be banned from baseball and think such players should be barred from the Hall of Fame, a poll found.

But there is strong opposition among baseball fans to erasing records held by players who fail drug tests, according to the nationwide poll released Tuesday by Quinnipiac University in Connecticut.

The poll was taken Dec. 7-12, a few days after the San Francisco Chronicle published leaked grand jury testimony in which Yankees slugger Jason Giambi admitted long-term steroid use and seven-time MVP Barry Bonds said he unknowingly took substances that prosecutors have identified as steroids.

Sixty-one percent of the 865 baseball fans polled said players who test positive should be banned from the game, while 33 percent oppose such a move. The breakdown was fairly consistent across gender — 60 percent of men and 64 percent of women supported such sanctions.

Fifty-two percent of those questioned said major leaguers who test positive for steroids or other drugs should be banned from the Hall of Fame, while 42 percent said there should be no such ban.

On the question about expunging the records of players who fail drug tests, 57 percent were opposed and 36 percent supported such a move.

The poll has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Sub-.500 Carolina might be best of sorry lot

In 1982, the NFL season was shortened to nine games by a strike, and the playoffs were expanded to 16 teams, including two that finished 4-5.

That is the only time a losing team made the postseason. Given the sorry state of the NFC, there's a possibility it will happen for the first time in a full season this year. In fact, if the playoffs started now, the Carolina Panthers (6-7) would be the final wild-card team.

Dave Goldberg

At least they would be somewhat deserving.

The Panthers were the conference champions last season and have won five straight games after losing seven of their first eight. Right now, they might just be the NFC's second-best team, behind Philadelphia, after adjusting to the loss of wide receiver Steve Smith, defensive tackle Kris Jenkins and running backs Stephen Davis and DeShaun Foster.

Quarterback Brett Favre summed up the NFC perfectly after Green Bay struggled to beat Detroit on Sunday to take the lead in the North.

"We should feel good about this win," he said. "But we're not good enough to feel that good."

Although New England, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Philadelphia and Atlanta have clinched divisions, the jury is still out on everyone else.

Right now, the first wild card in the NFC would be Minnesota, which is 7-6 despite losing five of seven to fall a game behind the Packers. The way the Vikings usually finish — they were 3-7 after opening 6-0 last season — nothing is guaranteed.

The strangest disparity the NFL had was in 1985, when Cleveland won the AFC Central with an 8-8 record.

In those days, there were two wild-card teams from each conference, and Denver (11-5) missed the playoffs in a three-way tiebreaker with the New York Jets and New England Patriots.

AP

Carolina Panthers' Ricky Manning Jr., left, runs past St. Louis Rams defender Arlen Harris after intercepting a pass during the first quarter of the Panthers' 20-7 victory on Sunday.

Broncos linebacker Tom Jackson summed that up 20 years ago with the bluntness that has served him well in his television career.

"The situation with us points up how unfair the system is now," he said then. "I don't think there's any way that you can have a team be in double figures in victories and have one of the best records in the conference and yet be at home when the playoffs start."

Jackson's sense of unfairness was assuaged somewhat when the Broncos ended up making the Super Bowl (and losing) in three of the next four seasons. And the Browns, who not only made the postseason that year but got a first-round bye, lost just 24-21 to defending conference champion Miami, which finished 12-4.

Four other 8-8 teams have made the playoffs: New Orleans in 1990, the Jets in 1991 and Dallas and Detroit in 1999.

But no better teams within their conferences were left out.

This year, plenty of AFC teams will go home knowing that they are more deserving than NFC teams that make the playoffs.

Right now, the Jets (9-4) would be one AFC wild-card team, with Baltimore and Denver (8-5) battling for the other spot, and Jacksonville and Buffalo (7-6) on the outside. The Bills, who held Cleveland to just 17 yards Sunday (15 of them in garbage time) have won four straight games and six of seven since Willis McGahee became the starting running back.

"If we're in the other conference, I'd have some hope. But we got a little behind the field in our conference," Bills owner Ralph Wilson said.

In the NFC, even 5-8 doesn't eliminate a team. And inconsistency is the norm.

Dallas's stirring comeback in Seattle last Monday night seemed to herald a late-season playoff run with rookie Julius Jones doing for them what McGahee has done for Buffalo. Then Dallas went home and lost 27-13 to New Orleans, managing just 269 yards against a team near the bottom in nearly every defensive category.

