



Stefani returns home
Tickets for Orange County's pop diva go on sale today **D5**



Lost and found
Man develops sneakers with a built in GPS after his young son goes missing **C8**

Twice as nice
Hesperia Christian boys and girls basketball teams go undefeated **C1**



DAILY PRESS

GOOD MORNING, HIGH DESERT

Saturday

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Inside today

Mr. 'Smitty' Smith goes to Washington, D.C.

Hesperia City Council members and other officials are headed to the nation's capital to lobby for funding for six major projects for 2008.



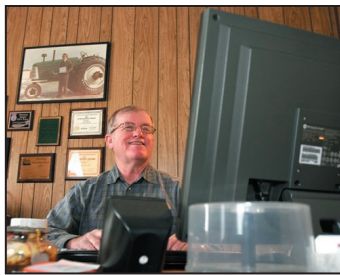
See page B1

Gas Spy

Adelanto	\$ 2.44
Circle K, 11724 Air Expy.	
Apple Valley	\$ 2.45
7-Eleven, 17979 U.S. Highway 18	
Victorville	\$ 2.45
The Depot 8, 12040 Amargoso Rd.	
Hesperia	\$ 2.45
Pilot, 8701 U.S. Highway 395	

Source: msn Autos

Coming Sunday



Farming the 'net

Online forums, message boards and chat rooms are replacing rural coffee shops and feed mills as places for farmers to talk about farming and trade tips.

Today's Forecast

HIGH 62°
LOW 42°

More weather information/B7

News Flash



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5 SECTIONS
64 PAGES



Page edited by Justin D. Beckett

Judge: Jessica's Law not retroactive

Prop. 83, heavily passed in the fall, will not affect residency for current sex offenders

By RYAN ORR
Staff Writer

SACRAMENTO — A federal judge ruled Friday that a voter-approved restriction on where sex offenders can live can't be applied retroactively, potentially freeing thousands of parolees from a ban on

living within 2,000 feet of a school, park or place where children gather.

The decision relieved Assemblywoman Sharon Runner, R-Lancaster, and her husband State Sen. George Runner, R-Lancaster, who helped author the bill and collected more than one million signatures to

have it put on the November election ballot as an initiative.

U.S. District Judge Lawrence Karlton said there was nothing in Proposition 83, commonly known as Jessica's Law, that specified its provisions were intended to be applied retroactively.

"The court finds that the law does not apply to individuals who were convicted and who were paroled, given probation or released from incarceration prior to its ef-

fective date," he wrote.

"We're glad to get that behind us and take some of the ambiguity out of the law," said George Runner.

San Bernardino County had specified in their sex offender ordinance that the residency restriction that has caused so



SHARON RUNNER

much controversy would not apply to sex offenders already living within 2,000 feet of a school or park. The county did create predator-free zones in which sex offenders are prohibited from coming within 300 feet of schools or parks.

Proposition 83, approved Nov. 7, 2006, by 70.5 percent of voters, took effect the next day.

In addition to barring sex

PROP 83/A7

Is the Victor Valley's number up for DMV expansion?



The governor's next budget could bring new services, facilities to the area

By HILLARY BORRUD
Staff Writer

Officials from the Victor Valley have been working to bring more Department of Motor Vehicles services to the area for nearly a year, and now it looks as if their number could be called soon.

With \$3.8 million for an expansion of the Victorville DMV field office in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's 2007-2008 budget, the administration has recognized population growth in the area and the need for more services, said Sen. George Runner.

"We worked on a couple of smaller issues, but ultimately it's just the reality that the services have not reflected the growth of the area," said Runner, who has been following the issue over the last year.

If the money remains in the budget and is approved by the legislature and governor, the customer service area at the DMV office and the parking lot could be expanded, according to state Department of Finance documents.

The expansion would add about



Courtney Hainey lifts Kimora Hainey while waiting to be served at the Victorville DMV. The DMV location is in line for a multi-million dollar expansion, should the governor's current budget make it through the legislature.

James Quigg / Staff Photographer

3,000 square feet to the existing 5,700-square-foot building, said Armando Botello, a spokesman for the DMV.

"The Victorville field office frequently has customers waiting outside in over 100 degree heat because the lobby is too small," the Department of Finance wrote in a capital outlay

budget change proposal.

The crowded public service area also makes it difficult to protect personal information of customers at the site, the report said.

The weather was much cooler on Wednesday afternoon, but a line still emerged periodically from the building as the number of

customers waiting to be served ebbed and flowed.

