

IN FOR A BREAK
Morning rain will give way to sunshine this afternoon; clear tonight.
Forecast, B6

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Abuse judge faults diocese

Superior Court Judge Nettie C. Vogel gives the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence 30 days to release more information about sexual-abuse allegations.

BY MIKE STANTON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
PROVIDENCE — An exasperated Rhode Island judge ordered the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence yesterday to provide much more information regarding allegations of sexual misconduct against dozens of priests going back nearly four decades.

The ruling came during a three-hour hearing in which Superior Court Judge Nettie C. Vogel referred to retired Providence Bishop Louis E. Geinert as a "see-no-evil, hear-no-evil type of guy, apparently," in his handling of complaints against a Woonsocket priest in the late 1970s.

Vogel is presiding over bitterly contested lawsuits by three men — Marc G. Barville, Donald Leighton and Christopher Young — who say that they were molested by three different priests years ago, and that church leaders have engaged in a pattern of covering up allegations of abuse. The suits are the last remaining from dozens of cases that ended with a historic settlement in 2002 and subsequent mediation, and they have gone further than the earlier cases in prying open the church's secret archives documenting what its leaders knew and did.

Vogel rejected claims by the plaintiffs' lawyers that the diocese, Bishop Thomas J. Tobin and his lawyers have committed fraud by deliberately withholding informa-

SEE ABUSE, B3

Recycling by firms lagging

The DEM tells businesses in the state that they need to start doing a better job.

BY PETER B. LORD
JOURNAL ENVIRONMENT WRITER

The state this week sent letters to 2,300 Rhode Island businesses advising them it is time to improve their rate of commercial recycling, which in most cases is abysmal.

Coincidentally, the state Senate has scheduled a hearing for Tuesday to talk about ways to help communities recycle more and to find out why businesses and corporations recycle so little.

The new efforts are being prompted by much more than an urge to go green. The state's Central Landfill in Johnston is expected to be filled within the next two years, forcing the state to explore options that include a \$70-million expansion plan.

Some 60 percent of the wastes buried in the landfill, about 700,000 tons annually, come from businesses. But despite a state law requiring busi-

SEE RECYCLE, A6

It's crunch time

Carcieri looks to eliminate \$151-million budget deficit as Wall St. and Washington react to looming recession

With stocks and the housing market plunging, the Bush administration and Congress appear to be coming together on a plan to offer rebates to taxpayers.

BY JEANNINE AVERSA and ANDREW TAYLOR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — United in the belief that urgent action is needed, the White House and Congress raced toward emergency steps yesterday to rescue the national economy from a possible recession, including tax rebates of at least \$300 a person — and may be as much as \$800.

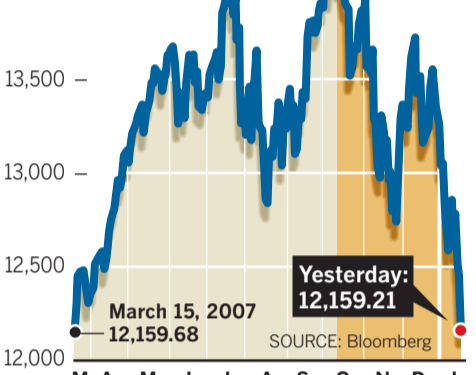
The ruling came during a three-hour hearing in which Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke endorsed the idea of putting money into the hands of those who would spend it quickly and boost the flagging economy. If lawmakers needed any additional impetus to act, they received it from Wall Street as the Dow Jones industrials plunged 306.95 points, underscoring deepening concern about the country's economic health.

Adding to the pessimism were reports that manufacturing activity could be slowing down even more than analysts had expected. The sudden scramble to take action came as fears mounted that a severe housing slump and a painful credit crisis could cause people to clamp down on their spending and businesses to put a lid on hiring, throwing the country into its first recession since

SEE ECONOMY, A7

COME AND GONE

The Dow has erased all its gains of the last 10 months.



SOURCE: BLOOMBERG
THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GEORGE SYLVIA



Governor Carcieri yesterday answers questions about his midyear budget revision bill. At far right is Jeff Neal, the governor's press secretary; center is Steve Kass, Carcieri's director of communications.

