

Akin Seeks Small Cash Donations For Campaign

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Abandoned by deep-pocketed national groups, Missouri Rep. Todd Akin is passing a collection plate among his remaining supporters, asking for a few dollars at a time in hopes of sustaining a Senate campaign threatened by his remarks about women's bodies and "legitimate rape."

Akin claimed Thursday to have taken in more than \$100,000 during a two-day online fundraising drive that he portrayed as a grassroots effort to circumvent "party bosses" who demanded that he drop out. But the six-term congressman will need much more than that to replenish a campaign account already diminished by a hotly contested primary.

"It's very difficult, when you have the limited base we have in Missouri, to send emails out asking for \$3 at a time," said Pat Thomas, secretary of the Missouri Republican State Committee who has worked as a coordinator for numerous candidates. "I don't know how to build a war chest to do that."

Akin now has to go forward without the firepower of well-funded political groups that had planned to pummel Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill with negative television ads.

'No Easy Day' Author Could Face Security Risks

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Navy SEAL who wrote an account of the raid that killed Osama bin Laden under a pseudonym was identified Thursday as Matt Bissonnette, who retired from the Navy last summer.

Bissonnette was first identified by Fox News. One current and one former U.S. military official confirmed the name, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss military personnel matters.

The book, "No Easy Day," is scheduled to be released Sept. 11, with the author listed under the pseudonym of Mark Owen. Penguin Group (USA)'s Dutton imprint, the publisher, asked news organizations Thursday to withhold his identity.

"Sharing the true story of his personal experience in 'No Easy Day' is a courageous act in the face of obvious risks to his personal security," said a statement by Christine Ball, Penguin Group spokeswoman. "That personal security is the sole reason the book is being published under a pseudonym."

Special Operations Command spokesman Col. Tim Nye said the retired SEAL could be endangered by being identified, which could also expose those active-duty SEALs the author worked with in the killing of bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan last year.

Coroner Rules Rodney King Death Accidental

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (AP) — Rodney King had been drinking and was on drugs when he plunged into a swimming pool and accidentally drowned in June, a coroner's report released Thursday concluded.

The report confirmed a previous police conclusion that King died by accident, and the case will be closed, Rialto police Capt. Randy DeAnda said.

"It concludes our investigation," he said. "Basically, our investigation revealed the same conclusion and now that we have the toxicology, it basically reinforces that."

King, whose videotaped beating by Los Angeles police in 1991 led to deadly rioting, had long struggled with addiction.

A call from King's fiancée brought police to his Rialto home at 5:30 a.m. on June 17. Officers pulled him from the bottom of the pool, and he was pronounced dead at a hospital.

France Shows Support For No-Fly Zone In Syria

BEIRUT (AP) — France signaled Thursday that it was prepared to take part in enforcing a partial no-fly zone over Syria, piling pressure on President Bashar Assad's embattled regime as it widens a major offensive against rebels in Damascus and surrounding areas.

French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian urged the international community to consider backing a no-fly zone over parts of Syria, but cautioned that closing the Arab nation's entire air space would be tantamount to "going to war" and require a willing international coalition that does not yet exist.

He told France 24 television that Paris would participate in a full no-fly operation if it followed international legal principles. But for now, he suggested that a partial closure — which U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Washington was considering — should be studied.

Syria's chief backer, Russia, meanwhile, said it was working closely with the Damascus government to ensure that its arsenal of chemical weapons stays under firm control and has won promises that it will not be used or moved.

In Syria, troops backed by tanks and helicopters broke into the Damascus suburb of Daraya, the scene of intense fighting over the last two days. At least 18 people were killed.

Wagner

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and Denker said the district works to embrace its diversity while building strong bonds among all races. In fact, the Wagner district hosted then-Gov. Mike Rounds, nationally-recognized Indian journalist Tim Giago and two-time Grammy-winning American Indian musician Robert Mirabal for a regional "Day of Unity" promoting racial reconciliation.

"I grew up here (in the Wagner area) and have a lot of friends from different races," Denker said. "The color of the skin has absolutely nothing to do with it."

As a show of support, Denker accompanied four Wagner students who made a presentation at a national convention.

"(Our students) gave a presentation that was tremendous. It was moving," he said. "There were a lot of tears shed after listening to the children in our district and to hear some of the things that they have overcome to go to school. You can drive by a school building, but it doesn't tell you much."

MAKING PROGRESS

Denker believes in providing opportunities for students of all ages and backgrounds. Five years ago, he worked with initiating the one-to-one laptop computer initiative for high school students. He has also been part of a Project Base Learning initiative.

"Technology is the way of the world for our kids," he said.

During Denker's time on the board, the district has opened a free pre-school program and early learning center for 110 three- and four-year-old students.

"With the pre-school program, statistics show that's what is good for children," he said. "The educational research sounded like it should help the kids and, by golly, at Wagner, we feel it has made a difference. It's open to all of our students as long as there's room."

The district has also implemented a Jobs for America's

Graduates (JAG) program that serves middle school and high school students. In addition, the alternative classroom has been moved from the National Guard armory to the school, where the site offers both recovery credits and college courses.