Carl and Linda Bettis of Victorville said when they arrived at about 12:30 p.m., there were no parking spots.

DMV/A7

Mitzelfelt continues fight for Camp Rock Road

County application for authority over road could set land-use precedent

By HILLARY BORRUD
Staff Writer

LUCERNE VALLEY — Starting out at Highway 247 in Lucerne Valley and traveling up to Interstate 40 near Daggett, Camp Rock Road is just another road through the remote areas of San Bernardino County.

But the fate of this road could set a precedent for land-use decisions on right-of-way through wilderness areas across the state, as the county tries to wrest authority over the road from the federal government.

Camp Rock Road passes through the Newberry Mountains Wilderness Area, land that is home to desert tortoises, said Jason Fried, desert field organizer for the California Wilderness Coalition.

The county's attempt to take over Camp Rock Road began in 2003, when the Board of Super-



AP Photo/Virginia Mayo

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, left, shares a word with U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, right, and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, center, during a round table meeting of NATO defense ministers in Seville, Spain, on Friday.

Gates says evidence discovered of Iranian help to insurgents

Over two inches of documents may prove transfer of lethal explosives to militants

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — Serial numbers and other markings on bombs suggest that Iranians are linked to deadly explosives used by Iraqi militants, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Friday in some of the administration's first public assertions on evidence the military has collected.

While the Bush administration and military officials have repeatedly said Iranians have been tied

to terrorist bombings in Iraq, they have said little about evidence to bolster such claims, including any documents and other items collected in recent raids in Iraq.

National security officials in Washington and Iraq have been working for weeks on a presentation intended to provide evidence for Bush administration claims of what they say are Iran's meddling and deadly activities.

The materials — which in their classified form include slides and some two inches of documents — provide evidence of Iran's role in

IRAQ/A5

Vegas winnings stolen by clerk, recovered by detective

Video camera catches men red-handed raiding purse

By KATHERINE ROSENBERG
Staff Writer

VICTORVILLE — It was a gamble all around — for both a woman carrying a large Las Vegas jackpot in her purse, and for the gas station attendants who later stole her winnings.

A woman returning from Las Vegas last Sunday reportedly

won \$18,000 in a casino before stopping off in Victorville on her way back to her Santa Clarita home, officials said.

She used the restroom at the Shell gas station at the corner of Palmdale Road and Park Avenue, said Detective Bob Thacker of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Victorville station.

Thacker said around 9:45 p.m. the woman took her purse into

WINNINGS/A4

Million-dollar challenge

Entrepreneur extraordinaire Richard Branson placed a \$25 million prize in front of the world's top scientists in search of a way to remove greenhouse gases from the air. For more, see page A3.

Road: Can't interfere with tortoise habitat

FROM A1

visors approved former Supervisor Bill Postmus' motion to take over authority of the road from the Bureau of Land Management.

On Monday, newly appointed Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt sent a letter to the state director of the Bureau of Land Management pushing for completion of the process.

"We selected Camp Rock simply because it was an easy and certainly non-controversial route across public lands," Mitzelfelt wrote.

"One of our concerns is that it is maintained in a way that protects desert tortoises," Fried said.

Since Camp Rock Road passes through desert tortoise habitat, it needs to be

banked correctly on each side so that the protected animals do not become trapped on the road.

Fried also said that the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976 would be a quicker and more modern way to determine authority over Camp Rock Road, and would allow for public feedback and environmental impact studies.

Both environmentalists and the county have recognized that how ever remote Camp Rock Road is, it could impact policy across the state.

Postmus said when he first applied for the title that he wanted to make it more difficult for the BLM and other federal agencies to limit pub-

lic access to roads and trails within the county's jurisdiction, according to a 2003 press release.

"It's been four years since we filed ... and we feel that it's been far too long that the BLM has taken to process our request and we feel that we're entitled to have it issued and decided in a timely manner," Mitzelfelt said. "We hope now that they will move forward and issue us the title."

"We also would like to be the first county in the country to receive that title because then we will be part of institutionalizing that process," he said.

Hillary Borrud may be reached at 951-6234 or hborrud@vvdaily.com.

Winnings: Man threw evidence in Dumpster

FROM A1

the restroom and left, accidentally leaving the purse and her big winnings behind.

At 10 p.m. an unidentified woman and man went into the restroom, and then went to the attendant to say that a purse had been left inside.

"They didn't just bring the purse out with them, they just told the clerk it was in there," Thacker said.

