

RECYCLED MEASURE



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB THAYER

Discarded plastic bottles add to the litter along Westminster Street in Providence last week.

An effort to bottle-up litter

With an eye to improve recycling and conservation, Senate Majority Leader Teresa Paiva Weed sponsors the latest incarnation of the bottle bill, which would add a 5-cent deposit on all types of redeemable drink containers.

BY PETER B. LORD and NATALIE GARCIA
JOURNAL ENVIRONMENT WRITERS

It's back. A bottle bill, a divisive issue that legislators battled over for years without ever approving, is once again on the General Assembly's agenda. Things have changed in the six or so years since the General Assembly last contemplated a bottle bill. Connecticut and Massachusetts are considering expanding their bottle-redemption laws. We all use a lot more bottles. And many of us throw them away. According to the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation, the agency that runs the state Central Landfill, in Johnston, Rhode Islanders bought 614 million beverage containers in 2005 that would qualify under the proposed

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EXTRA: Read the proposed bottle bill and cast your vote for or against, at: projo.com

legislation. Of the beverage containers Resource Recovery tracks, only about a third of them get recycled, said corporation recycling manager Sarah Kite. If the bottle bill passes, customers will pay a nickel for nearly every beverage container they buy. The bottles' cost could be redeemed at large retail stores and state-run redemption centers. The bill covers glass, plastic and aluminum containers that hold carbonated and

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What the bill calls for:

- Consumers will pay a fee of no less than five cents for plastic, glass and aluminum beverage containers that will be redeemable upon return of the bottles to a redemption center.
- Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation will be authorized to own and operate statewide redemption centers.
- Large retailers will host reverse vending machines at certain "qualified dealer locations" (determined by RIRRC based on set square footage of the retailer).
- Allow the corporation to collect unclaimed deposits, of which 75 percent will go to the state treasury for the state's general fund; 25 percent stays with the corporation to support municipal and commercial recycling programs.
- Effective date: July 1, 2009

Ability of Iraqi military in question

The government dismisses more than 1,000 soldiers and police officers who refused to fight against Shiite militias.

A secret deal for arms of dubious quality

BY SLOBODAN LEKIC
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD — Iraq's government moved yesterday to restore discipline within the ranks of the security forces, sacking more than 1,300 soldiers and policemen who deserted during recent fighting against Shiite militias in Basra.

The failure of government forces to capture Basra despite superiority in numbers and firepower was an embarrassment to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, who ordered the offensive and personally supervised it during the first week.

It also raised questions whether Iraq's mostly Shiite army and police can confront Shiite militias, including Iranian-backed "special groups," which the U.S. command now considers the

BY SOLOMON MOORE
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD — An \$833-million Iraqi arms deal secretly negotiated with Serbia has underscored Iraq's continuing problems equipping its armed forces, a process that has long been plagued by corruption and inefficiency.

The deal was struck in September without competitive bidding and it sidestepped anti-corruption safeguards, including the approval of senior uniformed Iraqi army officers and an Iraqi contract approval committee. Instead, it was negotiated by a delegation of 22 high-ranking Iraqi officials, without the knowledge of American commanders or many senior Iraqi leaders.

SEE **IRAQ, A5**

SEE **ARMS, A5**

Church under stress awaits pontiff in U.S.

When Pope Benedict XVI arrives tomorrow, he will find a church where parishes are closing and the average age of priests currently active is over 60.

BY LAURIE GOODSTEIN
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Less than two weeks ago, just before the start of the visit by Pope Benedict XVI to the United States, the bishop of Camden, N.J., announced plans to close or merge nearly half the parishes in his diocese. Meanwhile, Catholics in New Orleans; Toledo, Ohio; Boston; New York; and nearly three dozen other dioceses are mourning the loss of parishes and parochial schools they grew up in.

So when the pope arrives in

the United States tomorrow, he will find an American church in which many Catholics are eager not only for his spiritual guidance, but also for his acknowledgment that their church is going through a time of pain and uncertainty.

Hundreds of parishes are being closed and consolidated, and the reasons are usually intertwined with the other big challenges facing the church: a shortage of priests, fallout from the

SEE **POPE, A4**

"We're dealing with a country that does not value transparency, a country that seems to have shortages of everything except time."

CHRISTOPHER HILL
Assistant Secretary of State

He's the voice of America in talks with North Korea

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill, of Little Compton, is at the center of current nuclear negotiations.

BY JOHN E. MULLIGAN
JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — When he was helping to run a rural credit union as a 22-year-old Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon, recalls Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill, he won gestures of thanks and assent after telling several hundred customers why they should fire their miscreant board of directors.

It was the mid-'70s and Hill was only four years removed from the playing fields of Moses Brown School, fresh out of college, and set up a world away from home in Little Compton with a Suzuki 125



AP / WONG MAYE-E

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill in Singapore earlier this month after meeting with a North Korean official.

SEE **HILL, A3**

Faith comes to forefront for Democrats

But the discussion quickly turns to Barack Obama's comments on a "bitter" electorate.

JOURNAL WIRE REPORTS

GRANTHAM, Pa. — It was supposed to be a chance for the Democratic candidates for president to talk about the presence of God in their lives and how often they read the Bible.

But instead, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., used a portion of the the forum held last night at Messiah College in Grantham, Pa., to accused her rival, Sen.

Barack Obama, D-Ill., of repeating the mistakes made by their party's last two losing nominees when he described some U.S. voters as being "bitter."

"You know, the Democratic Party, to be very blunt about it, has been viewed as a party that didn't understand and respect the values and the way of life of so many of our fellow Americans," Clinton said. "We had two very good men and men of faith run for president in 2000 and 2004. But large segments of the electorate concluded that they did not really understand or relate to or, frankly, respect their ways of life."

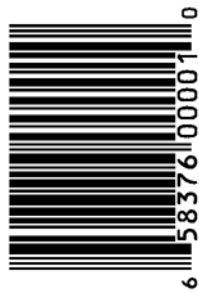
During an address at a fundraising event in California late last month, Obama suggested that some voters "cling" to issues dealing with guns, religion and

SEE **FORUM, A4**



AP / CAROLYN KASTER

Democratic presidential candidates Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama meet briefly last night as they participate in a Compassion Forum at Messiah College in Grantham, Pa.



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RHODE ISLANDER TO HEAD SECRET COURT

A federal judge from Rhode Island, Bruce M. Selya, will soon be the top judge of a secretive federal court that hears appeals involving wiretaps of suspected spies and terrorists. **C1**

NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES

Construction workers tear up a part of the new Yankees Stadium after discovering that a Boston fan had buried a Red Sox jersey in concrete inside the facility. **B4**

PUTTING VACATION TIME TO GOOD USE

Eight ways to keep children engaged, educated and entertained during school vacation week. **D1**

IMMELMAN WINS MASTERS



South African Trevor Immelman handles the wind and pressure of Augusta National far better than any of the golfers chasing him -- even Tiger Woods -- to win the Masters. **B1**