

Nation

Nationline



By Al Behrman, AP

In Peebles, Ohio: Police carry away Bob Larson after he interfered with removal of a monument Monday.

Ten Commandments moved from schools

At least 30 people were detained Monday for hindering workers who had been ordered to remove the Ten Commandments from school grounds in West Union, Ohio. Several hundred people protested a federal judge's order to remove the commandments from four schools. Some tried to block a crane from taking the 800-pound granite tablets from Peebles and West Union high schools. The protesters were detained at West Union High. Protesters gave way to workers after praying with sheriff's deputies at North Adams High. A crane lifted the tablets, and they were removed on a truck.

The Adams County school district, about 60 miles east of Cincinnati, is challenging a judge's ruling that the displays violated separation of church and state. "We have to make the decision in America if there's going to be local control of what we're going to teach our children," protester Dave Daubenmire said.

Man with grenade caught in Washington

Police arrested a man near the main railway station in Washington, D.C., after he pulled the safety pin from a hand grenade, Capitol Police spokeswoman Jessica Gissubel said. The man had entered a store in the shopping arcade at Union Station about 8 p.m. and demanded \$20, according to Amtrak. The clerk refused and called for help. The man ran from the station and was surrounded by Amtrak and U.S. Capitol police several blocks from the U.S. Capitol. He pulled the pin and threatened to throw the grenade at officers. One officer tackled the man, and another officer seized the grenade. It didn't explode, and no one was hurt, Gissubel said. A bomb squad removed the grenade. Authorities were questioning the man and examining the grenade. They didn't identify him. A grenade found in the suspect's bag was a dud.

Mayors support Bush's homeless plan

President Bush's plan to end chronic homelessness in 10 years won support from the U.S. Conference of Mayors. During the closing session of the five-day conference in Denver, the 225 mayors endorsed the proposal, which seeks permanent housing and services for chronically homeless people, freeing resources for people who are temporarily homeless. Major cities have been asked to develop solutions by working with non-profit groups and businesses and submit them by January.



By Pam Spaulding, The (Louisville) Courier-Journal, via AP

Ex-priest pleads guilty

In La Grange, Ky: Louis Miller, a retired Roman Catholic priest, consults lawyer David Lambertus. Miller, 72, pleaded guilty to 14 felony counts of indecent and immoral acts with seven boys and a girl. The abuse took place in the early 1970s. He already is serving 20 years for 50 sex-related convictions.

Fire forecast for West a mixed bag

California researchers say climate variations in fire-prone parts of the West indicate a mixed outlook for the wildfire season. A severe season last year burned almost 7 million acres. Using 21 years of data, scientists at Scripps Institution of Oceanography linked climate to fire severity by measuring the effect of moisture in the preceding two years on different types of vegetation. The more moisture recorded in grassy areas, for instance, the more likely a buildup in "fuels" that dry and then burn.

The study in the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* suggests that the drought in the West should mean that a below-average number of acres will burn in most Western deserts and basins, above-average numbers in the southern Rockies and mountains of Arizona and New Mexico, and medium to high numbers in the Sierra Nevada. Over the past 10 years, an average of 101,600 fires have burned 4.7 million acres annually.

— Patrick O'Driscoll

Airport gets high-tech air traffic control

A new generation of air traffic control technology was implemented at Philadelphia International Airport. The airport is the first to rely on the new system. The Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System is estimated to cost \$1.69 billion and will be deployed in 167 airports over the next eight years. STARS allows more planes to fly safely in increasingly crowded airspace and reduces the workload for controllers, officials say. Controllers say STARS has drop-down menus and monitors that present detailed, synchronized information and is easier to use than the old system, which was a jumble of knobs, monitors and displays.

Mars probe's launch postponed again

Thunderstorms forced NASA to postpone the launch of a Mars robot for a second day. NASA managers rescheduled it for 1:58 p.m. today. The Mars Exploration Rover is the first of two probes to be launched this month on a mission to find water on Earth's neighbor and to determine whether it was there long enough to support life.

