

BLOWN AWAY
Strong winds will make it feel even colder than today's high of 25; cold tonight.
Forecast, A10

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PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY 2008



Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., is greeted by supporters in Las Vegas yesterday. A change in Rhode Island's presidential primary election date could mean local voters would be seeing a lot more of him and other candidates.

A bigger role for R.I.?

Rhode Island and other states are considering moving their primaries ahead so they become players in the choice of the presidential candidates.

BY SCOTT MACKAY
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — If political leaders succeed in moving up Rhode Island's presidential primary, currently set for March 2008, the state will become a player in what may be the most unsettled, unpredictable, longest and costliest presidential campaign in American history.

With more than 650 days left before the November 2008 election, several states that normally hold late primaries are trying to get in on the early action of choosing the Democratic and Republican nomi-

nees. What once was a fairly simple process is about to become a chaotic campaign that will dominate media coverage even as President Bush and a Democratic-controlled Congress try to govern for two more years.

No one in either party knows yet what the nominating calendar of primaries and caucuses will look like. At this point, four states appear to have locked up the early dates for primaries and caucuses on the Democratic side — Iowa (Jan. 14), Nevada (Jan. 19), New Hampshire (Jan. 22) and South Carolina (Jan. 29).

Republicans so far have settled on only the Iowa and New Hampshire dates and a Feb. 2 primary in South Carolina. But many states are toying with or thinking seriously about moving their primaries ahead to become players in the choice of the presidential candidates, in effect creating a national primary on Feb. 5, ensuring an early end to the selection process and a long and bitter eight-month general-election campaign.

Among the states moving to hold their elections earlier are California, New Jersey, Florida and New York — all populous states with many delegates — which would further roll the election system.

Rhode Island's General Assembly

SEE PRIMARY, A4

Bombers defy latest effort to secure Iraq

An attack that kills at least 60 occurs shortly after a U.S. patrol had passed through the area.

BY MARC SANTORA
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Two days after Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki called the opening steps of a security crackdown here a "dazzling success," two car bombs tore through a crowded market and killed at least 60 people yesterday.

The attack occurred only minutes after American soldiers passed through the area on patrol, underscoring the difficult nature of trying to quell violence on Baghdad's streets, where car bombs have been an almost daily occurrence and suicide attacks directed at civilians are so common that many of the markets have been closed to vehicle traffic in recent days.

The blasts yesterday occurred in the mostly Shiite neighborhood of New Baghdad, devastating an open-air market, setting dozens

of cars ablaze and causing the partial collapse of a two-story building that housed several electronics stores.

The street was littered with charred televisions, satellite dishes and small generators. Shattered blue tiles, glass and blood were trampled together as the survivors tried to rush the more than 131 people wounded in the attack to the hospital. They wrapped the dead in rugs and blankets and whatever else they could find.

The explosions occurred within seconds of each other, according to witnesses, and were probably detonated in cars already parked in the area, Iraqi officials said.

Abdul Hussein Ameer, 41, said he ran when he heard the first blast shortly after 3 p.m.; he said he was so familiar with the pat-

rol that he had seen the patrol of cars blaze and causing the partial collapse of a two-story building that housed several electronics stores.

SEE IRAQ, A5

Wounded troops feel forgotten at military hospital

Outpatients and their families at Walter Reed Army Medical Center are often left to fend for themselves.

BY DANA PRIEST
AND ANNE HULL
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — Behind the door of Army Specialist Jeremy Duncan's room, part of the wall is torn and hangs in the air, weighted down with black mold. When the wounded combat engineer stands in his shower and looks up, he can see the bathtub on the floor above through a rotted hole. The entire building, constructed between the world wars, often smells like greasy carry-out. Signs of neglect are everywhere: mouse droppings,



WASHINGTON POST / MICHEL DU CILLE

"It's a nonstop process of stalling," says Marine Sgt. Ryan Groves, who has been at Walter Reed for 16 months.

SEE CARE, A5

Monologues still out, but dialogue's in at PC

The Rev. Brian J. Shanley, college president, says he now understands why Eve Ensler's controversial play means so much to some people.

BY JENNIFER D. JORDAN
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — One of the thickest files in the office of the Rev. Brian J. Shanley, president of Providence College, contains articles and letters about — and different versions of — a popular, controversial play he banned from the college last year.

The folder is a half-foot thick. Father Shanley's decision last year to prohibit the production of *The Vagina Monologues* six months into his presidency prompted a debate about academic and artistic

freedom, the Catholic Church's teachings on female sexuality and how those issues mesh with the mission of the Dominican liberal-arts college.

This past fall, students organizing the provocative, sometimes shocking play about female sexuality and sexual abuse asked the college president to reconsider. Their request included a petition signed by 1,200 students, parents, faculty and alumni.

Father Shanley held to his de-

SEE PLAY, A7

Harlequin has found a hero with NASCAR

BY CHARLES MCGRATH
THE NEW YORK TIMES

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — After a year of courtship, Harlequin, the leading publisher of romance novels, has entered into not a marriage, exactly, but what a Harlequin heroine would call a meaningful

relationship with Kevin Harvick, NASCAR's stock-car racing association. Last year, with NASCAR's approval, Harlequin Enterprises published

three NASCAR-theme books, including one in which the heroine, an ex-kindergarten teacher, falls in love with a NASCAR driver after first being run over by him and then piloting his enor-

SEE ROMANCE, A2

STATION FIRE MEMORIAL



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

Tammy Belanger, of Central Falls, whose cousin, Dina DeMaio, was killed four years ago in the Station nightclub fire, is among those attending a memorial service at the scene of the blaze yesterday in West Warwick. Story, C1

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NO SEARCH IN SIGHT
Despite the fact that Col. Steven Pare, superintendent of the Rhode Island State Police, is expected to leave the post in just nine days, the governor still hasn't announced how he'll search for his replacement. C1

FOLLOWING THEIR LEAD
More children these days are plugging into the Internet and the wares displayed at this year's Toy Fairs show companies are quick to follow. A8

SCHOOL VACATION WEEK
There's no shortage of ideas to keep young and old alike occupied during this mid-February break. D1



PITCHERS AND CATCHERS
Curt Schilling joins newly acquired starter Daisuke Matsuzaka and 12 other Red Sox pitchers on the first official day of spring training in Fort Myers, Fla. B1

C M Y K