

Today: Partly sunny, high winds. High 50. Low 28.
Saturday: Sunny, less wind. High 52. Low 34.

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California High Court Halts Gay Marriages

Hearings Ordered; Licenses Will Stand

By EVELYN NIEVES
Washington Post Staff Writer

SAN FRANCISCO, March 11—The California Supreme Court on Thursday ordered San Francisco to stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples after lawsuits by the state and conservative groups. It ordered hearings within three months to decide the legality of the unions.

But the high court did not void the more than 4,161 marriage licenses that San Francisco has issued to same-sex couples since Feb. 12, as the California attorney general had requested. Rather, in its unanimous ruling, the seven-member panel said it would let those on both sides of the issue argue their case as early as May.

The Supreme Court decision stops, at least for now, the wave of same-sex marriages here that inspired local leaders in other states, including New Mexico and New Jersey, to officiate at gay weddings. Gay couples from around the nation have flocked to San Francisco to be married in recent weeks. After the court's ruling, city officials here stopped issuing marriage licenses, leaving tearful gay couples lined up at City Hall.

The ruling came on the same day that the Massachusetts state legislature, responding to a decision from its state's highest

See MARRIAGE, A7, Col. 1

U.S. to Buy Anthrax Vaccine

Stockpile Would Permit Mass Inoculations

By JUSTIN GILLIS
Washington Post Staff Writer

The government is preparing to buy enough experimental anthrax vaccine for 25 million people, a stockpile that would permit mass inoculations in numerous U.S. cities if terrorists launched a broad assault with the deadly germ.

The new vaccine would be the most significant addition to the national anti-terrorism stockpile since the Bush administration fulfilled a pledge to buy enough smallpox vaccine for every citizen of the United States. Up to now, there has been little commercial incentive for companies to develop a modern anthrax vaccine, but the new plan would change that, creating a reserve big enough in a year or two to immunize everyone in the New York and Washington metropolitan areas—or in other cities that might be targeted in an anthrax attack.

Two biotechnology companies, in California and in Britain, have won contracts to make an early stockpile of the unlicensed vaccine sufficient to inoculate 2 million people, according to bidding documents released yesterday, and they are likely to bid soon on larger contracts. Coupled with the government's successes in stockpiling

See ANTHRAX, A6, Col. 1

Madrid Train Blasts Kill at Least 190



BY PABLO TORRES GUERRERO—EL PAIS VIA REUTERS

Victims of the bombings, which took place during the morning rush hour, sit scattered among rescue workers outside Madrid's Atocha station.

10 Bombs Detonate Almost at Once; Nearly 1,500 Hurt

By KEITH B. RICHBURG
Washington Post Foreign Service

MADRID, March 11—Ten nearly simultaneous explosions tore through four packed commuter trains in Madrid during rush hour Thursday morning, killing at least 190 people and wounding nearly 1,500 in the worst terrorist attack in modern Spanish history, three days before national elections.

The explosives were placed in backpacks and left aboard trains and on tracks at three stations. Witnesses describing the scenes of chaos and carnage said they heard multiple explosions at the city's busy Atocha station, which sent passengers scrambling in a panic. A makeshift emergency hospital was set up alongside the tracks at the station, just south of the Prado Museum. Buses were hurriedly converted into ambulances. The walking wounded were asked to make it to hospitals on their own, and leave vehicles available for the more severely injured.

Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar called the attacks "a mass murder" and compared them to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist strikes in the United States. "March 11, 2004, now occupies a place in the history of infamy," he said.

Government officials and the media immediately blamed the attacks on the Basque separatist group ETA, which has fought for more than 30 years against the Spanish government.

Later Thursday, however, the Spanish interior minister, Angel Acebes, said the government was investigating a possible link to Islamic extremists after a van was discovered on the outskirts of Ma-

See SPAIN, A14, Col. 1

A Catastrophe 'Like the Twin Towers'



BY MANUEL LOPEZ FIGUEROA—REUTERS

Rescue workers evacuate a man from the Atocha train station, a busy railway hub in central Madrid and a scene of much carnage.

Witnesses Describe Scenes of Chaos

By KEITH B. RICHBURG
Washington Post Foreign Service

MADRID, March 11—At the Atocha train station in the heart of Madrid, there was smoke and fire, and bodies and body parts. In 7½ years as a technician on an emergency services ambulance, Jonathan Cuenca had seen death and destruction—but never anything on this scale.

"Lots of people in pieces, bleeding," Cuenca said, leaning exhausted on the door of his emergency vehicle. "After the first explosion, everybody was

running over the people who were injured but not dead. It was a stampede."

He added: "It was like the twin towers—it's even the same date, the 11th. It's really amazing."

Spaniards on Thursday recounted with numb horror the worst terrorist attack to hit this country familiar with smaller-scale car bombs and periodic assassinations. Witnesses told of seeing train passengers ripped apart by the blast. They told of body parts strewn across the

See MADRID, A14, Col. 2

Stability Deadens Dreams for a Russian Family

Putin's Vow to End Chaos Leads to Inertia for Many

By SUSAN B. GLASSER
Washington Post Foreign Service

IVANOVO, Russia—Katya Khromova is depressed. She cries too readily. She has a hard time sleeping. She worries constantly about what will become of her and her husband Misha and their 7-year-old son Danil.