By John Bacon with staff and wire reports

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Cities in need selling themselves

Corporate cash rolls in

By Larry Copeland
USA TODAY

For sale: your city.

Cities across the nation are striking deals with corporate sponsors, in effect selling their names and prestige to the highest bidder as they try to ease financial problems without raising taxes.

The deals range from million-dollar contracts that make one soft drink a city's "official beverage" to smaller deals that put company logos on tennis courts and locker rooms.

"I'm probably getting two to three calls a week from cities all over the country asking about our program, especially lately," says Mary Braunwarth, who runs a city-corporate sponsorship program for San Diego.

The city has the nation's most comprehensive such effort. It has rung up more than \$5 million in 3½ years from lucrative deals that include contracts with Verizon for wireless services, Chevrolet for beach patrol cars and Pepsi as the exclusive vendor for 475 soda machines on city property. The money might seem a pittance in the city's \$740 million annual



By Sandy S. Huffaker Jr. for USA TODAY

Chevy sponsorship: Lifeguard Kerry Houlihan patrols the Pacific Beach area in May in San Diego. Chevrolet provided the city with vehicles in exchange for placing the company's logo on the cars.

operating budget. But San Diego's program costs only \$145,000 a year.

The trend is being driven by city officials trying to balance budgets, says Douglas Peterson, who studies the issue for the National League of Cities. "Citizens expect more efficiency from government," he says. "They don't want property taxes to increase, and they don't want sales taxes to increase."

Like states, cities have been hit by the recession, which has limited the revenue they receive from sales and business taxes. Among the sponsorships

that help fill the gap:

► Portland, Ore., had 92 basketball courts resurfaced by Nike. In exchange, the company was allowed to put its famous swoosh logo on the courts.

► In Asheville, N.C., the Buncombe County Parks and Recreation Department is offering naming rights to tennis courts, swimming pools and hiking trails. "Our objective is to keep costs as low as possible for our taxpayers," administrative officer Rhett Langston says.

► Phoenix is considering a program that could generate up to \$1 million annually. Phila-

delphia hopes for \$3 million.

► Palos Heights, a suburb of Chicago, is trying to sell naming rights to Lake Katherine, a 158-acre nature preserve.

► New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg hired a consultant to consider selling sponsorships for parks in the city.

Corporate sponsors pay for jazz concerts, opera houses and other events that many cities host. And some cities have reaped millions of dollars by selling naming rights for stadiums and arenas to corporations. Dozens of sporting events — from college football

bowl games to golf and tennis tournaments and stock car races — use a corporate sponsor's name in their titles.

Opponents decry the growing popularity of such deals.

"I think Americans are sick and tired of commercialism intruding in their life and culture," says Gary Ruskin, head of Commercial Alert, a non-profit group based in Oregon that opposes commercialism in government.

Braunwarth says San Diego didn't launch its corporate partnerships "because of budget considerations." In 1999, she says, Coca-Cola approached the city with a beverage deal. She cut a better one with Pepsi: The 12-year agreement will be worth up to \$10 million, depending on sales.

Braunwarth says there was considerable resistance at first from San Diegans to the corporate sponsorships.

"We got a sense of fear (from the community), of the sense that this could be a slippery slope" toward commercialism, she says. "We worked really, really hard to assure the naysayers that that wasn't what we were looking to do."

Ruskin says he sees a backlash against cities selling themselves. He notes that Boston, San Francisco and Los Angeles have rejected sponsorships for subway stations, a football stadium and other facilities.

FBI draining pond in its anthrax investigation

Search for evidence could take three to four weeks

By Toni Lory
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The FBI began draining a pond near Frederick, Md., on Monday, looking for evidence in the October 2001 anthrax attacks in what federal law enforcement sources called a precautionary step in the investigation.

