

News Briefs

By The Associated Press



AP LaserPhoto

Fun for everyone

Five-year-old Sasha Bocharov, foreground, plays with his friends at a camp for AIDS-infected children in a small town six miles from St. Petersburg. On Sunday, the camp provided a safe place for the children where they did not have to lie about or be afraid of their illness.

'Peeping Toms' may be punished by law

HARRISBURG — A state lawmaker yesterday proposed making so-called "peeping Toms" subject to criminal prosecution and imprisonment.

Rep. Chris McNally, D-Allegheny, said he would introduce a bill next month making it a second-degree misdemeanor to look at another person through a window, door or other aperture "without license or privilege."

He said he wrote the bill after a male YMCA employee was fined \$300 for peering into a women's bathroom through a two-way mirror. The employee received no jail term under the summary offense.

Under McNally's proposal, the offense would become a first-degree misdemeanor if the defendant constructed a peeping hole to commit the crime. The maximum sentence would be five years in jail and a \$10,000 fine.

Man sinks while visiting mom's grave

NEWTOWN — A man planting mums on his mother's grave was trapped for two hours when the ground gave way and he sank knee-high.

Kenneth McLaughlin, 29, said he tried repeatedly to free himself, but the leg that sank into soft ground Saturday became stuck under the base of his mother's headstone.

Help arrived after two hours, said McLaughlin, a security guard. McLaughlin was rescued by a bicyclist, who called for help. A police officer used a flower pot near the grave to shovel a two-foot hole and free McLaughlin.

Blimp new vehicle used to patrol cities

PHILADELPHIA — It's quieter than a helicopter. It has more space. And for the sometimes lengthy surveillance, there's the ever convenient bathroom.

It's a blimp on patrol and it could be coming to a city near you. Actually it's official name is the City Aero Patrol, the latest vehicle police can use to patrol from the sky.

"It's a police car in the sky for big cities," Richard DeSipio, an engineer with the Naval Air Warfare Center which devised the vehicle, told the Philadelphia Daily News.

The Navy developed the blimp about 18 months ago as part of the effort to convert military know-how into civilian use, he said.

The blimp, which can travel up to 60 mph, costs \$8 million to \$10 million to own.

Cable companies face tougher competition

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A federal judge opened cable television markets up to more competition yesterday by allowing telephone companies to provide video programming in many areas now served by only one cable company.

Judge T.S. Ellis of U.S. District Court in suburban Alexandria, Va., overturned a 1984 rule that barred regional telephone companies from offering cable service in the same areas they provide phone service. The rule was part of the 1984 Cable Communications Policy Act.

The Justice Department, which argued for keeping the ban in place, has not decided whether to appeal, department spokesman Joe Krovisky said.

"We have 60 days in which to make a decision on whether to appeal," Krovisky said.

More U.S. troops to be sent to Somalia

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Clinton administration is sending 400 additional American soldiers, members of an elite Army Ranger unit, into Somalia this week to reinforce U.S. troops there, officials said today.

"This deployment is not a policy change. It is in keeping with the basic mission that was set out from the May time frame, which was to try to improve the security situation" in Mogadishu, said Pentagon spokeswoman Kathleen deLaski.

DeLaski said the Rangers would be deployed from a Ft. Benning, Ga.-based battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment, and that they would head out "in the next few days."

She declined to discuss the Rangers' mission in greater detail than to say they would augment the U.S. "quick reaction force" that already is deployed in Mogadishu.

Demjanjuk linked to Sobibor death camp

JERUSALEM — Nazi-hunters seeking a new war crimes trial against John Demjanjuk said yesterday they have evidence linking him to the Majdanek death camp in occupied Poland where 250,000 Jews perished.

The organizations are also following leads indicating that he was at Sobibor, another Nazi death camp in Poland. On Monday, a woman in New Jersey said she remembered Demjanjuk at Sobibor and would be willing to testify.

Israel's Supreme Court yesterday, meanwhile, rejected an appeal from a Holocaust memorial group that demanded police investigate whether Demjanjuk committed war crimes at two other Nazi concentration camps.

Demjanjuk, 73, was acquitted July 29 of being "Ivan the Terrible," a guard at Treblinka death camp who operated gas chambers in which 850,000 Jews perished.

Justices ruled there was considerable evidence that Demjanjuk was at other camps, including the Sobibor death camp, where about 250,000 Jews died. They recommended against another trial, citing the danger of double jeopardy.

People important to new prime minister

TOKYO — Japan must worry less about being an economic superpower and more about improving the lives of its people, Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa said Monday in his first policy speech to parliament.

He promised to cut Japan's huge trade surplus — a sore spot in relations with the United States — by opening markets to more imports and making imported goods cheaper.

In another clear break from his predecessors, Hosokawa used strong language to apologize for Japan's aggression during World War II.

Drawing frequent, energetic applause, Hosokawa said he would cut import prices so that Japanese could enjoy the benefits of the stronger yen, which has risen about 20 percent against the dollar since February.

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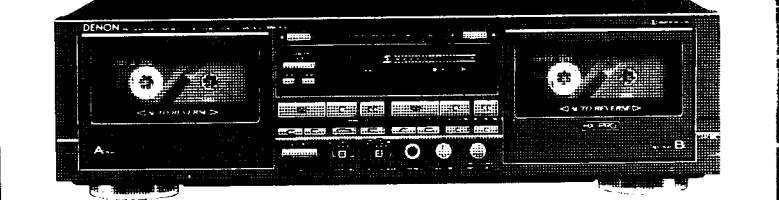
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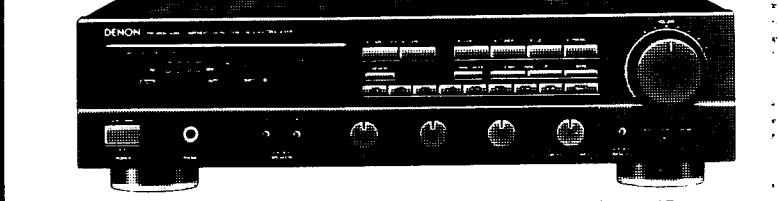
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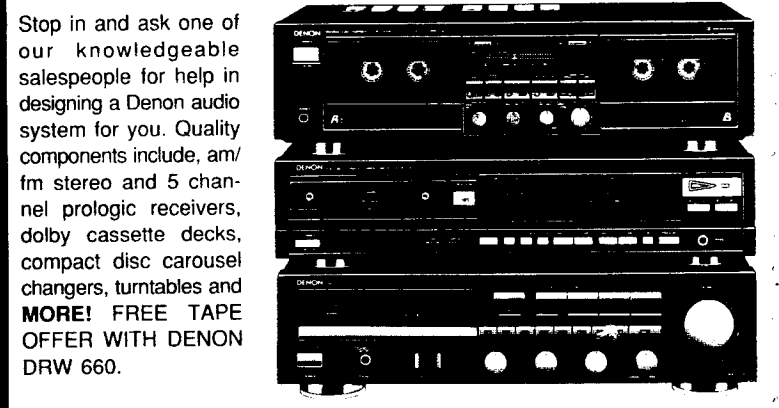
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