

Weather: Today: High 87, Tonight: Low 64, Tomorrow: High 80. Extended forecast at campusweatherservice.com

Man lunges at co-defendant in court

WILKES-BARRE — Deputies had to wrestle a murder suspect to the ground after he lunged at a co-defendant inside a northeastern Pennsylvania courtroom.

Luzerne County sheriff's deputies cleared the courtroom Wednesday morning after tackling 33-year-old Michael Simonson. Simonson headbutted 32-year-old Elvis Riccardi as the pair were in court for a pretrial hearing. Riccardi was transported to a hospital for treatment.

Both men are charged with killing 34-year-old Donald Skiff in April 2009. Prosecutors say the suspects robbed and beat Skiff to death before setting his truck on fire.

The Plymouth man's body was found more than a month later. Simonson, of Plains Township, and Riccardi, of Wilkes-Barre, had requested separate trials.

Court documents indicate each man blamed the other for the slaying. Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty.

Police officers set to go to trial

WILKES-BARRE — Three former Pennsylvania police officers are scheduled to go on trial next month on charges they obstructed the investigation into the fatal beating of an illegal Mexican immigrant.

U.S. District Judge A. Richard Caputo on Tuesday ordered jury selection to begin September 13 for former Shenandoah police Chief Matthew Nestor and two other officers.

Federal prosecutors say Nestor, William Moyer and Jason Hayes orchestrated a cover-up that protected high school football players involved in the July 2008 death of Luis Ramirez.

The 25-year-old Ramirez died after an altercation with a group of teenage athletes. Two suspects were convicted of assault but acquitted of more serious charges by an all-white jury. Derrick Donchak and Brandon Piekarsky are also facing federal hate-crime charges. All three officers have resigned from the department.

Clinton to campaign in Pa. for Sestak

SCRANTON — Former President Bill Clinton is scheduled to campaign for Senate candidate Joe Sestak in northeastern Pennsylvania next week.

The Democratic congressman is running against Republican Pat Toomey for the seat held by outgoing Democratic Sen. Arlen Specter. The Sestak campaign says Clinton will appear with Sestak on Tuesday afternoon at a rally at Scranton High School.

At the request of the White House, Clinton had tried to get Sestak to drop his primary challenge of Specter by offering him an unpaid presidential advisory position. Sestak turned Clinton down and went on to defeat Specter. In the 1990s, Sestak worked in the Clinton administration as director for defense policy on the National Security Council.

Teen sent to hospital after car surfing

HERMITAGE — Police say a western Pennsylvania teenager had to be airlifted to a hospital after she was run over while car surfing in a shopping center parking lot.

Police in Hermitage say an officer spotted the 17-year-old girl as she stood on the hood of a moving car Tuesday afternoon.

The girl then fell off and was run over by the car being driven by another teen. Investigators say the injured girl is from nearby New Castle.

She was flown to a hospital in Youngstown, Ohio. Her condition has not been released.

The investigating is continuing and police would not say if charges will be filed. Hermitage is about 60 miles northwest of Pittsburgh.

Volunteer dies after falling off roof

LANCASTER — Authorities in central Pennsylvania say an elderly volunteer helping to build a house died after an electric shock and a fall off a roof.

Lancaster police say 73-year-old Ron Mellinger was carrying a piece of metal sheeting at the Habitat for Humanity project when the metal came in contact with a high voltage line. Officials say he then fell 2 1/2 stories shortly before noon Wednesday. Detective Chris DePatto says Mellinger was taken to Lancaster General Hospital, where he died. An autopsy will be conducted to determine whether Mellinger died from the shock or the fall.

Man arrested in connection to robbery

HAVERTOWN — Authorities say a man arrested in suburban Philadelphia matches the description of a bank robber dubbed the "mummy bandit" for his use of bandages to conceal his face during holdups over the past year.

The FBI and Philadelphia police said Wednesday that a man matching the description of the suspect was seen Tuesday looking in the windows of bank branches in Havertown in Delaware County.



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Address

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Judge overturns Calif. ban

By Lisa Leff and Paul Elias ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

SAN FRANCISCO — A federal judge overturned California's gay-marriage ban Wednesday in a landmark case that could eventually force the U.S. Supreme Court to confront the question of whether same-sex couples have a constitutional right to wed.

