

NEWS

National and world news in brief

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Pirates seize U.N. food shipments to Somalia

NAIROBI, Kenya: Pirates seeking to sell goods on the black market have twice hijacked emergency food aid destined for ports in Somalia.

The merchant vessel MV Miltzow, and its cargo of 850 tons of foodstuffs, were pirated while pulling into the port city of Merka, near the national capital of Mogadishu. This new piracy occurred only 10 days after the buccaneers seized the MV Semlow for nearly 100 days.

"It is scandalous that a small number of profiteers would once again hijack humanitarian food supplies destined for fellow Somalis," said Robert Hauser, the director of the U.N. World Food Programme for Somalia.

The pirated aid was intended to relieve famine conditions for more than 78,000 Somalians in the Jilib district that has suffered from flooding, violence and crop failure in recent times.

The Indian Ocean near the Horn of Africa has some of the most dangerous waters in the world. The two emergency relief vessels captured are added to a fuel vessel that was seized earlier this year that services the ships that deliver food aid to the embattled region.

Many ships are now refusing to provide shipping service to the region without armed escorts, which has left aid officials searching for alternate transportation methods such as airlifting and overland trucking, both risky endeavors in areas controlled by ruthless warlords and peasant militias.

Volcanic activity in Alaska increasing rapidly

ANCHORAGE, Alaska: Several volcanoes in Alaska are showing new signs of increased volcanic activity as residents witness eruptions of ash and smoke.

Seismologists reported Tuesday that three volcanoes, two in the Aleutians and one southwest of Anchorage, have been responsible for several tremors that have shaken the area, as well as repeated emissions of steam and ash.

Dave Schneider from the U.S. Geological Survey said that the growing ash emissions "are a lot easier to see now than they were in the summer because you have fresh snow."

The last major series of eruptions in 1992 from many of Alaska's more than 40 active volcanoes blanketed the landscape in ash and debris, causing disruptions in civil services and bringing both commercial and non-commercial travel to a near standstill.



Source: CNN.com

New grant offered to student parents

By Justin DeSantis
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Paying for college is never easy.

For parents trying to pay for their own college tuition, it can be that much more challenging, a challenge that the federal government will help to alleviate.

Enter an increase to the old childcare grant, a part of a federal disbursement program offered to University Park. The university will receive \$300,000 over a period of four years. The subsidies will be distributed to all Penn State campus locations. As required by the Department of Education, students who receive Federal Pell grants will be given priority. Those who do not receive the Pell grants can apply for future subsidy distributions.

The U.S. Department of Education gave Penn State the maximum grant as allowed by the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program. The grant will help adult students who attend college and face the prospect of trying to raise children at the same time. It is available on a first come, first served basis. Therefore, the money isn't equally distributed. If 50 students at Behrend apply first, then they will receive the money first. The money does not cover a

student's tuition, but the cost of childcare. The choice for the students involved includes whether or not they want to have childcare provided by the school or by a private institution. The only stipulation is that the childcare provider must be licensed by Pennsylvania.

"Student parents contribute to the diversity of the Penn State community," said Linda Pierce, manager of University Park's Work and Life Programs.

The amount of money provided is based on the age of the child or children and whether or not they are attending full or part time daycare.

As far as why the grant money is based on loans available to all students, not necessarily just those who are student parents, Linda Pierce cannot say. "I'm not sure why the federal government uses that as their measuring stick, but they do," says Pierce.

There is only one uniform standard set for colleges or universities wanting to apply for the grant. Penn State met that qualification by having total Pell grants for all students meet or exceed \$350,000 for the preceding fiscal year. The Pell grant is distributed by the federal government. It is a grant distributed to eligible students by calculating financial infor-

mation provided by what the student reports on their FAFSA.

The Pell grant is available to all students, but the amount totaled is based on certain criteria. For instance, students who attend part-time will receive proportionally less than those who attend full-time. The calculation of the grant is determined by the amount of money the family of the student, or the student, can provide towards education. The number is then subtracted by the total cost of tuition, and that indicates the student's total financial need.