It turns out that couple may have stolen what they believed was all the cash in the purse before reporting it stolen and taking off, Thacker said.

Around 11 p.m. when business slowed down, one of the clerks went to the bathroom, retrieved the purse and brought it to the front register.

"He looks through the purse and sees \$5,000, still wrapped with the \$5,000 marker on it. He hands it to the other clerk

who walks in back, counts it and hands it back. The first clerk then puts it in his pocket," Thacker said.

Every last move was caught on the store's video surveillance system.

The victim showed up at the gas station around 1:30 a.m. Monday morning asking for the purse but the clerk told her he hadn't seen it, Thacker said.

"When she goes into the restroom he takes the purse outside and throws it in the Dumpster," Thacker said.

Again, caught on tape.

The manager was called to the store and a deputy took a report of the lost property. Both clerks denied having anything to do with it, Thacker said.

"I'm a Christian and I don't lie. I never saw any money," Thacker recalled one of the

two clerks as saying.

But the attendants, later identified as Nick Martinez, 46, and Nicholas Vieira, 23, changed their tune when Thacker showed them the surveillance tape.

"When I showed them the video Martinez reached into his waistband and pulled out \$4,983. They said they spent the rest on food," Thacker said.

Officials suspect that the first couple made off with the additional \$13,000. They have few leads in identifying the pair, authorities said.

Thacker said that both men recently moved to the area from Missouri and are living in a hotel room near the gas station.

"They weren't very good liars, and you could tell they hadn't done this kind of thing before. They said they were low on cash and the opportunity presented itself," Thacker said.

The recovered funds were returned to the victim.

Katherine Rosenberg can be reached at 951-6276 or by e-mail at krosenberg@vvdaily.com.

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Iraq: Raids last month picked up both Iraqis and Iranians

FROM A1

supplying Iraqi militants with highly sophisticated and lethal improvised explosive devices and other weaponry. They also lay out Iranian efforts to train Iraqis in military techniques.

Yet, government officials say there is some disagreement about how much to make public to support the administration's case. Intelligence officials worry the sources of their information could dry up.

Among the evidence the administration will present are weapons that were seized in U.S.-led raids on caches around Iraq, one military official in Washington said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly.

Other evidence includes documents captured when U.S.-led forces raided an Iranian office Jan. 11 in Irbil in northern Iraq, the official said. Tehran said it was a government liaison office, but the U.S. military said five Iranians detained in the raid were connected to an Iranian Revolutionary Guard faction that funds and arms insurgents in Iraq.

The assertions have been met with skepticism by some lawmakers still fuming over intelligence reports used by the administration to propel the country to war with Iraq in 2003. Gates' comments came as a new Pentagon inspector general's report criticized prewar Defense Department assertions of al-Qaida connections to Iraq.

Speaking with reporters in Seville, Spain, on Friday before traveling to Munich, Gates told reporters that markings on explosives provide "pretty good" evidence that Iranians are supplying either weapons or technology for Iraqi extremists.

"I think there's some serial numbers, there may be some markings on some of the projectile fragments that we found" that point to Iran, he said.

Gates' remarks left unclear how the U.S. knows the serial numbers are traceable to Iran and whether such weapons would have been sent to Iraq by the Iranian government or by private arms dealers.

Explosives have been a leading killer of U.S. forces in Iraq, where more than 3,000 U.S. troops have died in the nearly four-year-old war.

In Iraq on Friday, the military reported three more American soldiers killed in combat, pushing the U.S. death toll to 33 in the first eight days of the month.

Separately, U.S. helicopters targeting insurgents mistakenly killed at least five allied Kurdish militiamen in the northern city of Mosul early Friday.

Last week, Gates said that U.S. military officers in Baghdad had been planning to brief reporters on what was known about Iranian involvement in Iraq but that he and other senior officials had delayed the briefing to assure the information was accurate.

On Friday, White House spokeswoman Dana Perino said such information would come from U.S. officials in Iraq, though she did not say when.

"There has been discussion about how to detail out some of that evidence," she told reporters. "Decisions on that are being made out of Baghdad."

State Department spokesman Tom Casey said Friday that officials hoping to publicly release the information face another problem as well.

He said, "Under the circumstances and given the attention



AP Photo/Dennis Cook
Senate Armed Services Committee Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., chairs a hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington on Friday on the Pentagon's planning prior to the Iraq War.

Hit by friendly fire

At least five Kurdish troops were mistakenly killed Friday in a U.S. airstrike in Mosul.



