

IN SPORTS: UCONN MEN ADVANCE TO THE BIG EAST SEMIFINALS WITH A 66-58 WIN OVER NOTRE DAME

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REAL ESTATE
Friday

The Day

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2004, NEW LONDON

SERVING EASTERN CONNECTICUT SINCE 1881

VOL. 123, No. 255 80 PAGES 50 CENTS

Firm That Owned Plane Involved In Groton Crash Is Grounded

Air East operating certificate pulled by FAA; maintenance, training issues cited

By **GLADYS ALCEDO**
Day Staff Writer

The Federal Aviation Administration this week grounded the Long Is-

land-based air charter service that owned the Learjet that crashed in Groton in August, killing two pilots and clipping three homes in the Poquonock Bridge section.

The federal agency revoked the operating certificate of Air East Inc., citing the company's failure to perform required maintenance; faulty and incomplete documentation of maintenance procedures and training for pilots; and flying aircraft considered "not in airworthy condition."

The revocation of the license required Air East to immediately surrender its license and cease operations, according to the FAA.

Attempts to contact owners of Air East were unsuccessful Thursday night. A woman who answered the telephone at the charter's office said she could provide no information.

Air East, based at the Republic Airport in Farmingdale, owned the seven-passenger Learjet 35A that clipped the roof of a house on Provi-

dence Court and tumbled into two other houses before crashing into the Poquonock River northeast of Groton-New London Airport. The crash, which occurred early Aug. 4, killed the pilot, Jerrod Katt, 33, of Conroe, Texas, and co-pilot, Kenneth Hutchinson, 56, of Amityville, N.Y. They were on their way to the Groton airport from Long Island to pick up two passengers they planned to fly to Buffalo.

The National Transportation Safety

Board's investigation of the crash is continuing. But the FAA, which conducted an in-depth investigation of the operations of Air East, found the violations that prompted the agency to take action, Arlene Salac, an FAA spokesman, said Thursday.

"In this case, we were looking at maintenance issues, maintenance record-keeping and pilot training," she said.

Hutchinson's sister, Suzanne Gebel of Holbrook, N.Y., praised the

FAA for its investigation and swift action. Gebel said she was fired from her job as a bookkeeper at Air East after she went to the FAA about the charter's maintenance and repair history.

"When I read it, I was horrified. ... I had no idea the amount of things they didn't do right," Gebel said of the FAA report's findings. "If the plane was repaired, my brother didn't have to die. He was my soul mate, my

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'They restored order to chaos in San Francisco.'

Joshua Carden, an attorney with the conservative Alliance Defense Fund

Court calls a halt to gay marriages in San Francisco

Massachusetts lawmakers give preliminary OK to proposed ban

By **DAVID KRAVETS**
Associated Press Writer

San Francisco — The California Supreme Court ordered an immediate halt to same-sex weddings in San Francisco on Thursday as Massachusetts lawmakers gave preliminary approval to a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriages in the only state where they have been ruled legal.

Teary-eyed couples were quickly turned away at San Francisco's City Hall, where 4,161 gay couples have tied the knot in the last month.

"We were filling out the application and they told us to stop," said Art Adams, who was the first to be denied as he and partner Devin Baker sought a license. "It's heart-breaking. I don't understand why two people in love should be prevented from expressing it."

On the other side of the country, Massachusetts legislators returned to the Capitol to consider a constitutional amendment that would strip gay couples of their court-granted right to marriage but allow civil unions.

The amendment won approval during three preliminary votes, but its final passage is far from certain. Gay marriage supporters were conducting procedural maneuvers

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Lyme couple charged with taking owner of rare Ferrari for a ride

By **ANDREW RYAN**
Day Staff Writer

Lyme — Vintage race car collectors live in a small, opulent world of Ferraris and Alfa Romeos, where automobiles cost as much as mansions, and embezzlement from a single sale can stretch seven figures.

Prosecutors say that Richard Anderson, 59, of Lyme bilked almost \$3 million from the sale of one car, a 1956 blue and white Ferrari Model 290 MM. Working with his wife, Janice Anderson, also 59, Anderson allegedly used the money in part to pay off his mortgage, bankroll his son's college education and settle his tax bills.

