

A furious finish to primary in Pa.

The future of Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination may rest on the outcome of today's vote.

BY JEFF ZELENY
and JOHN M. BRODER
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BLUE BELL, Pa. — The six-week presidential primary campaign in Pennsylvania drew to a contentious finish yesterday, as Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton invoked images of Pearl Harbor and Osama bin Laden in a television ad that questioned Sen. Barack Obama's ability to lead in a time of crisis.

As she sought to spark a comeback in the Democratic nominating contest, Clinton warned voters not to "take a leap of faith or have any guesswork" as they cast ballots today. The Obama campaign accused its rival of employing the "politics of fear."

With 158 pledged delegates at stake in Pennsylvania, the largest state remaining on the party's primary calendar, the candidates raced from Scranton to Pittsburgh to Philadelphia — and a smattering of suburbs along the way — to rally their supporters and win over a dwindling lot of undecided voters.

While Obama spent nearly twice as much money as Clinton on television ads in the final days of the race here, her new commercial used historic images and threatening moments to ask voters whom they could trust in the White House. It did not mention Obama by name, but closed with a question: "Who do you think has what it takes?"

Obama, after three days of criticizing his opponent with some of his sharpest language of the campaign, did not directly engage Clinton. His campaign hastily responded with an advertisement of its own, asking voters: "Who in times of challenge will unite us — not use fear and calculation to divide us?"

Pennsylvania has become a key battleground in the nominating fight, with the future of Clinton's campaign likely to rest on the outcome. Even a wide victory by Clinton would not overcome her deficit in pledged

SEE **CAMPAIGN, A7**

Court debt rules seen costing state

A group says the system that has led to nearly 2,500 people being sent to prison for failing to appear at hearings dealing with court costs and fines needs to be changed.

BY EDWARD FITZPATRICK
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Nearly 2,500 people were sent to the state prison last year because they failed to appear at hearings regarding court debts, such as fines and court costs.

With Rhode Island facing a big budget deficit and a swelling prison population, that highlights the need to give judges clearer guidelines for waiving court debts and determining if people have the ability to pay, according to a new report by the Rhode Island Family Life Center, a Providence nonprofit group that advocates for and supports people who are leaving prison.

"While debtors' prisons are thought to be a thing of the past, they still exist in Rhode Island," Family Life Center Executive Director Sol Rodriguez said. "People with criminal records who are trying to get their lives together need support, not a system which throws them back in jail for having trouble paying court fees."

The report found people were sent to the

SEE **DEBTORS, A6**

While the average price of regular gasoline is \$3.489 a gallon in Rhode Island, premium costs nearly 20 cents more a gallon at Berretto's in Bristol.



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
BOB THAYER

Gas prices reach record high in R.I.

And prices are expected to climb even higher in the weeks ahead as the cost of crude oil continues to surge.

BY TIMOTHY C. BARMANN
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

What most of us had painfully suspected is now official: gasoline is more expensive than it has ever been.

The average price of gasoline in Rhode Island yesterday was \$3.489 a gallon, up 22 cents from last week, according to a survey of local dealers by the state's Office of Energy Resources.

Nationally, the average price was \$3.503 a gallon, according to the AAA Daily Fuel Gauge Report.

That surpasses the inflation-adjusted price of \$3.413 a gallon, the average price of regular grade fuel in March 1981, according to the Energy Information Administration, the statistical branch of the U.S. Department of Energy. (The actual average price was \$1.417 a gallon, and the EIA converted this to April 2008 dollars.)

Analysts say the big runup in prices over the past week is due mainly to two factors: the high price of crude oil, which is up \$21 a barrel, or about 22 percent so far this year; and the annual switch to summertime fuels by refineries, which tends to push up the price of gasoline every spring.

There doesn't seem to be any relief in sight. Yesterday, crude oil for May delivery rose 79 cents, or 0.7 percent, to settle at \$117.48 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. That is up 85 percent from one year ago, and a new record close.

Neil Gamson, an economist with the EIA, said that the prices at the pump don't yet reflect the recent increases in crude oil prices.

"Even if [crude] oil drops, you haven't seen the gasoline pass through from those prices yet," he

SEE **GAS, A7**



JOURNAL FILE

In 1951, Peter J. Berger sold gas for 19.9 cents a gallon at his Broad Street service station in Providence during a price war with competitors. He eventually raised the price back to 24.5 cents a gallon.

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Your turn: The ripple effect of gas prices: where are you seeing it? To respond, go to projo.com

SAME EARTH, NEW CHALLENGES

Rhode Island has made significant progress protecting the environment over the past 38 years since the first Earth Day; many say more needs to be done.

BY PETER B. LORD
JOURNAL ENVIRONMENT WRITER

When the first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970, Navy Secretary John H. Chafee flew home from Washington and spoke to some 800 students packed into the University of Rhode Island Memorial Union.

Chafee, always the environmental advocate, said he was optimistic about the chances of achieving what he described as a delicate balance between man's materialism and his desire for a healthy environment and personal liberty.

Then the students did something surprising. They gave Chafee a one-minute ovation, prompting URI President Werner A. Baum to observe, "It



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Joanna Detz, of Providence, picks up trash along the water at India Point Park during a cleanup organized by the Friends of India Point on Saturday in Providence.

projo.com

Extra: For more on going green in the Ocean State, go to projo.com/environment

SEE **EARTH, A4**

Innovative first-aid program focuses on mental health

BY FELICE J. FREYER
JOURNAL MEDICAL WRITER

A woman in the supermarket is gasping for air, clutching her chest.

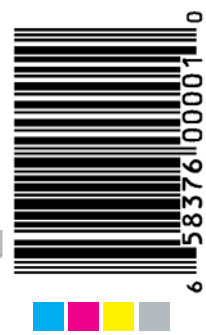
A coworker often returns from lunch smelling of alcohol.

A friend is having crying jags and won't leave the house.

Any of these people could be in the throes of a mental health problem, perhaps a panic attack, alcohol abuse or depression. And chances are, those around them have no idea what to do.

Today, Gateway Healthcare, a nonprofit mental health center in Pawtucket, will announce the launch of a pilot program to teach ordinary people that they can help, and exactly how — the small steps one can take to help those who may be in a mental health crisis or developing a mental illness. Called "Mental Health First Aid," it's a 12-

SEE **FIRST AID, A6**



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SHELTER MEETING A NEED

Faced with a growing need, Crossroads Rhode Island opens a new shelter in Providence designed to house up to 55 homeless women a night. **B1**

LOSING IRAQI HEARTS AND MINDS

Even as American and Iraqi troops are battling to wrest control of Sadr City from militia fighters, the Iraqi government is failing to provide it with basic services, undermining the effort to stabilize the area and win over wary residents. **A3**

OVER AND OUT FOR BRUINS

Carey Price gets his second shutout and Andrei Kostitsyn scores twice to lead the Montreal Canadiens to a 5-0 win over the Boston Bruins, taking the first-round playoff series four games to three. **C1**

DOWN TO THE WIRE IN BOSTON



Robert Cheruiyot of Kenya wins his fourth Boston Marathon while Dire Tune of Ethiopia, right, finishes two seconds ahead of Russian Alevtina Biktimirova in the closest finish in the history of the women's race. **C5**