Anbar province
Three U.S. soldiers killed in fighting Thursday

Southern Iraq
Roadside bomb killed a British soldier; wounded three others Thursday

South of Baghdad
U.S. airstrike Thursday night killed eight suspected insurgents and destroyed a building

Imam
Gunmen dressed in Iraqi army uniforms kidnapped 13 civilians, killing 11

SOURCE: ESRI AP

that this has gotten, we want to make sure that we provide you the best information possible but do so in a way that doesn't compromise sources and methods, that doesn't make it harder for us to deal with the situation that's there."

Gates also told reporters that he was surprised that raids last month by coalition and Iraqi forces in Iraq swept up some Iranians.

"I don't think there was surprise that the Iranians were actually involved, I think there was surprise we actually picked up some," he said.

He and other U.S. officials have said for some time that Iranians, and possibly the government of Iran, have been providing weapons technology and perhaps some explosives to Iraqi fighters.

Gates, who attended his first NATO defense ministers meeting in Seville this week before flying to Munich for a security conference, said Iran is "very much involved in providing either the technology or the weapons themselves for these explosively formed projectiles."

He acknowledged the Iranian weapons are not a large percentage of the roadside bombs used in Iraq, but he said, "They're extremely lethal."

Gates said the recent raids combined with the movement of an additional U.S. aircraft carrier into the Persian Gulf have created a stir, but he said the Bush administration had no intention of attacking Iran.

Asked about the Defense Department inspector general's report criticizing the Pentagon's use of prewar intelligence, Gates said he hadn't yet read it.

But, he added, "based on my whole career, I believe that all intelligence activities need to be carried on through established institutions, and where there is appropriate oversight. And if the intelligence isn't adequate, then changes need to be made in these institutions to improve the intelligence."

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, however, has offered assur-

ances that the security operation will not target any specific religious or ethnic group and that the law will be enforced evenhandedly.

"Some say that the plan targets Shiites, and others say it targets Sunnis. I want to say it targets all, but all those who break the law," al-Maliki said last month.

But one Iraqi general, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged there were differences between U.S. and Iraqi planners on the best way to conduct the operation, with each side insisting on the final say. The Iraqi said his colleagues have the feeling the Americans "don't trust us."

The U.S. officers said they had no intention of knuckling under to the Iraqi demands and were confident the Iraqis would come around in the end. But the dispute has resulted in delays, they said.

Those differences have also held up a final decision how to carve up the city into the nine zones and where to deploy Iraqi units that are being sent in for the operation, U.S. and Iraqi officials said.

Iraqi commanders are supposed to send about 8,000 mostly Shiite and Kurdish troops into the city from southern and northern Iraq. Although Iraqi units have been arriving on schedule, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said last week that they were coming with only 55 to 65 percent of their intended troops.

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State water agency suspends diving program after two deaths

SACRAMENTO (AP) — A state agency suspended its underwater inspections of an aqueduct that supplies water to millions of people following the mysterious deaths of two divers.

Department of Water Resources spokeswoman Sue Sims said Friday that the 11 remaining members of the dive team would not perform any inspections, maintenance or repair work while inves-

tigators try to determine how two men died at a state pumping plant. "At this time, our employees are not diving pending the results of the investigation," Sims wrote in an e-mail to The Associated Press.

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Prop 83: Was initially blocked day after election

FROM A1
 offenders from living within 2,000 feet of places where children gather, the measure increases prison terms for sex offenders and requires lifetime satellite tracking for rapists, child molesters and other felony sex criminals after their release from prison. The Sacramento case is one of two lawsuits that asked federal judges to interpret the restrictions. A day after the election, U.S. District Judge Susan Illston in San Francisco temporarily blocked the 2,000-foot

residency requirement from applying to currently registered sex offenders who are not on parole or probation. Karlton's decision came in response to a lawsuit filed by three unidentified sex offenders, including one on parole and one on probation, who said they live within 2,000 feet of schools or parks. They sought a preliminary injunction blocking enforcement of the residency restrictions, but Karlton denied the motion saying it was unnecessary because the restrictions

didn't apply to them. Attorneys representing the governor, attorney general and local prosecutors have disagreed whether the proposition should be applied retroactively. Only the attorney general's office said it should be retroactive, an interpretation Karlton said was "frivolous." "While individuals who have opposed Prop 83 have claimed there was confusion as to whether the law can be applied retroactively, Judge Karlton made it clear that it

is well-established that California laws apply prospectively," said Sharon Runner. One of the concerns in the High Desert regarding the residency restriction is that the rural areas of the Victor Valley could act as safe living areas for sex offenders coming out of jail who need to obey the 2,000 foot restriction. Associated press writer Steve Lawrence contributed to this article. Ryan Orr may be reached at 951-6277 or rorr@vvdailypress.com.