The Andersons allegedly took millions from Luigi Chinetti, the son of a famed Italian race car driver who helped Enzo Ferrari launch his car company after World War II. Chinetti described the con as a betrayal by confidants so trusted he'd written them into his will.

It's "like you've had a burglar in your house that has taken away the jewelry. You really feel raped. You feel violated in your inner sanctum," Chinetti said in a telephone interview Thursday from his home in Stuart, Fla. "You feel very sad because it wasn't supposed to turn out this way. Automobiles and money are supposed to bring happiness. There's no malice. It's just very sad."

Anderson denied the charges in a telephone interview Thursday from his house on Old Hamburg Road, but said that a court order from a civil suit pending between him and Chinetti bars him from discussing specifics.

"He is a very litigious individual," Anderson said. "God bless him."

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PAUL WHITE / Associated Press

Firefighters using a stretcher remove a body from a bomb-damaged railroad car following a number of explosions on trains in Madrid, Spain, on Thursday. The blasts, which killed at least 192 people and injured 1,400, occurred just three days before Spain's general elections.

Spain left reeling by terrorist bombings

At least 192 are killed; authorities uncertain as to who was responsible

By **MAR ROMAN**
Associated Press Writer

Madrid, Spain — A series of bombs hidden in backpacks exploded in quick succession Thursday, blowing apart four commuter trains and killing at least 192 people and wounding 1,400. Spain blamed Basque separatists, but a shadowy group claimed responsibility in the name of al-Qaida for the worst terrorist attack in Spain's history.

Panicked commuters trampled on each other, abandoning their bags and shoes, after two of the bombs went off in one train in the Atocha station in the heart of Madrid. Train cars were turned into twisted wrecks and platforms were strewn with corpses. Cell phones rang unanswered on the bodies of the dead as frantic relatives tried to call them.

"March 11, 2004, now holds its place in the history of infamy," Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said.

The bombing came three days ahead of Spain's general election on Sunday. A major campaign issue was how to deal with ETA, the Basque militant group.

Campaigning for the election was called off and three days of mourning were declared.

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Spanish leaders were quick to blame Basque terrorists for setting off Thursday's devastating bomb attacks in Madrid. But hours later they were less sure. **A2**

New London Housing Authority seeks 'better option'

Agency hopes to gain federal funds to raze high-rise apartments

By **KATE MORAN**
Day Staff Writer

New London — In the two-bedroom apartment she shares with four children, Jessica Lopez has learned that storage is a matter of triage. She fits her children's clothes into her dresser and her own clothes into plastic bags.

Lopez, 26, has asked the New London Housing Authority for a larger apartment. Despite a doctor's letter that showed one child has asthma and needs a new room, she said she has gotten no relief.

"They suggested I move into the living room," she said.

Tenants of the Thames River Apartments, the high-rise public housing project on Crystal Avenue, have long complained of an impassive bureaucracy and

inferior living conditions, such as glass on the playground and urine in the halls. But if federal money materializes, they could move on as early as this summer.

The city's housing authority has requested \$1.8 million through the federal government's HOPE VI program to demolish the high-rise and relocate its tenants. Sometime this spring, the agency will hear whether it has won a piece of the \$40 million available this year through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the demolition of "severely distressed" public housing.

Richard Leco, the housing authority's executive director, sees demolition as a way to rectify a housing system that "warehouses" the poor in cinderblock apartments.

In Leco's mind, renovation is not a practical alternative. He estimates the cost of repairing buildings that were poorly built and improperly maintained at \$20 million. By preserving the apartments, he said, the housing authority al-

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TIM MARTIN / The Day

Robert Marin, 13, left, Daniel Dallas, 12, Franklin Dallas, 11, and Jonathan Cluff, 14, all residents of the Thames River Apartments high-rise in New London, play basketball at the complex on Thursday.

INSIDE
TODAY

NEWS

Spy Case

Susan Lindauer, right, a former news reporter and press secretary, is charged with being a paid Iraqi intelligence agent. **A4**



Shaky Prospects

Job-hunting college seniors have a lot of challenges ahead, with new economic reports suggesting negligible job growth. **B1**

WEATHER

Cloudy And Wet

Today, rain turning to snow. High about 42. Saturday, partly sunny and cool. High around 43. **C8**

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