"We have tried to fulfill every student's needs," Denker said. "It's something that we take very seriously."

The district has changed its structure from an elementary and high school to a structure that consists of primary, elementary, middle school and high school levels.

In addition, Denker has chaired the board's Buildings and Grounds Committee that added a pre-school and kindergarten wing, remodeled the music department and library, added a kitchen and commons facility, added a second auxiliary gym and renovated its business office.

"We re-did our cafeteria so we are able to serve more students faster and give them more time to sit down and enjoy their meal and not eat so fast," Denker said.

HIGH STANDARDS

The Wagner school board members hold high expectations for themselves, Denker said. In turn, the faculty, staff, students and district are raising the bar each day, he said.

"The superintendent and rest of the staff are not afraid of high expectations," he said. "When you have somebody working that hard underneath you, it definitely reflects on you and the entire board, making us look better."



50th Anniversary

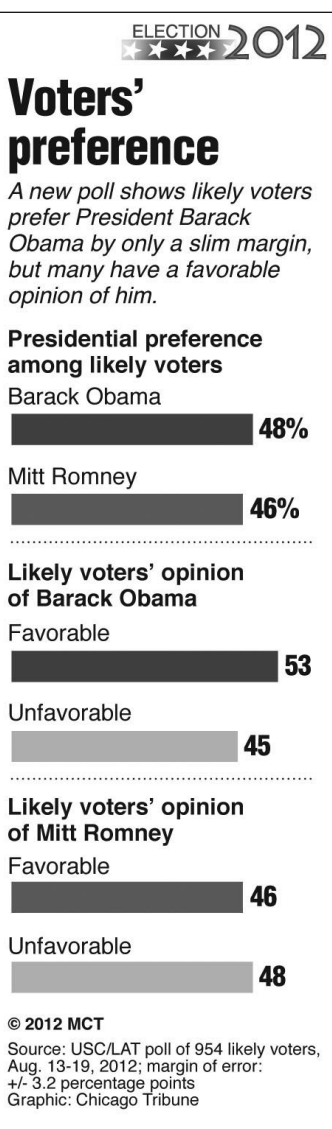


The couple have 4 children: Tony (Jackie) Lanning of Brookings, SD; Shawna (Tom) Peterson of Long Grove, IL; Annie (Brian) Lanning of Sioux Falls, SD and David (Nichole) Lanning of Brookings, SD.

The couple also has 5 grandchildren: Sophie, Sarah, Claudia, Conor and Finnegan.

The family would like a card shower for their 50th as well as Larry's 70th birthday which is the same day. Cards can be sent to: 1214 W. 9th St., Yankton, SD 57078

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lanning
Mr. and Mrs. Larry and Glenda (Berendes) Lanning, Yankton, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on August 22, 2012.



Romney Promises Energy Independence By 2020

BY JULIE PACE AND MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

HOBBS, N.M. — Republican presidential contender Mitt Romney promised on Thursday to aggressively expand off-shore oil drilling along Virginia, North Carolina and the Gulf of Mexico, changing the subject from social issues like abortion and Medicare that have dominated the debate in the days before the critical Republican National Convention.

Speaking to voters in the heart of New Mexico's oil and gas industry, Romney declared that his energy plans — which include drilling for oil in a federal Alaskan wildlife reserve — would create 3 million jobs and more than \$1 trillion in new revenue. And he predicted complete "North American energy independence by 2020, a never-realized goal claimed by presidential candidates for decades."

"That means we produce all the energy we use in North America," Romney said, emphasizing an expansion of oil and gas over wind and solar production. "This is not some pie-in-the-sky kind of thing. This is a real achievable objective."

President Barack Obama did not face voters on Thursday. Instead, he deployed a popular former president, Bill Clinton, to help convince a divided electorate that he simply needs more time to fix the nation's struggling economy. Clinton is expected to speak at the Democratic National Convention next month and play a prominent role in the final months before Election Day.

"We need to keep going with his plan," Clinton says of Obama in a new television ad set to run in eight battleground states.

The push to re-frame the debate comes at a delicate time, sandwiched between the sudden resurgence of



Romney

a fight over social issues, led a chorus of Republican officials who demanded Akin abandon his Senate bid. The congressman has so far refused.

The uproar raises broader concerns for Romney's effort to win over female voters. At the same time, a strengthening tropical storm is forcing Republicans to prepare for big schedule changes or even the possibility of mandatory evacuations. GOP convention planners on Thursday said they are working closely with local officials and are moving forward with the convention as scheduled.

The stakes are high, the outcome uncertain 75 days before voters choose their next president and the majorities of Congress.

Polling suggests that the presidential contest is essentially a tossup, although Obama maintains a slight lead among women. Research also suggests that more voters trust Obama's plans for Medicare than Romney's. It's an advantage that could prove significant given Romney's selection of running mate Paul Ryan, the House budget architect who crafted a controversial plan to transform Medicare into a voucher-like system for future retirees.