Plan calls for unpaid workdays, cuts in local aid

BY STEVE PEOPLES, KATHERINE GREGG and CYNTHIA NEEDHAM
JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

PROVIDENCE — Governor Carcieri unveiled a deficit-avoidance plan yesterday that forces all state employees, local communities, immigrant children and even motorists using hand-held cell phones to help close a \$151-million budget hole over the next six months.

"I've said all along we had a very, very serious problem," Carcieri said yesterday afternoon, adding that the burden needs to be shouldered by "all the different aspects of state government, all the different people that depend upon state government ... as well as the cities and towns."

Carcieri wants to strip \$12.5 million in non-school aid from cities and towns, and eliminate subsidized health insurance for 7,400 low-income adults and another 2,000 non-citizen children. He hopes to save another \$15 million by forcing all

state employees to take off six unpaid workdays over the next six months.

Troubled by the midyear aid cut, Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian, a Republican, said: "They've taken one bad budget on the state level and turned it into 39 bad budgets on the local level."

The proposals released yesterday, known as a "supplemental budget," would make midyear changes in the \$1.8-billion current year budget the General Assembly adopted in June. Most of the provisions require the approval of the Democrat-dominated General Assembly and, in some cases, labor unions.

The revised spending plan also lays the groundwork for closing a far more serious budget deficit —

SEE BUDGET, A7

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Governor Carcieri has proposed sweeping legislation to close the state budget deficit. Key elements include:

- Spending cuts**
Reduce aid to cities and towns: **\$12.5 million**
6 unpaid days for state employees: **\$14.8 million**
State vendor contract savings: **\$33.5 million**
Savings on employee medical claims: **\$11 million**
- Other measures**
 - Cap historic tax credits
 - Remove illegal immigrant children from RiteCare
 - \$50 fine for driving while talking on hand-held cell phone
 - 1 license plate per vehicle
 - Cap Training School population

projo.com Your turn: To react to the governor's latest budget proposals, go to projo.com

On eve of Southern primaries, competing loyalties split black voters



Sen. Barack Obama meets with Serena Kirk of Sacramento, Calif., during a campaign visit to the San Francisco Women's Building in San Francisco yesterday.

In some cases, black families are divided over whether to back Sen. Barack Obama or Sen. Hillary Clinton, both of whom have substantial claims to African-American support.

BY SHAILA DEWAN
THE NEW YORK TIMES

ATLANTA — The People's Voice African-American Weekly News in tiny Roanoke, Ala., has not endorsed a candidate in the Feb. 5 Democratic presidential primary — much to the frustration of the publisher, Charlotte A. Clark-Frieson, a Barack Obama supporter.

"I'm trying to get ready to endorse him, but my board is so split," Clark-Frieson said. While letters to the paper are almost unanimously in favor of Obama, she said, the older of the state's two black political organizations, the Alabama Democratic Conference, endorsed Sen. Hillary Clinton in October.

So great is the tension over the contest, Clark-Frieson said, that many of the newspaper's board members have refused to betray

their preference even in private. Across the South, a fierce competition is afoot for black voters, who are expected to constitute from 20 percent to 50 percent of voters in the South Carolina Democratic primary on Jan. 26 and in the four Southern states with primaries on Super Tuesday: Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia and Arkansas. In many counties, registration has spiked since Obama won the Iowa caucuses, and election officials say that interest is at its highest point in several election cycles.

While the official ground game is just beginning, chatter about the two candidates — both of whom have substantial claims to African-American support — is constant on black

SEE CAMPAIGN, A5



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STEM CELL ADVANCE

Scientists using skin cells say they have produced embryos that are clones of two men, a potential step toward developing valuable stem cells. **A2**

RECLAIMING FORECLOSURES

Warning that "the momentum of our city is really put at risk by this foreclosure crisis," Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline unveils a \$1-million no-interest loan program intended to encourage the purchase of foreclosed properties. **F1**



FRIARS TOP HUSKIES

Providence pours in a season-high 14 3-pointers as Randall Hanke and the rest of the Friars outdue UConn to come away with a 77-65 win over the Huskies in Hartford. **D1**