

Man Tells Police He Killed Etan Patz

NEW YORK (AP) — In a potential break in one of the nation's most baffling missing-children cases, a former convenience-store employee has told police that he suffocated 6-year-old Etan Patz in 1979 and left the boy's body in a box in an alley, law enforcement officials said Thursday.

If Pedro Hernandez's story checks out, it could solve the 33-year-old mystery of what happened to Etan, whose disappearance on his way to school helped give rise to the nation's missing-children movement and made him one of the first abducted youngsters to be pictured on a milk carton.

After decades of dead-end leads and phony confessions, investigators warned they are still trying to confirm Hernandez's account and have little to go on other than his word. No body has been found. No charges have been filed.

"Let me caution you that there's still a lot of investigating to do," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said.

Hernandez, who is believed to be in his mid-60s, worked at a store in the neighborhood where Patz lived, authorities said.

Brotherhood Claims Lead In Polls In Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — The Muslim Brotherhood said Thursday that its candidate was leading in exit polls from Egypt's landmark presidential election, as official counting began after two days of voting to choose a successor to ousted leader Hosni Mubarak.

In stations around the country, workers cracked open ballot boxes and started the count after polls closed Thursday night, in Egypt's first truly competitive presidential election. There are five prominent candidates in a field of 13, but none is expected to win outright in the first round. A run-off between the two leading contenders would be held June 16-17.

A Brotherhood spokesman said the group's candidate, Mohammed Morsi, was the leader in exit polls conducted by Brotherhood campaign workers nationwide. Morsi's spokesman, Murad Mohammed Ali, declined to give specific percentages.

"The Egyptian people always amaze us," said Ali. "This is above our expectations."

The reliability of the Brotherhood's polls could not be confirmed. Regional television channels, citing their own exit polls, also placed Morsi as the top finisher, with rivals Ahmed Shafiq and Hamdeen Sabahi vying for second post.

Rover On Mars Takes A Picture Of Its Shadow

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Even robots like to have fun. NASA's rover on Mars showed off its playful side by snapping a picture of its own shadow. It's the latest self-portrait since the rover, named Opportunity, landed on the red planet in 2004.

The photo was taken in March and NASA released it this week. The solar-powered, six-wheel rover was at an outcrop on the rim of a massive crater. The late afternoon sun set the crater aglow and Opportunity waited for just the right lighting to send a postcard back to Earth.

The result was a dramatic view of Opportunity casting a shadow with the crater in the background.

After nearly five months in one spot, the tireless rover is rolling again to explore more rocks.

Video Of Tornado At Wedding Goes Viral

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — In the plains of central Kansas, tornadoes are so unremarkable that guests barely flinched as a barrel-racing bride wed her bull-riding groom with a twister dropping from the sky just miles away.

But for people living outside Tornado Alley, Caleb and Candra Pence's wedding last Saturday is generating the kind of buzz usually reserved for celebrity nuptials. The video of the service has gone viral, garnering more than 20,000 views on YouTube and a flurry of media coverage.

"It is amazing how fast it has taken off," said the groom's uncle, Lee Pence, who shot the video.

After Saturday's outdoor service on the groom's family farm near the small south-central Kansas town of Harper, the couple posed for photos with the twister visible behind them. The pictures capture them smiling serenely — the 21-year-old bride in a white gown and the 22-year-old groom in a cowboy hat and jeans.

About eight to 10 miles away, the twister was damaging a farm and wind turbines. The National Weather Service has classified it as an EF-3 storm, packing winds of 138 to 167 miles per hour.

Gov. Says N.J. Will Implement Sports Betting

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — New Jersey will defy a federal ban and let people bet on the outcomes of football, basketball and other games this fall, Gov. Chris Christie said Thursday.

Speaking at a news conference highlighting efforts to reinvigorate Atlantic City, Christie said the regulations his administration will issue next week make no attempt to overturn a 1992 federal law that limits sports betting to four states.

