



Across the USA

News from every state

Posted 11h 53m ago

Alabama:

Montgomery —Six elementary schools will participate in "The Wee Can Fight Obesity" program this fall designed to test a way to fight obesity in children: E.D. Nixon Elementary here, Winfield Elementary in Winfield, Epic Elementary in Birmingham, Dale Elementary in [Bay Minette](#), Spring Garden Elementary in Piedmont and [Kingston](#) Elementary in Selma.

Alaska: Juneau— The state's labor department said it is helping Alaskans train for mine jobs. A class of 12 will graduate from entry-level underground mine training later this month, and a job fair is set for Friday. The goal is to help state residents get the better-paying jobs that the mining industry offers, spokeswoman Beth Leschper said.

Arizona: Apache Junction— Police are looking for the parents of a young boy found on a city street. Police aren't sure whether the boy wandered away or whether he was deliberately dropped off. A woman found the boy, age 1½ to 2 years, sitting by the curb around 3:30 a.m. Wednesday, police Capt. Thomas Kelly said. It's unclear how long the child was abandoned, detectives said.

Arkansas: Little Rock— More than 53,000 students have applied for Academic Challenge Scholarships. State officials said many recipients will be notified by the end of June. The deadline for applying was June 1. The state Scholarship Lottery is to provide funding for 28,000 scholarships — \$5,000 for students in four-year programs and \$2,500 for students in community colleges.

California: Sacramento —A state appeals court said schools may allow only nurses to give insulin shots to diabetic children. The Third District Court of Appeal struck down current regulations that also allow trained staff members to give insulin. The regulations came out of a 2007 agreement between

the state Department of Education and the American Diabetes Association.

Colorado: Denver —[Democratic](#) Gov. Ritter signed a bill into law giving state colleges more flexibility to set tuition rates. He also signed a bill providing \$35 million to help lower- and middle-income students with tuition. Lawmakers said the legislation was necessary because the state plans to cut college funding by \$300 million next year.

Connecticut: New London —The school year will not end six days early after Superintendent Nicholas Fischer and the city reached a deal calling for the city to hand over nearly \$460,000 in state education aid and for an auditor to study a \$140,000 disputed debt the city said the school system owes. The deal came after a meeting with state Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan.

Delaware: Wilmington —[Democratic](#) Gov. Markell signed into law a measure that will ease in curbside recycling across the state, repeal bottle deposits and put into effect a 4-cent fee on beer and soda cans. Curbside recycling begins for single-family homes, bars and restaurants by September 2011.

D.C.: Shannon Hader abruptly resigned as director of the HIV/AIDS administration, effective July 15, to become vice president of a health organization, [The Washington Post](#) reported. During her three-year stint, she focused national attention on the city after a report showed that 3% of the population had tested positive for HIV/AIDS.

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Florida: Deland —The Volusia County School District is eliminating about 450 jobs, including guidance counselors, assistant principals and teachers' aides. The job cuts are being made because of funding reductions, caused in part by declining enrollment and property values, and rising costs. Some of the positions were vacant. The board has cut more than 1,200 jobs since 2007.

Georgia: Jonesboro —The Clayton County school district remains on probation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a national accrediting agency, but has made progress. The 50,000-student district lost its accreditation in 2008 because of its ineffective school board, which has been replaced. Accreditation was restored on a provisional basis last year.

Hawaii: Maalaea —A brush fire that forced the evacuation of about 100 people continues to burn. The blaze, battled by nearly 100 country and state firefighters, has covered an estimated 2,300 acres since it began Monday night, fire officials reported. A firefighter was treated for smoke inhalation and released, Maui County spokeswoman Mahina Martin said.

Idaho: Boise — City administrators in Moscow will take a pay cut next year to continue providing campus security to the University of Idaho. City Supervisor Gary Riedner said that under the tentative agreement, the university will pay \$937,000 for the Moscow Police Department to patrol the campus. Riedner said that's about \$65,800 less than the contract paid last year.

