

**HOT STUFF**

Very warm and humid today with highs near 90 and a chance of thunderstorms.

Forecast, **E10**

# The Providence Journal

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FRIDAY  
JUNE 27, 2008

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Home Delivery 401.277.7600

## Special master to oversee Landmark

The Woonsocket hospital petitions Superior Court as it seeks a merger with another hospital.

BY PAUL GRIMALDI  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Financially troubled Landmark Medical Center yesterday sought the help of a Superior Court judge to clear the way for a potential merger with another hospital.

Superior Court Judge Michael A. Silverstein spent most of yesterday in discussions with lawyers and state officials regarding Landmark's request that he appoint a special master to oversee the Woonsocket hospital, which Landmark officials said is on the brink of financial collapse. Silverstein ultimately designated Providence lawyer Jonathan N. Savage, with the firm Shechtman, Halperin and Savage of Pawtucket, as temporary special master.

Savage will fill the role until at least July 17 when the judge is expected to make a permanent appointment in the case.

Until then, Savage will assume control of the hospital's assets and day-to-day operations. The 214-bed hospital is expected to operate normally while under court supervision, said Savage and others involved in yesterday's meetings.

There's no indication the quality of health care at Landmark has suffered, nor that the hospital's 1,100 jobs are threatened at this point.

"It's important to stress that normal business operations will continue," said hospital spokesman Bill Fischer. "[People] need to understand we're not shutting down tomorrow."

Savage drove to the Woonsocket hospital late yesterday afternoon to talk with its managers after meeting with the judge for most of the day.

"We obviously have a very unusual situation here that needs special care and attention," Savage said before leaving Superior Court in Providence.

Savage's key task apparently will be to "seek

SEE **LANDMARK, B2**

## Unity again puts N.H. at center stage

This rural town today will serve as the backdrop for the Democrats' hopes to unite and carry the Granite State in November.

BY SCOTT MACKAY  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

UNITY, N.H. — The hamlet where Illinois Sen. Barack Obama and New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton meet today for the first joint public appearance since the end of their bruising campaign for the presidential nomination has one store, which sells the town's unofficial souvenir: a T-shirt screen-printed with a moose sleeping on a hammock over the words, "Unity: Life in the Slow Lane."