Maybe if she had a bathroom in her tiny two-room apartment. Or if she hadn't seen the neighborhood kids shooting heroin right outside the crumbling apartment house where they live. Or if Misha could find a better job. Or if his sister weren't so successful in a city that is best compared to an industrial disaster area.

"This year I told Misha, 'Enough! I cannot take this anymore,'" Katya said, tears falling from her delicate brown eyes as she surveyed the minuscule kitchen. Her ultimatum went unanswered, just another debate in the continuing series of how to change their lives.

The Khromovs, college sweethearts who married at 22 and fear they are now trapped before



BY SUSAN GLASSER—THE WASHINGTON POST

Katya Khromova helps her son Danil put on his coat at his school in Ivanovo, a depressed mill town.

they turn 30, never stop discussing the future—for themselves and their battered city of Ivanovo. In President Vladimir Putin's Russia, the question of the future is the one that matters, and they

See RUSSIA, A17, Col. 1

New Bush Ad Assails Kerry on Taxes, War Campaign Takes a Negative Turn

By HOWARD KURTZ
Washington Post Staff Writer

Just one week after launching a wave of positive commercials, President Bush went on the attack with a new ad yesterday, charging that Democratic challenger John F. Kerry would "raise taxes by at least \$900 billion" and weaken the country's response to terrorism and ability to go to war.

"John Kerry—wrong on taxes, wrong on defense," says the ad, which begins airing today in 18 battleground states.

Kerry campaign officials, vowing to let no attack go unanswered, immediately began cutting a response ad for airing today. The commercial will deny any such proposed tax plan and remind viewers that Kerry wants to cut taxes for the middle class, the aides said.

■ Kerry will not apologize for remark. | Page A4

"Once again George Bush is misleading America," the tentative script says, adding: "Doesn't America deserve more from its president than misleading negative ads?"

These opening salvos in what promises to be a long and vituperative air war came as senior Republican lawmakers launched an assault, coordinated with the Bush campaign, on Kerry's tax proposals as well as his overheard comment Wednesday that Republicans are a "crooked ... lying group."

The senator from Massachusetts rejected their demands for an apology for the remark, firing back instead against

See ADS, A4, Col. 1

'Selfless' Spirit Killed In an Ambush in Iraq

By SEWELL CHAN
and CARYLE MURPHY
Washington Post Foreign Service

BAGHDAD, March 11—Fern L. Holland was tough, passionate and anything but predictable—leaving a secure job at a Washington law firm to work in Africa, then going to Iraq to help local women assert their rights in the postwar political process, her friends and colleagues recalled Thursday.

On Tuesday night, Holland and Robert J. Zangas of Trafford, Pa., became the first American

civilian employees of the Coalition Provisional Authority to be killed in Iraq. Gunmen wearing Iraqi police uniforms stopped their vehicle at a makeshift checkpoint near Hilla, 60 miles south of the Iraqi capital, and shot the two Americans and an Iraqi translator to death, according to U.S. and allied military spokesmen.

Holland, 33, was based in Hilla and spent much of her time with the occupation authority promoting women's political empowerment. She helped draft sections of the Iraqi interim constitution intended to ensure a role for women in the country's evolving system of governance, relatives and colleagues said.

See IRAQ, A20, Col. 1

INSIDE

Md. Activist Indicted

A former press aide from Takoma Park is accused of working with Saddam Hussein's intelligence agents.
METRO, Page B1

Korean Impeached

In Seoul, lawmakers voted to remove President Roh Moo Hyun after a scandal-plagued year in office.
WORLD, Page A12

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A Long, Crowded Road to Weekends

Highway Traffic Stalls Traditional Getaways

By STEVEN GINSBERG
Washington Post Staff Writer

It's 4:15 p.m., and time's a-wastin.' Already the Girl Scouts from Vienna are 15 minutes behind schedule after hitting traffic near Centreville, and trip organizer Nancy Chila is annoyed because she didn't think of putting one of the scouts with another driver so they could have taken the carpool lane. So there goes another 15 minutes.

The group is trying to get to Massanutten in time to snowboard on this Friday, and a glance at the miles of glowing brake lights in front of them on Interstate 66 doesn't reassure. "This is terrible," Chila laments at the rest stop near Manassas where she is meeting other chaperones.

The girls, who are sitting quietly in the back of the van, watching DVDs and listening to music, have granola bars, chips and juice by their sides.



BY STEPHANIE K. KUYKENDAL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Interstate 66 near Manassas is packed with commuters and weekenders on a Friday afternoon.

Stopping for dinner is out of the question. The drivers will subsist on Girl Scout cookies.

As it has for so many other Washingtonians, the weekend trip turned into a trek as the scouts found themselves trapped on their way out of town. In a region with the third-worst traffic in the nation, the weekend getaway has gotten away.

See GETAWAY, A11, Col. 1