Illinois: Belleville — A woman avoided jail time and got a year of probation after admitting she mistreated a pit bull puppy found emaciated in a trash can, an electrical cord embedded in his neck. Tracia Johnson of Cahokia pleaded guilty to one count of animal cruelty. Authorities said the abuse surfaced in October 2009 when a trash collector found the then-9-month-old pit bull.

Indiana: Indianapolis — Got an Indiana ancestor who served in the [Civil War](#)? A new database allows people to search records of soldiers who fought in the war. The state's Civil War Soldiers Database includes more than 200,000 records compiled by the State Archives and volunteers. Records include information about a soldier's age, military dates, location and other information.

Iowa: Des Moines — A call is out to residents for help deciding what to put in the city's time capsule. City officials said they want to tell the story of the community, culture and successes. Citizens can put their suggestions into a stainless steel box on the second floor of City Hall. The time capsule and cornerstone laying is set for Monday. The time capsule is to be opened in 100 years.

Kansas: Treece — Residents relocating out of the contaminated town have been told they can move anywhere, as long as it isn't another area poisoned by mining. The state Department of Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency are funding a \$3 million buyout. The town is surrounded by lead- and zinc-contaminated mine waste.

Kentucky: Louisville — Youth-oriented bands will be competing at the State Fair this summer for free recording time at a local studio. The Battle of the Bands competition is for groups with at least half their musicians in the 14-20 age group. The competition is part of an effort to draw more young people to the fair, which runs this year Aug. 19-29.

Louisiana: Bossier City — Bad drivers are taking a toll on the city budget. The Shreveport *Times* reports accidents cost the city at least \$1.7 million over the past five years. Many of those mishaps, including a 2006 head-on collision that resulted in a \$240,000 payout, involved the police department. A portion of the money was paid out by insurance carriers.

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The advertisement features the USA TODAY logo at the top left. Below it, the word "AutoPilot" is written in a large, bold, black font, with a blue airplane icon to its right. Underneath "AutoPilot", the text reads "The new travel app for iPhone® and iPod touch®". To the left of this text is a smartphone displaying the app's interface, which includes a "USA TODAY Meeting" section with a date "Sep 21, 2009", a flight status "A6 BNA to IAD Landed 09:21:0009 11:48 AM", a weather forecast "73° Washington (MD) Partly Cloudy", and a "View a Flickr gallery of Washington" link. Below the phone, it says "Presented by: Hampton" with the Hampton logo. At the bottom right, a blue button with white text says "SEE HOW IT WORKS »".

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Maine: Pittston — Fairgrounds neighbors said they've had enough of mud runs, where pickup trucks race in the mud. After the Fair Association's annual 4X4 Mud Fest last weekend, neighbors complained about people urinating in public. One neighbor said a helicopter flew low over her cattle just to see them run, prompting a sheriff's deputy to order the operator to stop.

Maryland: Baltimore —A Justice Policy Institute report said that the city is the USA's most active jailer among major cities. With a jail population topping 4,000 in 2009, 0.6% of residents were jailed; 90% of people jailed were awaiting trial. The national average is 67%. The report suggests reducing arrests for non-violent offenses and releasing more people on their own recognizance.

Massachusetts: Lowell —The University of Massachusetts here has launched construction of a \$70 million facility for cutting-edge technologies that the school hopes will attract researchers from around the world. The 84,000-square-foot Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center is slated for completion in 2012 and is likely to create hundreds of permanent jobs.

Michigan: Mount Clemens —The Macomb County board of commissioners named three peregrine falcon chicks living atop the old Macomb County building: Ernie, after sportscaster [Ernie Harwell](#); Packard, after the Packard Motor Car Co.; and Martha, after Martha Griffiths, the state's former lieutenant governor. The chicks were born May 12 to Hathor and Nick.

Minnesota: Moorhead — The president of Concordia College died Wednesday morning after an early-morning stroke. President Pamela Jolicoeur, 65, had served since 2004 after working for 32 years at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks.