Isaac Could Shake Up Security For GOP Convention

BY TAMARA LUSH

Associated Press

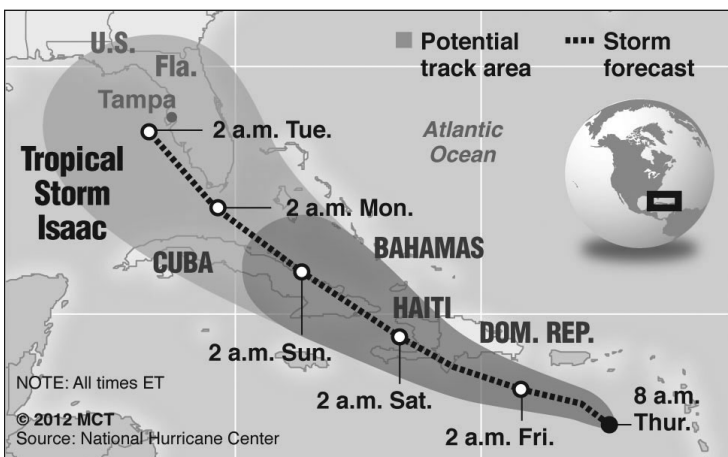
TAMPA, Fla. — Tropical Storm Isaac could force a shakeup of the security plans for the GOP convention in Tampa, because about half of the expected officers come from other parts of Florida and some could be forced to stay home for the storm, authorities said Thursday.

But Gov. Rick Scott said the Florida National Guard is ready to step in if needed to fill the gap.

More than 3,500 officers from 59 law enforcement agencies from around the state are scheduled to come to Tampa to patrol the streets as the convention opens Monday. About half would come from outside Hillsborough County and the city of Tampa.

About 1,700 National Guard troops were already expected to help with patrols.

"We have a process where we can call up more National Guard as quickly as we need them," Scott said. "If we know now that some individuals are not going to show up we have plenty of time



to add more National Guard, but at this time we don't see that we're going to have a problem."

The storm is forecast to start affecting South Florida on Monday and could reach the Tampa area by Tuesday.

"We're in a situation right now where we don't know what's going to happen," said Hillsborough County Sheriff David Gee. "My primary concern right now is that we will lose resources."

Gee said some agencies, espe-

cially in South Florida, might decide not to send officers to Tampa if the storm threatens their areas. "As things change, they might have to prioritize," he said.

Scott, however, said additional guardsmen — instead of heading to Tampa — could go the other way and fill in back home for the visiting officers because the latter already are trained for convention duty.

The Republican governor also said he spoke on the telephone

with presumptive GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney to assure him Florida can handle the convention and the storm.

Scott noted that a recent National Hurricane Center update had moved the centerline of the storm track from 85 miles west of Tampa to about 150 miles west of the area. Virtually the entire state, though, is included within the five-day forecast cone.

"Right now it's full speed ahead," Scott said. "We're looking forward to the delegates coming. We're going to keep them safe. ... We're a hospitality state that knows how to deal with hurricanes."

Gee's agency is in charge of the county where the convention will take place. The Hillsborough Sheriff's Office is providing the bulk of the staffing for the event because it is the largest agency in the area and also oversees the county jail. The Tampa Police is the other main agency handling security outside of the convention hall. The Secret Service is in charge of everything inside the convention hall.

has continued receiving federal funding when it was believed the district was no longer eligible for the entire payment, she said.

Despite financial pressures for the district, Denker believes in maintaining an attractive base salary for attracting new employees and raises as a show of respect and appreciation for veteran staff, Dufraim said.

"When negotiation times would roll around, Mike would always strive to treat all employees fairly and with utmost respect, knowing that the school board's decisions affect every employee's family members and their livelihood," she said.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

Denker shows a genuine concern for people and goes out of his way to welcome newcomers, said Wagner Middle School principal Steve Petry.

"He was a person that made me feel at home and welcome. His friendship is a reason I enjoy working in Wagner," Petry said. "Mike does the same with other new employees. At ball games and at church, I have observed Mike seek out new teachers, extend his hand and introduce himself as 'Mike Denker.'"

Wagner school attorney Ken

Cotton credits Denker with an ability to deal with a number of complicated matters.

"Each and every time that I have observed Mike in his capacities as both a member and chairman of the school board, I have been most impressed with his ability to quickly grasp the issues at hand and to deal with those issues in an intelligent, reasonable and professional manner," Cotton said.

For Denker, public service is like a torch or baton. His father served on the Wagner school board in the 1970s, but the younger Denker said it's not a matter of imitating his father.

"For me, it's a way to give back to the community," he said.

Denker said he takes pride in never missing a school board meeting in 13 years. He intends to remain on the board through 2013, when Smit retires from her position. She has announced her resignation, effective at the end of the school year, to give the district time to find her replacement.

"I want to be on the board when we hire the next superintendent. We've got to have somebody with a vision," Denker said. "It's tough shoes to fill. (Smit) replaced Vernal Anderson. She came in and picked up the reins,

and it's been a pleasure working with her."

Regardless of what lies ahead for the Wagner district, Denker said he never wants the board to lose the personal touch.

"With students and staff, you are dealing with human feelings instead of machines," he said. "I try to make this a better place for all of them."

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at twitter.com/RDockendorf

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