The ruling by Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker touched off a celebration outside the courthouse. Gay couples waved rainbow and American flags and erupted with cheers in the city that has long been a magnet for gays.

Shelly Bailes embraced her wife Ellen Pontac as Bailes held a sign reading, "Life Feels Different When You're Married."

In New York City, about 150 people gathered in front of a lower Manhattan courthouse. They carried signs saying "Our Love Wins" as organizers read portions of the ruling.

Walker made his decision in a lawsuit filed by two gay couples who claimed the voter-approved ban violated their civil rights.

The ruling "vindicates the rights of a minority of our citizens to be treated with decency and respect and equality in our system," said former U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson, who delivered the closing argument at trial for opponents of the ban.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger also praised the ruling as an important step toward equality and freedom.

Protect Marriage, the coalition of religious and conservative groups that sponsored the ban, said it would immediately appeal the ruling to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

"In America, we should uphold and respect the right of people to make policy changes through the democratic process, especially changes that do nothing more than uphold the definition of marriage that has existed since the founding of this country and beyond," said Jim Campbell, a lawyer on the defense team.

Despite the favorable ruling for same-sex couples, gay marriage will not be allowed to resume immediately. Judge Walker said he wants to decide whether his order should be suspended while the proponents of the ban pursue their appeal.

UPUA

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to designate the IFC Vice President for Communications Dan Cartwright (senior-energy, business, and finance) as a representative for the Greek community.

"The title itself is supposed to ensure that we're on the same page with other student organizations,"

Florencio (senior-philosophy) said. "Given that it's a liaison position, we thought that would fit well."

Florencio said he conferred with IFC President Max Wendkos on the decision to appoint Cartwright as a liaison to the IFC.

And though Wendkos (senior-marketing and psychology) initially said he was unaware of Cartwright's UPUA appointment, it may have simply been a small matter of what

he called absentmindedness.

Wendkos said Florencio was the correct person to approach on the matter, too, because his job description is to deal with internal matters in IFC.

"UPUA went about what they did the correct way," he said. "And we appreciate the opportunity to have the greek voice heard."

To e-mail reporter: cmm5773@psu.edu

LGBT

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State has received a five-star rating, Subasic said.

Each summer, university officials are encouraged to fill out new questionnaires and update their index profiles, according to a press release issued by the organization.

Subasic said Penn State was able to score high because the university has welcoming policies and procedures for the LGBT community.

Penn State has a long history of student LGBT organizations as well as administrative support, Subasic said.

"We have a safe space here for

students and knowledgeable staff they can talk to," she said. "We have an amazing resource library."

Subasic said other programs and outreach efforts include seminars, mentorship programs and year-long internships.

Brian Patchcoski, the current LGBT Student Resource Center assistant director, said he is happy Penn State tops the rating because the school provides a comfortable environment for LGBT individuals.

"The Campus Pride Index is a really great monitor of what schools are doing and how schools are putting their best effort forward and Penn State is definitely in the lead," he said.

When Patchcoski came to Penn

State two years ago, he felt Penn State was advanced compared to the college where he finished his undergraduate degree at the University of Scranton.

"Penn State has given me so many resources to build and grow upon as a gay male," Patchcoski said. "I really feel like Penn State provided me the foundation to grow personally and professionally."

Campus Pride Executive Director and Campus Climate Index creator Shane Windmeyer said he is grateful more and more colleges and universities in America are creating a friendlier environment for their LGBT students.

To e-mail reporter: tol5105@psu.edu

Rendell

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and registrations to meet rising inflation over the past decade. Rendell said the cost of driver's licenses and registrations have not been raised for several years.

If the state were to raise the gas tax just to meet inflation it would only raise the cost of gas about three-and-a-half cents a gallon, he said.

Should the gas tax see that increase, it would produce an additional \$240 million annually, Rendell

said, helping to aid Pennsylvania's economy and some of its funding woes.

"Three-and-a-half cents — gas fluctuates from week to week," Rendell said. "You can have one price at a Sunoco station and they're charging 'X' and two miles down the road another Sunoco station is charging 'X' plus five cents."

Rendell discussed how the repairs and work on the infrastructure have produced jobs as well.

"There's been a lot of talk about the stimulus program, whether it worked or it didn't work, whether it created jobs or it didn't create jobs,"

Rendell said. "I can tell you that the \$1.2 billion that went to bridges, road and highway repair has created jobs."

