

Tampa offers benefits to same-sex couples

■ The decision to extend benefits to unmarried partners is the fulfillment of a campaign promise by the mayor.

By **BILL VARIAN**
Times Staff Writer

TAMPA — Mayor Pam Iorio signed an executive order Thursday extending health benefits to unmarried domestic partners of city employees, including same-sex couples.

INSIDE

Gay marriage advocates suffer a double setback Thursday, as two states move to ban same-sex weddings. **3A**

With the order, Tampa joins a handful of other local governments in Florida offering the benefit to employees with domestic partners.

Iorio said the decision was the fulfillment of a campaign promise stemming from the shooting death in July 2001 of Tampa police Officer Lois Marrero,

whose domestic partner later was denied pension benefits.

Iorio said the decision was made after months of fiscal and legal analysis. It does not extend to pension benefits, which are set by state law.

"This is not a new concept. It's been around for years," Iorio said. "It's an addition to employee benefits that I think is important."

The order came amid increasing national debate on gay rights issues.

Please see **BENEFITS 3A**



Mayor Pam Iorio made the change.

THE TIMES TODAY

School search down to final 3

The Pinellas School Board gets its first look today at the top three candidates for the superintendent position. **1B**

Seminoles roll their dice

With skydiving Elvises and other Vegas touches (beverage included) the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino opens in Tampa. **1B**

Bay Pines morale

An investigation finds that morale among doctors at the VA medical center is so low that it is jeopardizing the quality of care. **1B**

SPORTS

They'll be back swinging

The Devil Rays trim their roster a little early this year. Among the cuts are three talented youngsters expected to return. **8C**

Feeling heat on the ice

Lightning goalie Nikolai Khabibulin admits it's not easy to maintain the focus he needs to block every shot. But he's working on it. **1C**



BUSINESS

Going higher and higher

Gasoline prices continue to set records this spring, and Florida Attorney General Charlie Crist would like to know why. **1D**

Air perks, at a price

Airlines are working hard to lure business travelers with special amenities, Internet connections and seats that lie flat. **1D**

ENTERTAINMENT

It's her role to be different

Aisha Tyler found fame as a guest star on *Friends*, but there's much more to her than that, including a book and a comedy act. **2B**



NATION & WORLD

House attacks indecency

The House overwhelmingly approves a bill that would raise the fines for broadcasting indecent material on TV and radio. **4A**

More die in Haiti

Two die and seven are hurt as police and pro-Aristide protesters battle. The ex-president says he will visit Jamaica next week. **17A**

FLORIDIAN



Pet lover goes whole hog

When Lynne Boismier turned her New Port Richey home into a sanctuary for pigs, she said goodbye to a life of her own. **1E**



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Spain reels after terrorist massacre

■ In a day harkening back to 9/11, almost 200 are killed, 1,400 hurt when 10 bombs blow apart trains and stations in Madrid.

■ Basque separatists could be to blame, say officials. But a letter claims al-Qaida did it and warns of a major attack on the U.S.



Compiled from Times wires

MADRID — 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 more than 1,400 just three days before national elections.

Spain at first blamed Basque separatists but a shadowy group claimed responsibility in the name of al-Qaida for the worst terrorist attack in Spanish history.

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.

Mayor Alberto Ruiz Gallardon said, "This pain will never leave Madrid."

Roland Jacquard, a French terrorism specialist and a consultant to the United Nations, said the attacks were a wakeup call for Europeans:

"We discovered today that this type of terrorism has arrived in Europe."

Police said that starting about 7:39 a.m. and lasting 15 minutes, 10 bombs rocked the trains along 9 miles of commuter line from Santa Eugenia to the Atocha terminal, a bustling hub for subway, commuter and long-distance trains just south of the famed Prado Museum.

Three more bombs were detected and safely detonated by police.

The Interior Ministry said 192 people were killed and 1,421 injured.

Worst hit was a double-decker train at El Pozo station, where two bombs killed 70 people, fire department inspector Juan Redondo said. One corpse was blown onto the roof.

Forty coroners worked to identify remains, the nation-

Please see **SPAIN 14A**

INSIDE

Even emergency workers were unprepared for what they witnessed at the scene. **15A**

The Dow Jones stock index drops nearly 170 points on news of the terror bombings. **1D**

Timeline of train bombings

- 7:39 a.m.** — Three backpacks loaded with explosives blow up on a commuter train in Atocha station.
- 7:44 a.m.** — Four backpack bombs explode on a commuter train entering Atocha station.
- 7:49 a.m.** — Backpack bomb explodes as a commuter train enters Santa Eugenia train station.
- 7:54 a.m.** — Two bombs explode on double-decker commuter train in El Pozo station, six miles from Atocha.
- 10 a.m.** — Police carry out controlled explosions of three booby-trap backpack bombs — two in Atocha, one in El Pozo.

Sources: ESRI, El Mundo and AP



Times map — JEFF GOERTZEN



John Lynch fights to control his emotions during a news conference Thursday about his pending departure from the team.

For Lynch, goodbye came way too soon

■ The Bucs' defensive captain is told that returning to the team "is not an option."

By **ROGER MILLS**
Times Staff Writer

TAMPA — John Lynch did something Thursday he never thought he would do so soon: bid farewell to a team and a community he has served with integrity and passion.

After 11 seasons, 173 games, a Super Bowl championship and countless memorable moments on the field and off, Lynch has played his last game as a Tampa Bay Buccaneer.

And he didn't want it to end this way.

In an emotional news conference Thursday from his hometown of San Diego, Lynch said he was "saddened and shocked" at the team's decision to cut him loose.

He said that he was willing to negotiate a new contract with the Bucs, even if it meant less money, but that general manager Bruce Allen never made him an offer.

"I don't agree with it and I let Bruce know that," Lynch said of Allen's decision, delivered in a Tuesday night phone call. "I think it's a

Please see **LYNCH 9A**

Stewart faces a dreary world behind bars

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — The Danbury Federal Correctional Institution has next to nothing in common with Martha Stewart's world of porcelain pudding bowls and Egyptian cotton bedding.

The millionaire who taught America how to make buckwheat pillows and decorate with doilies is expected to spend 10 to 16 months sharing a toilet and working for about 12 cents an hour at the minimum-security women's prison, where the walls are drab concrete and the 1,300 inmates wear starched khaki jumpsuits.

"There's nothing soft or colorful or pleasant in the whole environment," said Caryl Hartjes, 68, a Roman Catholic nun from Wisconsin who served three months at Danbury for trespassing during a protest against the U.S. military.

Stewart, who has a home and a TV studio in Westport, could be sent to any of several women's facilities when she is sentenced in

Please see **STEWART 6A**