"We intend to go forward," the Republican governor said. "If someone wants to stop us, then let them try to stop us. We want to work with the casinos and horse racing industry to get it implemented."

"Am I expecting there may be legal action taken against us to try to prevent it? Yes," the governor said. "But I have every confidence we're going to be successful."

Obama Taps Yucca Mtn Critic For Nuke Agency

WASHINGTON (AP) — Moving quickly to stem a controversy, President Barack Obama on Thursday nominated an expert on nuclear waste to lead the federal agency that regulates the nation's nuclear power plants.

Allison Macfarlane, who served on a presidential commission that studied new strategies to manage nuclear waste, would replace Gregory Jaczko as head of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Jaczko announced his resignation Monday after a tumultuous three-year tenure in which he pushed for sweeping safety reforms but came under fire for an unyielding management style that fellow commissioners and agency employees described as bullying.

U.S. Could OK Arms Transfers To Syrian Rebels

BY MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As one diplomatic effort after another fails to end more than a year of brutal violence in Syria, the Obama administration is preparing a plan that would essentially give U.S. nods of approval to arms transfers from Arab nations to some Syrian opposition fighters.

The effort, U.S. officials told The Associated Press, would vet members of the Free Syrian Army and other groups to determine whether they are suitable recipients of munitions to fight the Assad government and to ensure that weapons don't wind up in the hands of al-Qaida-linked terrorists or other extremist groups such as Hezbollah that could target Israel.

The plan, which has not yet been finalized, reflects U.S. frustration that none of the previous efforts — including diplomatic rhetoric from the United Nations and the multinational Friends of Syria group, and special envoy Kofi Annan's plan for a cease-fire — has even begun to nudge President Bashar al-Assad from power. The vetting would be the first tiny step the U.S. has made toward ensuring that the Syrian opposition uses the weapons to fight Assad and not to turn it into a full sectarian conflict.

While some intelligence analysts worry

that there may be no suitable recipients of lethal aid in the Syria conflict, the vetting plan has arisen as the least objectionable idea in a complicated situation.

U.S. officials, most of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the subject, stressed that the United States, which is already providing non-lethal aid to Syria's political opposition, is not supplying military assistance to Assad's foes.

The administration's position remains that adding more weapons to the conflict is a bad idea and will only fan the fire of instability.

"We don't think that adding fuel to this fire is the right way to go," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

"Our decision is to support the civilian opposition in nonlethal ways," she said. "There are other countries who have made other decisions. That's their sovereign decision to make. We've made our decision."

But she added: "We are obviously consulting with various states about the decisions that we've made, that they've made."

Privately, officials say that as conditions continue to deteriorate, it would be irresponsible not to weigh in with Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and others such as Turkey that have indicated interest in arming the rebels.

Magic Of 2008 Campaign Past

Obama Gets Tough In Iowa To Blunt Romney Challenge

BY THOMAS BEAUMONT
AND KEN THOMAS

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — The Iowa magic that launched Barack Obama to the presidency four years ago has all but faded.

Soured by the direction of the nation and its economy, Iowa has drifted away from Obama since his 2008 caucus victory over Hillary



Obama

Rodham Clinton made him the Democratic front-runner. And while he carried the state in the general election by a comfortable margin that year, polls this year have shown voters narrowly preferring

Republican challenger Mitt Romney, who plans to wage his own major effort in Iowa.

Today, the Democrat who emerged Cinderella-like with a hope-filled message four years ago is sharply attacking Romney's economic credentials and his ability to grasp voters' everyday concerns.

Obama's visit Thursday to blue-collar Newton, Iowa, and his Des Moines campaign rally near where Romney once declared that corporations are people, underscored the president's own vulnerability with working-class voters and his effort to identify with the middle class.

In Newton, once the prosperous headquarters of Maytag appliances, Obama visited a wind-turbine plant to push his alternative energy agenda and delivered a message that could as well have applied to all of Iowa. "Yeah, we're facing tough times, but we're getting through them, we're getting through them together," he said.