Mississippi: Jackson — Almost a third of state households can't afford basic needs such as housing, food, child care, health care, transportation and taxes, even though many are not considered poor by federal standards, said a report by an economic development group and other advocates.

Missouri: Jefferson City — Beaches will be closed at two northeastern state parks this weekend because of high levels of E. coli bacteria. Water samples showed problems at [Mark Twain State Park](#) in

Monroe County and Wakonda State Park in Lewis County. No other state park beaches tested poorly.

Montana: Missoula — Pharmaceutical giant [GlaxoSmithKline](#) announced it is laying off 19 employees at its production plant in Hamilton. The plant makes a key component to the company's vaccine against a virus that doctors said can cause some types of cervical cancer. Spokeswoman Sarah Alspach said the layoffs are part of an effort to control costs because of the down economy.

Nebraska: Lincoln — A woman who is suing a psychiatrist for malpractice, saying he had an affair with her, must use her name in court filings, a judge ruled. The woman said using her name would cause humiliation, emotional anguish and could worsen her problems. But a county judge said embarrassment does not trump the public's need for open court proceedings.

Nevada: Las Vegas — Regulators said monthly casino winnings in the state decreased 5.7% in April, to a little more than \$810 million, compared with the same month a year ago. The state Gaming Control Board reported Wednesday that state tax collections based on those winnings was just under \$40 million, or 23.4% less than last year.

New Hampshire: Berlin —Public Service of New Hampshire has agreed to buy the power produced by a wood-fired generating plant being proposed here at the site of a closed paper mill. The proposed 70-megawatt North Country biomass facility would help the utility move toward its goal of getting 25%

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of its power from renewable energy by 2025.

New Jersey: Montvale — Voters in the Pascack Valley Regional school district will consider whether to change their tax formula at a special election Sept. 28. Voters here and in Hillsdale, River Vale and Woodcliff Lake will decide whether to change the way the district is funded to one based on the proportional cost per student instead of property values.

New Mexico: Albuquerque — The Commission for Community Volunteerism said its federal funding for such efforts will more than double this year to about \$3.2 million. The commission's executive director, Gregory Webb, said the money will mean more volunteers in the field in the state.

New York: New York — The Metropolitan Transportation Authority's board voted to hold a new round of public hearings next month to discuss layoffs and subway booth closures. A judge ordered the agency to hold new hearings before firing any subway station employees and to reopen dozens of subway booths. The MTA will also appeal the judge's ruling.

North Carolina: Charlotte — The Tryon Bridge Beacons were expected to be lit for the first time in a private dedication ceremony. The artistic structures are on both sides of South Tryon Street at the Interstate 277 overpass. The stainless-steel-and-acrylic structures are a gift from Queen's Table, a philanthropic group working to advance the arts in the city.

North Dakota: Belfield — Police shot and killed a man following a car chase from the scene of an earlier shooting. The dead man, **Keith Newton**, 55, "had a handgun in his hand and as he pointed it at officers, the officers ended up shooting him," said Stark County Sheriff Clarence Tuhy. The officers are on leave pending a state review.

Ohio: Alliance — Audrey Scott, 57, spent three days in jail for calling 911 five times seeking a husband. The dispatcher was flabbergasted. Scott was warned that she could face arrest. She was convicted of improper use of the 911 system.

Oklahoma: Henryetta — The Okmulgee County Sheriff's Office said two people have been arrested in the death of a local businessman. No formal charges have been filed. Investigators said the two

people are responsible for the death of Delbert Rodgers, the owner of the Oil Pit, an auto service business. Rodgers' body was found Saturday in the garage at his home.

Oregon: Salem — Police have arrested a contract employee in connection with vandalism May 23 at Salem Hospital. Anthony Thurston, 22, of Independence, is accused of stuffing a sink with paper towels and leaving the water running, causing \$200,000 in damage. His employer provides information technology services for the hospital.

Pennsylvania: Philadelphia — Six government employees have retired or been fired as part of an investigation into parking ticket-fixing in the city. The city's inspector general, Amy Kurland, said the probe found no evidence of money changing hands and, in part, involved free and discounted food. The report has been sent to the district attorney, but no charges have been filed.