On June 30, 2010, Rendell said stimulus-funded projects had about 8,600 people working.

"These are good jobs. Family sustaining jobs. Jobs that can't be outsourced," Rendell said. "If we're going to fix these two bridges, you can't fix them in India, you can't fix them in China. We have to fix them in Pennsylvania with products made in Pennsylvania."

To e-mail reporter: pro5004@psu.edu

Bike

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But the shop isn't the only thing evolving — Drayton is as well. Two years ago, he became a member of the State College Transportation Commission, giving him a say in everything from adding bike lanes to changing traffic patterns.

While Penn State students have seen little success entrenching themselves in the world of borough politics — perhaps because few have tried — Drayton found his niche on the commission only three years post-graduation.

It would be easy for others to pass Drayton off as a fringe member, only activated by cyclists' issues.

It hasn't turned out that way so far, he said.

"There are a few other active cyclists on the commission," he said.

But more importantly, while bikes are a big part of his life, they're not the entirety, and he's more than willing to spend time working through issues like traffic patterns, he said.

"I have a wife, a kid, and a car we use pretty frequently," he said. His plan for Freeze Thaw hatched when he was a freshman in East Halls and he made a friend with similar motivations, Drayton said.

By 2004, he and Justin Wagner were doing double duty, he said, trying to graduate yet also working 80 to 90 hours a week in order to move their store out of their apartment and into a permanent location.

"We messed up with a few classes," Drayton said.

Drayton said he is content where he is, with the shop stationed in a roomy three-story space nestled into one of the busiest blocks downtown.

He also signed on to another four-year stint on the commission.

Drayton's mainly reserved, but his eyes light up when he shows off the things that set Freeze Thaw apart, like the bike stands in the middle of the shop, allowing customers to learn first-hand how their ride is going to be repaired.

"It has its challenges to be working with your friends all day," Drayton said.

"But this is fun, awesome stuff."

To e-mail reporter: ndp5045@psu.edu

Intern

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have interns work with different committees within UPUA, she said.

In addition to shadowing an executive board member, the interns will be responsible for different things such as attending UPUA assembly meetings, meeting weekly with their executive board mentor, making phone calls and practicing writing legislation, Alt said.

Interns will also make strides to improve town and gown relations by meeting with council members, the mayor and residents of the borough, Ragland said.

The program is a great start for student leaders from high school to transition to student government at Penn State, Ragland said.

"What I noticed about last year's internship program is that everyone is in UPUA now," Ragland said. "They ran for office and now they're really in UPUA."

Not every intern is guaranteed a spot in UPUA — but the experience is beneficial to running for student government, Alt said.

But the internship is different from the freshman representative position in UPUA — which is an elected position freshmen can run for, Alt said.

The two freshmen representa-

tives represent their specific constituency — the entire freshman class, Alt said.

While the interns will learn about UPUA as a whole, the two freshman representatives will work to make the freshman class's voice heard in UPUA, Alt said.

Since only two students are selected for the positions, the internship program gives the freshmen who didn't win a chance to remain involved.

The UPUA executive board will conduct an interview process for the internship program sometime during the fall semester, Alt said.

To e-mail reporter: zlg5012@psu.edu

SLIZ

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learn hands-on about entrepreneurship, meet some interesting people along the way and "probably had too much fun conducting the necessary 'market research' which came with a lot of vodka," he said.

People who Foire meets are always surprised to find out the product was created by a group of Penn State students, he said.

"Most people don't believe me until I show them my business card," Foire said.

But before their product became a word-of-mouth phenomenon, it was discovered in a dorm room by a group of Penn State freshman girls.

The three girls on the team — Kelly Lavey, Julie Wolf and Rees — started laying a cup with a similar design to because they didn't like taking shots in the traditional manner, Rees said.

After seeing the cup, Foire and Vella, both business majors, decided to test their skills and create a business out of the product and set out to market it.

The group began selling the products in February of 2009, after they

had found a manufacturer in China, finalized the business details and created their website, SLIZ.com, Foire said.

People are attracted to the product not only because of its unique look, but also because it really works, Vella said — people are shocked afterwards that they didn't taste the alcohol.

It's a fun way to take a shot, Rees said, adding that it can be a little dangerous because users don't really taste the alcohol and may be prone to do several more shots.

To e-mail reporter: mer5200@psu.edu