While offering only six of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency, how Iowa voters ultimately judge Obama is expected to be an important factor in the race.

"Last time it was a lot more ex-



CLEM MURRAY/PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/MCT

Republican presidential hopeful Mitt Romney has a seat in Ms. Stephanie Robinson's sixth grade language arts class at Universal Bluford ES, a charter school in West Philadelphia, Thursday, May 24, 2012, learning about metaphors, similes and alliterations. Romney holds up an alliteration that he and his desk mates wrote.

citing. It was a new thing," said Nancy Bobo, a Des Moines Obama volunteer and one of his earliest Iowa backers in 2008. "Today, we're all just very serious."

Obama was visiting a former Maytag Corp. appliance plant in Newton, a town devastated by the plant's closing in 2005. The plant now houses TPI Composites, a wind-turbine blade manufacturer.

Romney, a former Massachusetts governor, has made the struggling economy the centerpiece of his campaign. But Obama can point to comparatively low 5.1 percent unemployment in Iowa, where stable financial services and strong agriculture sectors buoyed the economy while manufacturing has struggled to rebound.

Obama's Des Moines rally, his first in Iowa since announcing his candidacy for re-election, is symbolically set for the Iowa State Fair grounds, within steps of where Romney declared last year that "corporations are people."

Romney made the comment as he argued against raising taxes as a way of shoring up Social Security and Medicare.

Members of the audience interrupted, calling for increased taxes on corporations, and Romney responded: "Corporations are people, my friend. ... Everything corporations earn ultimately goes to people."

The comment has been used by opponents to characterize Romney, a former private equity

Food Stamp Fraud Raising Concerns

BY SAM HANANEL

Associated Press

WASHINGTON— Food stamp recipients are ripping off the government for millions of dollars by illegally selling their benefit cards for cash — sometimes even in the open, on eBay or Craigslist — and then asking the government for replacement cards.

The Agriculture Department wants to curb the practice by giving states more power to investigate people who repeatedly claim to lose their benefit cards.

It is proposing new rules Thursday that would allow states to demand formal explanations from people who seek replacement cards more than three times a year. Those who don't comply can be denied further cards.

"Up to this point, the state's hands have been tied unless they absolutely suspected fraudulent activity," said Kevin Concannon, the department's undersecretary for food, nutrition and consumer services.

Overall, food stamp fraud costs taxpayers about \$750 million a year, or 1 percent of the \$75 billion program that makes up the bulk of the department's total budget for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Most fraud occurs when unscrupulous retailers allow customers to turn in their benefits cards for lesser amounts of cash. But USDA officials are also concerned about people selling or trading cards in the open market, including through websites.

OBITUARIES

Denwood Carl Hult

VOLIN — Denwood Carl Hult, 63, of Volin died Thursday, May 24, 2012, at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, Yankton.

Funeral services are at 2 p.m. Tuesday at Komstad Covenant Church, rural Beresford, with the Rev. David Olson officiating. Burial will be in the Komstad Cemetery with military honors by the

Beresford American Legion Post 72, VFW Post 2975 and South Dakota Air National Guard.

Visitation is 5-8 p.m. Monday at Wintz & Ray Funeral Home, Yankton, with a prayer service, video tribute and time of sharing at 7 p.m.

To send an online sympathy message, visit wintzrayfuneralhome.com.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Melba M. Kremer

10:30 AM, Friday
St. Joseph's Catholic Church
Constance

Denwood Carl Hult

2:00 PM, Tuesday
Komstad Covenant Church
Rural Beresford

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Thank You

Thank you to Father Fulton for celebrating our 60th anniversary mass and special blessing on April 22.

Thank you to our family for hosting the dinner, our family & friends for the cards & well wishes.

God has blessed us and may God bless you all.

Clarence & Angela Mueller

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