"Every time we have an opportunity with this team to do something and to maybe make something out of our season, we revert to the kind of thing you saw today, which was a very, very poor example of how to try to win," Cowboys coach Bill Parcells said.

That's the NFC: Miami is 2-11, and its only victories are over NFC teams St. Louis and San Francisco.

Philadelphia is 12-1 and can clinch home-field advantage for the playoffs with one more victory or an Atlanta loss. But even the Eagles have had trouble with AFC teams.

Their only loss was a 27-3 pounding in Pittsburgh. They were forced into overtime by Cleveland (which is just 3-10) and had to work to beat Baltimore 15-10 at home in a game in which the Ravens were without running back Jamal Lewis, tackle Jonathan Ogden and tight end Todd Heap.

At that rate, maybe the Eagles will lose their fourth straight NFC title game — to Carolina, a team below .500.

Dave Goldberg writes about the NFL for the Associated Press.

First postseason in decade within Chargers' grasp

BY BERNIE WILSON
The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — It's been a long time since either the San Diego Chargers or coach Marty Schottenheimer were talking playoff possibilities this late in the season.

The unimaginable can become reality on Sunday for the Chargers, who can win the AFC West based on two scenarios, or at least clinch a playoff berth under two other scenarios.

"This is a fun time to be a San Diego Chargers fan and also a player," linebacker Donnie Edwards said Monday, a day after San Diego won its seventh straight game, 34-21 over Tampa Bay, to improve to 10-3.

Edwards, a nine-year NFL veteran, was still at UCLA the last time his hometown Chargers made the playoffs, in 1995. He played for six seasons in Kansas City, and only now, in his third season with San Diego, are the Chargers on the cusp of returning to the postseason.

The Chargers, who have a two-game lead over Denver in the AFC West, can win the division title on Sunday if the Broncos lose at Kansas City, which would secure a better division record for San Diego.

They can also win the West if they win or tie at Cleveland, and Denver ties. The Chargers can clinch a playoff berth if they win and Baltimore loses or ties at Indianapolis, or if they tie and Baltimore loses.

The Chargers have won 10 games for the first time since their Super Bowl season of 1994, but it's not quite good enough yet to stamp their playoff passport.

"It's a very tough division," said Edwards, who sealed Sunday's victory with a 30-yard interception return for a touchdown in the closing minutes. "You can be 5-8 and still be in the hunt in the NFC. It's just different. I don't know what it is. But the AFC is a tough division and there's a lot of teams over .500 that still haven't clinched, just like us."

Providing the Chargers don't collapse like they did two years ago, they're battling Indianapolis for playoff seeding. Pittsburgh and New England have clinched division titles at 12-1 and have the inside track to first-round byes. The Colts have won their division and are also 10-3.

AP

San Diego's Kassim Osgood spikes the ball after his 19-yard touchdown reception in the Chargers' 31-24 victory over Tampa Bay on Sunday.

If form holds, the Colts and Chargers — who play each other on Dec. 26 at Indianapolis — would host the wild-card teams the second weekend in January.

Schottenheimer hasn't been to the playoffs since 1997. His Chiefs missed the postseason in 1998, he was out of football for two seasons, and he fell short with Washington in 2001 and with the Chargers the last two years.

"The excitement I get is about our players, our organization, our fans, because when you're able to have success and get in the playoffs, everybody shares in that," Schottenheimer said.

Although Schottenheimer is eighth on the career list with 175 victories, he is just 5-11 in the postseason, with Cleveland and Kansas City, including losses in his last four games with the Chiefs.

His Chiefs were 13-3 in 1995 and 1997, getting a first-round bye and home-field advantage throughout the playoffs, but were upset in the divisional round both times.

Schottenheimer said he took it for granted that his teams would be in the playoffs every year.

"I just sort of thought every year you're there and it's just a matter of how far you go," he said. "That obviously isn't the case anymore in this league."

Quarterback Drew Brees and Edwards defended Schottenheimer's record.

"Look at Marty's career. Can you argue the amount of wins he's had, no matter where he has gone?" Brees asked. "He's done a great job wherever he's been. And this seems to be the year for a lot of crazy things happening. So hey, if that's the way it's been in the past with Marty, 5-11 in the playoffs, then maybe this is the year we run the table."