Convicted serial molester sentenced to 800 years

SAN JOSE (AP) — The former roommate of notorious child predator Dean Arthur Schwartzmiller was sentenced Friday to hundreds of years in prison for molesting a 3-year-old he baby-sat and two other boys. Fred Everts, 36, was silent as he was sentenced in Santa Clara County Superior Court to 800 years to life in prison. Everts, who was shackled at the wrists and ankles, was convicted last year of 17 felony counts of child molestation and taking pornographic pictures of children, and one misdemeanor count of possessing child pornography. The victims were 3, 9 and 11 years

old at the time of the abuse. His sentence was compounded under California's three-strikes law because of two felony convictions in Oregon in 1993 for sodomy and sexual abuse on his young stepson. Steve Fein, who prosecuted Everts and Schwartzmiller, added that Everts admitted molesting about 40 children, including his 3-month-old biological son.



EVERTS



Courtney Hailey, left, holds Kimora Hailey while waiting in line at the Victorville DMV. Victorville's DMV has a reputation for long lines and waits. Photos by James Quigg / Staff Photographer

DMV: Many head north to Barstow for service

FROM A1
 Instead of waiting around, they went to a nearby 99 cent store and returned later when the crowd had dispersed a bit. Some officials in Apple Valley say they think the valley needs a second DMV office and have been exploring the possibility of bringing a new office to the town or another local city for about a year. When county areas are included, the Victorville DMV office serves a population of about 400,000 people, whereas the Barstow office serves a population of approximately 35,000, said Town Councilman Scott Nassif. Nassif said he, Apple Valley Mayor Pro Tem Tim Jasper, Town Councilman Peter Allan and Town Manager Bruce Williams met with DMV representatives in Sacramento in early January. A DMV report on service needs across the state has yet to be released, but Nassif said, "We were hoping that the report would identify a need, which we already recognized, and we were hoping monies would be allocated for those needs." Long waiting times at the Victorville DMV have inspired many people to drive to Barstow



Department of Motor Vehicles customers line up early, before the office opens in Victorville. The office may be due for major expansion.

instead, although that practice has been going on long enough that the Barstow office may now be clogged with customers as well. John Cowans of Victorville said he used to drive to the Barstow DMV when he sold cars and would refer other people to the office as well. "The wait was extremely long," he said of Victorville, but Wednesday it took only 30 minutes for him to get through the line. Trina Siverts used to drive to Barstow but said recently that by the time she drives 35 minutes to get there and stands in line for an hour, she might as well go to the Victorville office. "What's the difference between waiting in Victorville for two hours?" she asked. Siverts said she started handling some of her needs through Trucker's Permits and More in Victorville, a mobile service that helps truckers obtain registration and other services but also handles private vehicles. Jolene Saldana, the owner of Trucker's Permits and More, said she has lived in the High Desert since 2003 and has seen lines at the DMV get longer. "I know the DMV's system has gotten a little better in terms of

numbering, but it doesn't really reduce the wait," she said. "I see people really angry at the DMV." Customers coming out of the DMV office Wednesday afternoon had mixed experiences. Some said they had been served quickly, but others who came in for services like driver's licenses waited longer. It took two hours for Julie Udjohn of Hesperia to take the written driver's license test and have her photo taken, she said. The deadline for the legislature to approve the governor's budget is June 15 and the governor's deadline to act upon the budget is June 30, said H.D. Palmer, deputy director for the Department of Finance. If the Victorville DMV expansion remains in the budget, DMV spokesman Botello said, construction could begin in 2008 and be completed in 2009. Hillary Borrud may be reached at 951-6234 or hborrud@vvdailypress.com.

MOTORISTS WHO VISITED DMV OFFICES			
	2004	2005	2006
Lancaster	179,335	187,083	190,166
Victorville	141,420	158,836	164,605
Palmdale*			146,061

MOTORISTS ACTUALLY SERVED AT DMV OFFICES			
	2004	2005	2006
Lancaster	169,490	178,248	181,992
Victorville	138,283	154,249	159,900
Palmdale*			140,009

*Palmdale only one year of data is available.
 Source: California Department of Motor Vehicles

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