"With additional federal funding, Penn State will be able to lower the high cost of childcare for hundreds of student parents across Pennsylvania," said Pierce.

This new grant replaces the old grant that had been offered to student parents previously. That grant was started four years ago and expired on September 30th of this year. The new grant has added an \$80,000 increase over the old grant.

Additional information can be obtained from Linda E. Pierce, at the Office of Human Resources at University Park at (814)-865-4046. Information about how to apply for the grant can be found at the website www.ohr.psu.edu/worklife/subsidies.htm.

Heavy rains bring flooding to the Northeast

TRENTON, New Jersey: A huge storm system has dropped as much as 10 inches of rain in some parts of the Atlantic northeast, causing severe transportation problems and increasing the possibility of voluntary evacuations along the eastern seaboard.

Several major highways were swamped as storms continued to lash large areas of New York, New Jersey and much of New England. The high levels of precipitation overwhelmed many small streams and rivers across the region, ultimately resulting in several deaths as vehicles were swept away by walls of water.

"I looked out my window and all I could see -- straight down -- was water, right up against the building," said Sean Weeks, a 19 year-old New Hampshire resident. "I saw all this New Orleans stuff happening and I was thinking, 'This can't happen to me,' then bada-bing, bada-boom, it just happened."

The widespread flooding caused the destruction of hundreds of homes from Maine to Pennsylvania, and is responsible for at least 10 deaths. Several governors and mayors are hoping for federal disaster relief from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"There is no way we could foot this bill," said Greenfield, Massachusetts mayor Christine Forgy.

Clean-up and recovery efforts are continuing despite the threat of renewed rains, which could cause yet more flooding.

Video game addiction becomes national problem in South Korea

SEOUL, South Korea: The problem of video game addiction in South Korea is quickly becoming more of a problem, as nearly 35% of its population considers themselves "obsessive" game players.

More and more light is being shed on a problem that has already claimed several lives, and has led to a 400% increase in reported video game-related counseling within the last year.

South Korea, which boasts the highest levels of broadband Internet connectivity in the world, has made a major industry of video gaming. Three cable channels are devoted to nothing but live and recorded game matches, with televised specials of tournaments and events.

Professional players of games, such as StarCraft, can earn upwards of \$100,000 a year and sign lucrative endorsement deals for food items and computing products in much the same way that professional athletes do in the United States.

The most recent gaming-related death in South Korea was in August, when a man who had been playing StarCraft for over 50 hours straight died of stress-induced heart failure after collapsing at his computer.

Student admits to reckless behavior;
agrees to pay for damages

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The pictures are of a student destroying a wall of the Stair Tower of Penn State Erie. However, pictures only tell a small fraction of the story. This time they told a story that, at face value, seemed to be a clear cut case of vandalism hitting hard. The huge hole in the wall had to have been caused by a vandal or a certain number of vandals. The student was not immediately available for identification or questioning.

"Call it reckless behavior," said Chief Jim Amann of Police & Safety.

The still frames caught a student who seemed to want to ruin the campus. Although that's the way it appeared to people and faculty who run Penn State Erie, it was actually an act of unintentional damage. The hole was covered up last week, and as of last Friday had yet to be completely fixed. Also, there appeared to have been more damage done as other students picked away at it.

The student called and turned himself in to Student Affairs even before the incident was reported to Police and Safety. The incident occurred over the weekend of Oct. 7. The Police and Safety office wasn't informed of it until Monday, almost three days after the damage was done.

That means that the student most likely admitted to the damage immediately after causing it. Since the alleged vandal turned himself in, and agreed to pay damages, it was considered an unintentional act. The student has accepted full responsibility for the damage he caused. There were even restitution payments that are being planned for him to make. Chief Amann determined this to be sufficient and said there wouldn't be charges pressed.

"We didn't have to go looking for him," said Chief Amann.