Edwards has been in only one playoff game, with the Chiefs following the 1997 season when Denver won 14-10 at Kansas City.

That was the third time a John Elway-led team eliminated Schottenheimer from the postseason — remember "The Drive" and "The Fumble" in consecutive AFC championship games in the late 1980s when Schottenheimer was with Cleveland?

"That's the past," Edwards said. "This is the new Marty Schottenheimer. We're trying to forget about the days of Cleveland and Kansas City and look to the new days in the playoffs with the Chargers. So hopefully we can turn a new leaf over."

Plummer faces fine for gesture

The Associated Press

DENVER — Denver quarterback Jake Plummer probably lost more than just his cool when he made an obscene gesture toward the stands.

The NFL is reviewing Plummer's actions under its long-standing policy that prohibits public displays of profanity, a review that will likely lead to a fine.

Plummer didn't do himself many favors in a city that is already a little fed up with his performance this season.

He was a no-show in the locker room Monday, the day after a shaky 20-17 victory over lowly Miami that kept the Broncos (8-5) tied with Baltimore for the AFC's final wildcard spot.

NFL briefs

Plummer threw two interceptions. After the first, he made an obscene gesture toward the stands, which was caught by TV cameras carrying the game on CBS.

He apologized Sunday, saying "One guy got into my head a little bit. It shouldn't be that way."

On Monday, his coach and teammates chimed in.

"I think Jake understands that this game is very tough on the quarterback," coach Mike Shanahan said. "You work your way through it. If you're mentally tough enough, you survive. If not, you acquiesce and you're gone."

Plummer has thrown six interceptions without a touchdown in the past two games.

His obscene gesture was front-page material in Denver and was played over and over on national highlight shows.

League spokesman Greg Aiello said the NFL's stance on profanity has not changed and the case would be reviewed under the league's long-standing policy that prohibits public displays of profanity.

Coughlin sticks with Manning

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Despite horrific struggles in recent weeks, Tom Coughlin still believes that Eli Manning is going to be an outstanding quarterback for the reeling New York Giants.

Coughlin reiterated Monday that the No. 1 pick in the draft will start against the Pittsburgh Steelers (12-1) on Saturday, adding that giving Manning a week off to clear his head wasn't an option.

"The rookie player that has this type of opportunity, and this type of experience, it is a priceless experience that does not come without pain," Coughlin said in a conference call as he reviewed a 37-14 loss to Baltimore.

Not only is Manning winless in four starts since taking over from Kurt Warner, his statistics are dreadful. He has completed 42 of 110 passes for 516 yards, one touchdown and six interceptions. His quarterback rating is a 33.8 percent — the lowest in the NFL for anyone with 100 pass attempts.

And the Giants have lost their last three games by at least 21 points, the first time that has happened since 1980.

Bengals QB Palmer questionable

CINCINNATI — Carson Palmer sustained no serious damage to his left knee, but the Cincinnati Bengals quarterback was still on crutches and wearing a bulky brace on Monday.

Tests on Palmer's sprained knee showed no tear to his anterior cruciate ligament. Coach Marlin Lewis didn't rule out the possibility of Palmer playing Sunday against Buffalo.

Lewis put the final decision on Palmer's availability off until midweek, listing him as questionable for now.

"Let's wait and see what happens," Lewis said.

If Palmer's sprained knee isn't better, Jon Kitna will make his first start of the season. Kitna took over for Palmer during the third quarter of a 35-28 loss in New England and looked rusty on his first series of the season.

Kitna threw an interception in the end zone that scuttled the first drive, but got the Bengals (6-7) within seven points on a 27-yard touchdown pass to Kelley Washington with 3:50 left. The Patriots then ran out the clock.

Garcia joins Browns' long IR list

BEREA, Ohio — Cleveland quarterback Jeff Garcia will miss the rest of the season after tearing a knee ligament, another blow to the battered Browns, who have lost seven straight games.

Garcia is the eighth starter and 17th player overall to be placed on the injured reserve list by the Browns (3-10).

Garcia was hurt in the third quarter of Sunday's 37-7 loss to Buffalo after taking over for rookie Luke McCown. Garcia, who missed the previous two games with a sprained shoulder, lasted just three plays before injuring his knee while fumbling as he was sacked.