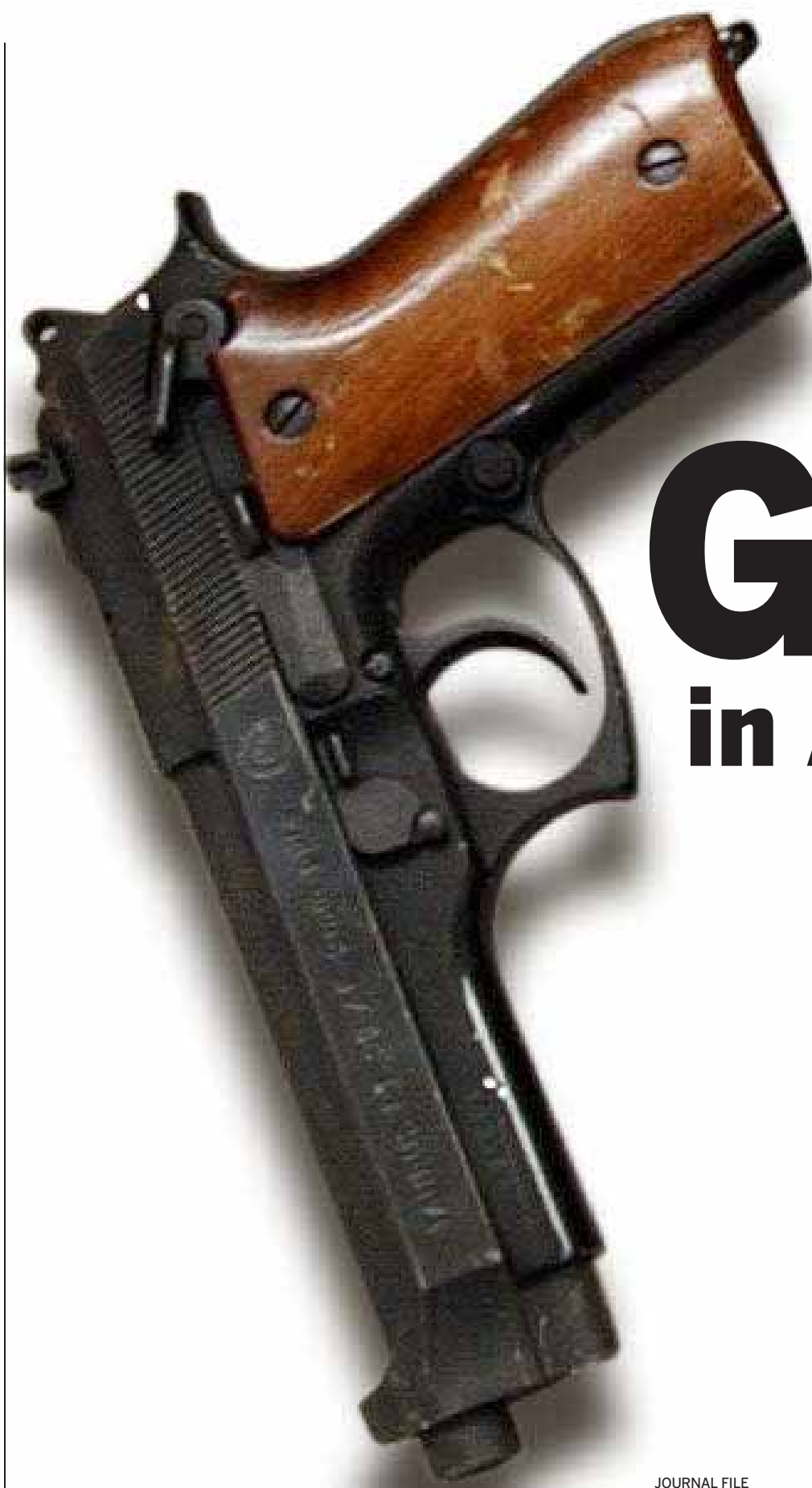
A no-stoplight community of dirt roads, lake views and wood stoves, Unity's town center, which consists of Will's Place (the store), a white clapboard Town Hall, a volunteer fire station and an elementary school, was invaded yesterday by an army of Secret Service agents, state police, political operatives, reporters, TV crews and workers setting up temporary aluminum bleachers.

Every time Cheri LeMere, cashier at Will's Place, spied an anxiety-ridden Blackberry-toting politico, she but the brakes on her northern New England twang.

"When I see them, they're all in such a hurry, I just talk slower."

"We've never had anything like this before, that's for sure," says LeMere. This afternoon the

SEE **UNITY, A6**



JOURNAL FILE

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Second Amendment, to the U.S. Constitution

# GUNS in America

## Justices rule individuals have rights to firearms

BY LINDA GREENHOUSE  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court yesterday embraced the long-disputed view that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to own a gun for personal use, ruling 5 to 4 that there is a constitutional right to keep a loaded handgun at home for self-defense.

The landmark ruling overturned the District of Columbia's ban on handguns, the strictest gun-control law in the country. The court rejected the view that the Second Amendment's "right of the people to keep and bear arms" applied to gun ownership only in connection with service in the "well regulated militia" to which the amendment refers.