Even though the intent wasn't to cause any damage, the act could still be classified as criminal mischief. The fact that the damage was done unin-

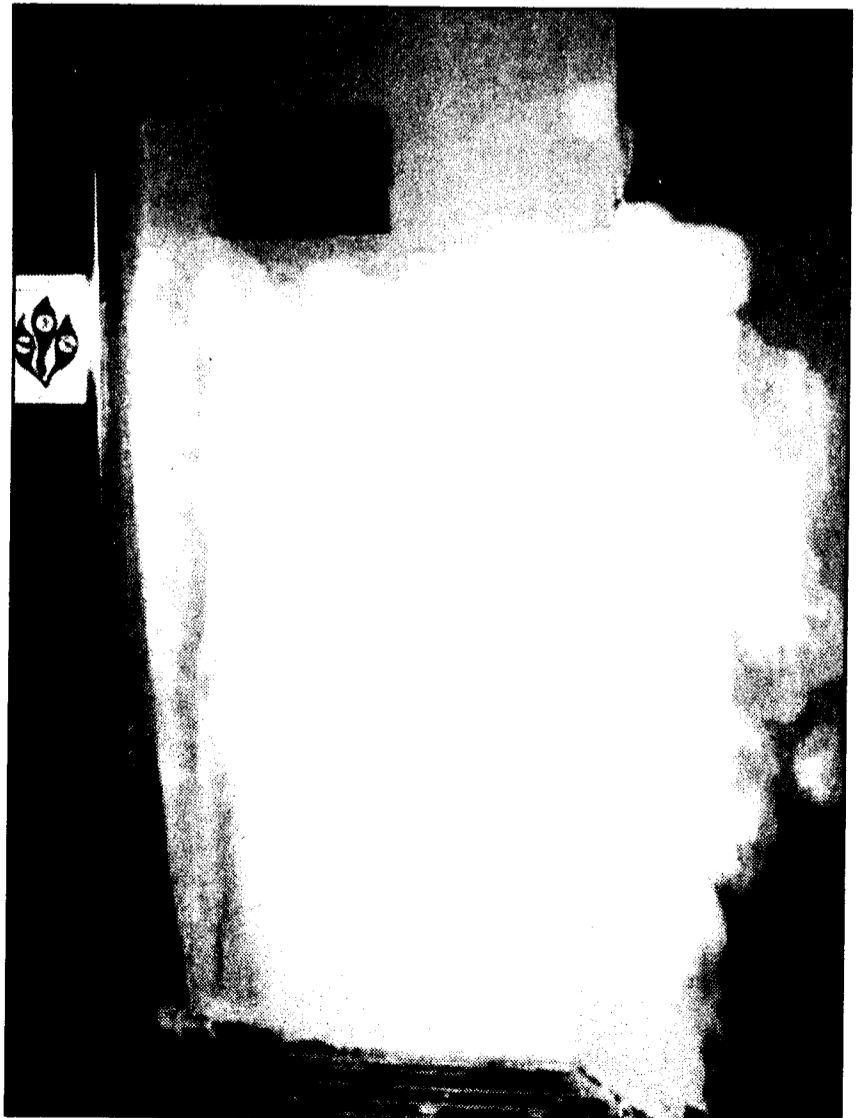
tionally severely lessens the amount of punishment administered.

However, had the damage been labeled as vandalism, the penalties would have been much stiffer. Vandalism, legally speaking, is the act of knowingly destroying or desecrating religious areas, public works, or other type or state and federal buildings.

The grade of vandalism is a felony of the third degree. It is graded as such if the person who does the damage desecrates or defaces property in any way, or if there is damage totaling more than \$5,000.

Of course, that is all subjective legal talk. It would be relatively difficult to say that someone set out to destroy something and then turned himself in. At any rate, the damage cost will have to be paid, regardless of intent. There were no available estimates.

As far as this being a motivator towards



Kathryn Carstater / THE BEHREND BEACON

Damage to the wall in the stairtower is gradually being repaired

installing cameras, Chief Amann said he only knew of one other location that will have cameras and that is the REDC building being built.

"Justice was served," said Police and Safety Chief Amann.

Classifieds

"The highest result of education is tolerance."

— Helen Keller, American social activist, public speaker and author (1880-1868)

Janet Neff Sample Center
for Manners & Civility