With McCown struggling and Kelly Holcomb still nursing cracked ribs, the Browns might need to sign a quarterback this week.

Shaky Chandler might start again

ST. LOUIS — Marc Bulger can't get healthy fast enough for the St. Louis Rams.

One day after missing a 20-7 loss to the Panthers with a sprained shoulder, Bulger resumed light throwing on Monday.

The Rams are aiming for him to return next week against the Eagles.

"He's a little sore, but who knows?" coach Mike Martz said Monday. "We may have him, but I'm not going to count on it."

That means another week with 39-year-old backup Chris Chandler, whose first start of the season was forgettable and included a career-worst six interceptions.

The alternatives are not very enticing for the Rams (6-7). The backups are rookie Jeff Smoker, who's still learning the offense, and Jamie Martin, who's not physically ready after being out of the NFL since October 2003 before signing last week.

Pain threshold key for Broncos' Bell

DENVER — Running back Tatum Bell believes his shoulder injury isn't as bad as first thought and insists he could be available for next week's game against Kansas City.

Bell ran for 123 yards and two touchdowns after replacing Reuben Droughns, who fumbled twice early in Denver's 20-17 win over Miami on Sunday. Bell, the rookie second-round draft choice left in the third quarter after separating his shoulder, and Droughns returned to finish the game.

Bell, however, said the shoulder wasn't feeling too bad Monday and considered himself day-to-day.

Denver (8-5) is tied with Baltimore for the AFC's final wild-card spot. After Sunday's game, Broncos coach Mike Shanahan said Bell's injury was a third-degree shoulder separation, the worst kind of separation possible.

Urlacher status depends on MRI

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — Chicago Bears linebacker Brian Urlacher is to have an MRI on his left hamstring this week, and his status for the final three games is unknown.

Urlacher sustained his third leg injury of the season in Sunday's 22-3 loss to the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Urlacher made a brief appearance in the Bears' locker room Monday. Asked how his leg was doing, he said: "Which one?"

Urlacher missed the entire preseason and two early games this season with a sore right hamstring. He later sat out two more games after surgery on his left calf following a Nov. 14 game against Tennessee. He had played the past two weeks.

Seahawks lose Wistrom until playoffs

KIRKLAND, Wash. — Seattle defensive end Grant Wistrom has ligament damage in his left knee and will miss up to six weeks, though coach Mike Holmgren said he could be available if the Seahawks reach the playoffs.

Wistrom was hurt in the fourth quarter of last weekend's 27-23 win at Minnesota. He missed four games earlier this season with a broken bone in his left knee.

Doctors will re-examine Wistrom within two weeks, when they'll determine if the injury is healing faster than projected. If that's the case, Holmgren said Wistrom might play if Seattle is in the playoffs.

NFL scoreboard

American Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
East						
x-New England	12	1	0	.923	366	217
N.Y. Jets	9	4	0	.692	260	192
Buffalo	7	6	0	.538	297	231
Miami	2	11	0	.154	213	289
South						
x-Indianapolis	10	3	0	.769	454	277
Jacksonville	7	6	0	.538	220	228
Houston	5	8	0	.385	250	312
Tennessee	4	9	0	.308	269	343
North						
x-Pittsburgh	12	1	0	.923	290	190
Baltimore	8	5	0	.615	270	205
Cincinnati	6	7	0	.462	296	307
Cleveland	3	10	0	.231	247	345
West						
San Diego	10	3	0	.769	370	262
Denver	8	5	0	.615	294	229
Kansas City	5	8	0	.385	390	364
Oakland	4	9	0	.308	244	363

National Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
East						
x-Philadelphia	12	1	0	.923	357	195
Dallas	5	8	0	.385	249	265
N.Y. Giants	5	8	0	.385	243	267
Washington	4	9	0	.308	183	218
South						
x-Atlanta	10	3	0	.769	267	252
Carolina	6	7	0	.462	269	264
New Orleans	5	8	0	.385	280	357
Tampa Bay	5	8	0	.385	257	334
North						
Green Bay	8	5	0	.615	334	307
Minnesota	7	6	0	.538	328	313
Chicago	5	8	0	.385	199	257
Detroit	5	8	0	.385	231	285
West						
Seattle	7	6	0	.538	305	289
St. Louis	6	7	0	.462	260	325
Arizona	4	9	0	.308	229	294
San Francisco	2	11	0	.154	229	364

x-clinched division

Sunday's games

Atlanta 35, Oakland 10
New Orleans 27, Dallas 13
Buffalo 37, Cleveland 7
Baltimore 31, N.Y. Giants 14
Indianapolis 23, Houston 14
Jacksonville 22, Chicago 3
New England 35, Cincinnati 28
Seattle 27, Minnesota 23
Pittsburgh 17, N.Y. Jets 6
Denver 20, Miami 17
Green Bay 16, Detroit 13
Carolina 20, St. Louis 7
San Francisco 31, Arizona 28, OT
San Diego 31, Tampa Bay 24
Philadelphia 17, Washington 14

Monday's game

Kansas City 49, Tennessee 38

Saturday's games

Pittsburgh at N.Y. Giants
Washington at San Francisco
Carolina at Atlanta

Sunday, Dec. 19

Houston at Chicago
Minnesota at Detroit
Seattle at N.Y. Jets
Denver at Kansas City
Buffalo at Cincinnati
Dallas at Philadelphia
San Diego at Cleveland
St. Louis at Arizona
New Orleans at Tampa Bay
Jacksonville at Green Bay
Tennessee at Oakland
Baltimore at Indianapolis

Monday, Dec. 20

New England at Miami

Monday
Chiefs 49, Titans 38

Kansas City	0	14	14	21—49
Tennessee	7	14	7	10—38

First Quarter

Ten—Brown 1 run (Anderson kick), 7:19.

Second Quarter

Ten—Bennett 42 pass from Volek (Anderson kick), 13:27.

KC—Kennison 58 pass from Green (Tynes kick), 12:28.

KC—Morton 30 pass from Green (Tynes kick), 1:17.

Ten—Bennett 22 pass from Volek (Anderson kick), :09.

Third Quarter

KC—Blaylock 1 run (Tynes kick), 10:26.

Ten—Bennett 7 pass from Volek (Anderson kick), 7:22.

KC—L.Johnson 46 run (Tynes kick), 6:29.

Fourth Quarter

KC—L.Johnson 41 run (Tynes kick), 4:49.

Ten—Mason 4 pass from Volek (Anderson kick), 2:26.

Ten—FG Anderson 27, 1:39.

KC—Kennison 9 pass from Green (Tynes kick), :32.

KC—Mitchell 39 fumble return (Tynes kick), :08.

A—68,932.

	KC	Ten
First downs	24	30
Total Net Yards	363	542
Rushes-yards	24-146	33-163
Passing	217	379
Punt Returns	1-4	2-0
Kickoff Returns	7-144	8-148
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	18-32-1	29-43-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-7	2-17
Punts	5-38.0	4-36.8
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	5-4
Penalties-Yards	7-58	13-104
Time of Possession	22:01	37:59

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing—Kansas City, L.Johnson 7-104, Blaylock 14-51, Green 1-(minus 1), Morton 1-(minus 8). **Tennessee**, Brown 15-91, A.Smith 19-31, Volek 2-24, Fleming 1-13, Holcombe 5-4.

Passing—Kansas City, Green 18-32-1-244. **Tennessee**, Volek 29-43-0-426.

Receiving—Kansas City, Gonzalez 7-76, Kennison 2-67, Morton 2-46, Blaylock 2-22, L.Johnson 2-19, Horn 1-27, Dunn 1-13, D.Hall 1-(minus 2). **Tennessee**, Bennett 12-233, Meier 4-50, Mason 3-22, A.Smith 2-38, Kinney 2-10, Fleming 2-4, McAddley 1-36, Troupe 1-16, Brown 1-13, Berlin 1-4.

Missed field goal—Tennessee, Anderson 50 (SH).

Points: Bennett, Volek have career games in loss

POINTS, FROM BACK PAGE

"It's just a shame it comes like this," Bennett said. "That's about the hardest I've seen a group of guys play for 60 minutes, and for it to turn out like this is tough."

It's been that kind of season for the Titans, who made the playoffs the past two years.