Rhode Island: Providence — **Republican** Gov. Carcieri has given a thumbs up to a new law that overhauls the state's income tax structure. The legislation, passed last week, would lower tax rates, reduce the number of tax brackets and eliminate the flat-tax option for the highest earners in the state. Supporters said it will make the state competitive with neighboring states.

South Carolina: Charleston — Officials have released the name of a 6-year-old boy who died after swimming in an apartment complex pool. Charleston County Deputy Coroner Brittney Martin

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said the victim was G-Vonne Washington of North Charleston. Martin said it appears the boy drowned.

South Dakota: Mitchell — City officials are discussing a community center that could cost up to \$18 million, though some council members said there is public opposition. The proposed city-owned recreation center would be on the Dakota Wesleyan University campus. The city would pay up to \$10 million, while its partners would raise the rest.

Tennessee: Nashville — Metro Police are investigating how an officer failed to find a gun on a man he arrested and took to jail. *The Tennessean* reported Officer Travis Baxter arrested Jesse Alexander outside a nightclub on June 1. Police spokesman Don Aaron said Alexander wasn't properly patted down for a weapon and later showed corrections officers a loaded handgun.

Texas: Killeen — The City Council has approved plans for a Fort Hood Memorial to victims of November's deadly shooting rampage at the Army post. The memorial is planned near the Civic and Conference Center. No cost estimate was given. Donations will be sought from private groups and the public.

Utah: Salt Lake City — A man has been charged with murder in the 1989 death of a Utah County woman. Jose Ortiz-Garcia, 55, also was charged with aggravated robbery and aggravated sexual assault. The body of Lela Rockwell, 62, was found under a viaduct.

Vermont: Burlington — A globe-trotting convicted con man who was arrested in September at the Canadian border pleaded guilty Wednesday to entering the U.S. illegally. Juan Carlos Guzman-Betancourt, 33, of Colombia faces up to 10 years in prison. Officials said he has at least 10 aliases. He's been convicted of larceny in Virginia and New York and other charges in Florida.

Virginia: Newport News — **Northrop Grumman** is investigating an incident in which a worker's clothing was contaminated with radioactive material at the company's shipyard here. Spokeswoman Margaret Mitchell-Jones said a trace amount of radioactive material was found, and the worker wasn't harmed.

Washington: Seattle — A state audit of the

Department of Social and Health Services found problems with updating records and access to records. The audit found some employees were overpaid, and that \$350,000 was paid for former employees' medical insurance premiums. The audit also found at least 100 former employees still had access to computer systems.

West Virginia: Whitesville — The town has donated land for a memorial to the 29 Upper Big Branch miners killed on April 5, and residents are trying to raise funds for the project. Councilwoman Patty Ann Manios said a website for donations should launch July 1. Donations are crucial, Manios said, noting the town's small population.

Wisconsin: Jefferson — An ailing Kentucky con man pleaded guilty Wednesday to killing a teenage couple in Wisconsin nearly 30 years ago and agreed to plead guilty to two Ohio murders he had earlier confessed to. Edward Edwards, 76, admitted killing 19-year-old sweethearts Tim Hack and Kelly Drew in 1980. Each murder carries a mandatory life prison sentence.

Wyoming: Moose — A trail will close briefly in Grand Teton National Park so that a crew can push a boulder about the size of a **La-Z-Boy** recliner downhill. The giant rock recently tumbled downhill and came to a precarious rest above the Valley Trail, park spokeswoman Jackie Skaggs said. Workers will try to pry the boulder loose and roll it downhill to a safer spot, Skaggs said.

U.S. territory: Virgin Islands — A security screener at

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the main airport pleaded not guilty Wednesday to charges that he tried to bribe a juror in a drug trafficking trial. Ikim Blackett, 31, made the plea at his first court hearing in St. Thomas. A federal indictment accuses Blackett of offering to pay \$1,500 in return for a not guilty verdict.

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