Three federal law enforcement sources said the FBI's decision to drain the 1-acre, spring-fed pond about 46 miles northwest of Washington was not prompted by any new development in the probe, in which there have been no arrests. The attacks killed five people.

One of the sources said investigators decided to drain the pond because they did not want to be criticized later for not following a potential lead. The pond is in a city-owned forest near the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, one of several U.S. labs that has had anthrax stocks.

It is one of 10 ponds near Gambrill State Park that FBI divers searched in December and January after some theorized that the anthrax attacker could have discarded equipment there. During those searches, a plastic box and rope were found in the pond that now is being drained. The discovery led some investigators to speculate that the culprit could have kept the box in water while using it to load powder containing anthrax into envelopes that were sent to media outlets and two U.S. senators. The theorizers say this could be how the culprit was not contaminated. However, other law enforcement sources dispute that theory.

The theory was buoyed when initial tests on the rope indicated traces of anthrax, four federal law enforcement sources familiar with the probe told USA TODAY last month. But the sources said further testing contradicted those results, casting doubt among investigators about whether the box and rope were related to the attacks.

Tests on the rope and box are continuing. City and federal officials told Frederick residents that the FBI's work at the pond posed no danger to the public. Frederick Police Chief Kim Dine said the FBI

Vaccines considered in monkeypox scare

By Anita Manning
USA TODAY

The number of people in the Midwest possibly infected with monkeypox, a close relative of smallpox, jumped Monday to at least 34. Health officials are considering whether to recommend smallpox vaccination for people who may have been exposed to infected prairie dogs and other exotic pets.

Monkeypox is not as severe or as contagious as smallpox, but experts admit they don't know how it would behave if it spread widely here because no one has seen a case in the USA until now.

Fearing that the rare African virus could spread to wild animal populations, health and agriculture officials in the three affected states — Wisconsin, Indiana and Illinois — are tracking down prairie dogs, Gambian giant rats and other exotic animals that may be infected. They are urging pet owners to notify health officials if they have sick animals.

The outbreak came to light after several people involved in the sale or purchase of prairie dogs from a Milwaukee animal distributor fell ill. The Wisconsin dealer bought the prairie dogs and a Gambian giant rat, which was sick at the time of sale, from an Illinois distributor in mid-April. Since then, the animals have been sold at pet stores and at "swap meets," gatherings where animals are traded and sold.

"At this point, we don't know how many animals are involved, and we don't know the scope of the problem in terms of affected areas," said Stephen Ostroff of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He said six people are hospitalized with symptoms that include fever, pustular rash and cough; none is gravely ill. All those affected had direct contact with sick prairie dogs or, in one case, a sick rabbit that had been exposed to an ill prairie dog.

The worry now, said infectious disease specialist Kurt Reed of the Marshfield (Wis.) Clinic, is keeping the virus from spreading to squirrels, mice or other local animals. "Everyone hopes this is a one-shot deal for the history books, but look what happened with West Nile virus." West Nile emerged in 1999 in New York City and has spread nationwide and into Canada.



USA TODAY



By Timothy Jacobsen, AP

Spring-fed pond: The site is near a lab that has had anthrax stocks.

tested the pond's water "hundreds of times" and found no traces of anthrax.

Investigators also were interested in the ponds because they are

near the former home of Steven Hatfill, an ex-researcher at Fort Detrick. Last summer, Attorney General John Ashcroft called Hatfill "a person of interest" in the probe.

Hatfill, 48, has denied involvement in the attacks. For 10 months, he has been under round-the-clock surveillance by the FBI. His lawyer, Tom Connolly, declined to comment.

The FBI has contracted with Phillips and Jordan, a contractor based in Knoxville, Tenn., to drain the 4- to 5-foot-deep pond.

One law enforcement source said Monday that removing the water will take two to four days. The FBI then will search the bottom of the pond for evidence, which could take three to four weeks, the source said.

Dine said that the water will be dumped into other ponds, and that the FBI believes the drained pond's spring will re-fill it.

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