The Titans had gone ahead 38-35 when rookie Randy Starks pounced on Tony Richardson's bobbled handoff at the Kansas City 17, and Gary Anderson kicked a 27-yard field goal with 1:39 remaining. Then the Chiefs, who got two touchdown runs of 46 and 41 yards from Larry Johnson, surged back.

"I was excited, I was pumped," Johnson said. "As soon as I got my chance and my shot, I did everything I had to do and break tackles."

Tennessee tried a hook-and-ladder play after Kennison's go-ahead TD, but Kawika Mitchell went 39 yards with a fumble for Kansas City's final touchdown.

"This was one of those games that just ended up being a shootout," Green said. "We were behind, clawing our way back and got in position very late in the game to get it done."

The Titans led much of the night and came back to tie it 35-35 on a 4-yard TD reception by Derrick Mason moments before Green's exchange with fullback Richardson fell to the ground.

A strong second half allowed the Chiefs to overcome Bennett, who easily bettered Denver's Rod Smith's 208 yards against Atlanta on Oct. 31. Bennett, who needed intravenous fluids at halftime, set the season high for yards with a nifty move on a fade pattern for a 7-yard touchdown early in the second half. That gave the Titans a 28-21 lead.

"I felt I could beat the DB every time," Bennett said. "I didn't feel our offense in general could be stopped."

Johnson, who has emerged from coach Dick Vermeil's doghouse with a burst, rushed for 104 yards on only seven carries in place of injured star Priest Holmes.

Tennessee's Chris Brown went over 1,000 yards rushing for the season on the opening series, but he also fumbled twice. He had a 1-yard TD run before leaving at halftime with a recurrence of his turf toe injury; he gained 91 yards.

He soon was followed to the sideline by tackle Fred Miller (ankle) and center Justin Hartwig (finger).

Kennison also had a big night that featured a 58-yard TD reception as both defenses kept losing track of opposing receivers.

"I don't know how many yards they got," Vermeil said, "but they got a lot."

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SPORTS

Phoenix again soars into triple digits, routs Magic, Page 26

The sign of points to come

Chiefs rally to top Titans in wild, offensive show

BY BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — For two also-rans, the Chiefs and Titans sure know how to put on a show. A long, wild, controversial show.

The Monday night showcase featured 925 yards of offense, a season-high receiving performance, a highly debatable penalty, a bunch of comebacks — and, finally, a smile on the face of Kansas City coach Dick Vermeil after a 49-38 victory.

"I'm sure it was entertaining," said Vermeil, who scowled at his porous defense most of the night. "Some people may have turned their sets off early. I noticed that a lot of people left the game, the stands had empty seats.

"Pro football is pro football. Two teams, we were both in the playoffs last year and for one reason or another neither team is in the playoffs this year. But that doesn't mean we aren't good football teams or can't play exciting football."

Or controversial.

Kansas City (5-8), which won 13 games last season, was helped greatly by a phantom penalty, then got the winning points on a 9-yard touchdown catch by Eddie Kennison with 32 seconds left.

Trent Green capped a 64-yard drive in just over a minute with his third touchdown pass.

One play earlier, referee Tom White called a personal foul on rookie Travis LaBoy for a hit to Green's helmet. But LaBoy clearly hit Green on the shoulder.

"I am disappointed in the performance of Tom White and the job he did officiating that game," said coach Jeff Fisher, who as co-chairman of the NFL competition committee rarely criticizes officials. "You've got to let players play."

One player who played his best was Titans receiver Drew Bennett, a former college quarterback. He had 233 yards receiving, a career high and the most in the league this season. Bennett caught three touchdown passes from Billy Volek, who threw for a career-high 426 yards in replacing the injured Steve McNair — one of nine Titans starters not on hand; three more left during the game.

But it wasn't enough for undermanned Tennessee (4-9), which gained 542 yards and lost on a night that even featured a snow shower in Music City.

SEE POINTS ON PAGE 30

AP

Chiefs wide receiver Johnnie Morton celebrates his touchdown catch in the second quarter at the expense of Titans safety Scott McGarrahan. Kansas City surrendered 542 yards of offense but still won the shootout.

Red Sox resigned to fact Martinez will leave for New York, but it's Mets, not Yankees
Page 28

Strickland gives Wake something in reserve, picks up slack for late-arriving starters
Page 25

NHL set to reject players' offer, likely signaling end to season Page 25