Justice Antonin Scalia's majority opinion, his most important in his 22 years on the court, said that the justices were "aware of the problem of handgun violence in this country" and "take seriously" the arguments in favor of prohibiting handgun ownership. "But the enshrinement of constitutional rights necessarily takes

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Your turn: React to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on gun control at [projo.com](http://projo.com)

SEE **GUNS, A7**

## In Rhode Island: 3 killed in separate late-night shootings

BY W. ZACHARY MALINOWSKI,  
JOHN CASTELLUCCI and MARK REYNOLDS  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

In the last two hours of Wednesday, two 17-year-old boys and a young woman were killed in shootings in Pawtucket, Providence and Woonsocket.

In Pawtucket, Mayra Cruz, 27, of Galego Court, had been shot in the head and left lifeless in her boyfriend's basement apartment — the boyfriend had called 911 and fled before the police arrived.

In Providence, Virgilio Rojo, 17, of

470 Manton Ave., was gunned down on Eastwood Avenue in the Hartford neighborhood, as his friend ran for cover.

And in Woonsocket, 17-year-old Brandon Smith was found sprawled at the doorstep of a house at 45 Robinson St. where he'd been living for the last few months.

By nightfall yesterday, one of the suspects in the shootings was in custody. Pawtucket police said that 24-year-old Juan L. Diaz had been arrested in Albany, N.Y., for the slaying of his

girlfriend, Cruz. The police had tracked him there after he used his cell phone to call his other girlfriend, a woman in Prospect Heights, according to a Pawtucket city official who'd been briefed on the investigation.

The deadly evening on Wednesday had begun at Diaz's apartment at 14 Reservoir Ave., at quarter to 10, when the Pawtucket police got a call from the suspect himself.

The caller, later identified as Diaz, contacted the police from the Reservoir Avenue apartment

SEE **SHOOTINGS, A7**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BILL MURPHY

Sgt. Phillip Cummings, center, of Johnston, a member of the Army National Guard 169th Military Police Company, is welcomed home by his wife, Susan, and son, Phillip Jr.

## For returning Guard unit, warm embraces all around

BY ALEX KUFFNER  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

NORTH KINGSTOWN — Somehow, it all felt strange to Master Sgt. Michael Beaver.

A week ago, he was with his unit in Iraq, "standing in the desert in 130-degree heat during a sandstorm." Yesterday, he stepped off a plane at Quonset Air National Guard Base and into what he described as a "surreal"

scene: hundreds of people crowding orange barriers, some with children on their shoulders, cheering and waving flags while patriotic music played from speakers and cameras flashed.

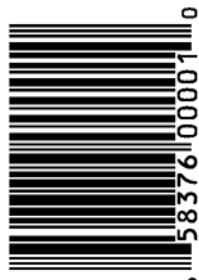
Beaver was overwhelmed. "All I really want to do is go to my backyard, lay under a tree and look up at the green leaves," he said.

One hundred and thirty-five members of the Rhode Island National Guard's 169th Military Police Company returned yesterday morning from Al-Anbar province in Iraq, where they spent the past 10 months training Iraqi police officers.

SEE **GUARD, A7**

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Video: Watch the return of members of the Rhode Island Army National Guard 169th Military Police Unit at [projo.com](http://projo.com)



### INSIDE TODAY

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6 SECTIONS			
Ask Amy	E8	Local News	C1
Bridge	E8	Lotteries	D4
Business	F1	Obituaries	C4
Classified	F4	People	E1
Comics	E9	Rhode Island	B1
Crossword	E8	Sports	D1
Editorial	B4	Television	E7
Legal ads	E5	What's Happening	E8
Lifebate Movies	E1		

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### OIL SOARS, STOCKS SINK

A barrage of bad business news, coupled with the price of a barrel of oil surging to nearly \$140, sends the Dow down more than 350 points, or 3 percent. **F1**



### UP IN THE AIR

The warm reception those barnstorming pilots receive in Rhode Island keeps them coming back to this weekend's Quonset air show year after year, **B1**; and watch the video as projo.com staff writer Brandie Jefferson and Journal photographer Sandor Bodo ride along with the aerobatic pilots who will be performing this weekend on [projo.com](http://projo.com)