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March 12, 2004

INSIDE IN THE NEWS



State girls' basketball

Charles City's furious fourth-quarter rally ended Thursday in a nerve-racking Class 3-A state basketball semifinal win over Dubuque Wahlert.

Tournament action in Sports

Killer Klindt to get taste of freedom

Metro & Iowa, Page 1B

Take a peek into horror of 'Secret Window'

Movie reviews in IowaLife

OPINION

Dick Cheney's Iowa fund-raiser for Stan Thompson misses the mark, writes Rob Borsellino. His column appears today on Page 2B with this and other tidbits.



Web EXTRA

Legislative Toolbox

Stay informed while state lawmakers are meeting.

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WEATHER

HIGH 46° LOW 33°

Mostly sunny and seasonable.
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March 12, 2004



A B C

NEARLY 200 KILLED • AL-QAIDA-LINKED GROUP CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY

Bombers hit Spanish trains

Inside

A group of Iowa high school students left a Madrid train station just hours before the bombs exploded. **Page 5A**

By MAR ROMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

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 more than 1,400. 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.

Panicked rush-hour commuters trampled on each other, abandoning their bags and shoes, after the first three bombs went off in one train in the Atocha station in the heart of

Madrid. Seven other bombings followed on other trains.

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 bombings 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 that is seeking greater

See SPAIN, Page 5A



Injured: Medical workers help an injured survivor at a train station southeast of Madrid on Thursday.

State honors slain social worker



DAVID PETERSON/REGISTER PHOTOS

One from Dad: Nan Gaul kisses her youngest, Frannie, during a ceremony Thursday in Des Moines honoring her husband's life.

March 11 declared 'Greg L. Gaul Day'



Greg Gaul and Sarah Dahlke were killed in January by a Johnston teen who was one of Gaul's clients.

By LEE ROOD
REGISTER STAFF WRITER

Gov. Tom Vilsack honored slain Des Moines social worker Greg Gaul on Thursday, calling him a rock for countless Iowa families who needed help to reach their full potential.

"There are too few social workers in the world today," Vilsack told the family counselor's widow, Nan, and about 40 loved ones in a private ceremony in his office at the Capitol.

"Many of us who didn't

know your husband pray for you and your family, because he lived a life of moral leadership."

Gaul, 41, and Sarah Dahlke, 21, an Iowa State University student, were killed in late January by Tyler Pirtle, a Johnston teenager who was one of Gaul's clients.

Pirtle shot Dahlke, who was house-sitting for Pirtle's father, on a Sunday, after she became upset with the teen for having two parties in his father's absence. Gaul, a partner in the Lifeworks in-home

See GAUL, Page 6A



Private ceremony: Nan Gaul accepts a proclamation from Gov. Tom Vilsack that declares March 11 "Greg L. Gaul Day" across Iowa. About 40 people attended the ceremony.

In abuse trial, lawyers focus on accuser, 8

The defense suggested the girl's home life and a history of lying could explain the allegations.

By STACI HUPP
REGISTER AMES BUREAU

Bloomfield, Ia. — The blond girl stood behind her second-grade teacher's desk to get help with her schoolwork one day last spring.

That's when the Centerville teacher she once wanted for a father stuck his hands down her pants, inside her underwear, and rubbed her genitals, the girl testified in court Thursday. Other students were in the classroom at the time, she said.

The girl was direct and emotionless as the state's first witness at Timmy Higbee's sexual abuse trial in Bloomfield.

"It hurt," said the girl, a student at Garfield Elementary School. "His nails were scratching me."

The 8-year-old wore a light blue, flower-print dress and held a white stuffed teddy bear as she answered questions most of the afternoon in a closed room at the Davis County Courthouse. Her image and voice were broadcast via closed-circuit television into the courtroom, where Higbee and jurors watched.

Attorneys used the girl's name in the courtroom, but The Des Moines Register's policy is not to identify sexual-abuse victims.

Higbee has pleaded not guilty to 38 counts of second-degree sexual abuse and two counts of indecent contact involving seven girls.

See HIGBEE, Page 16A

House OKs steeper fines for indecency

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, D.C. — Spurred by public outrage over the Super Bowl halftime show, the House voted overwhelmingly Thursday to dramatically increase fines for broadcast indecency.

Under the bill, broadcast companies and entertainers could be fined up to \$500,000 per indecent incident.

The Federal Communications Commission has received more than a half-million complaints about the halftime show.

Related article, Page 3A



See some of Duffy's cartoons online: DesMoinesRegister.com/duffy

Iowa coaches knock possible NCAA changes

By BRYCE MILLER
and RANDY PETERSON
REGISTER STAFF WRITERS

Banning university-sponsored recruiting trips would be a knee-jerk reaction to headlines in Boulder, Iowa City and other places — and would make it more difficult for teams in Iowa to attract athletic talent, college officials and coaches say.

S. David Berst, head of a national task force reviewing recruiting rules, said Thursday the NCAA is considering strict new standards, including a ban on university-sponsored recruiting trips. Berst told a congressional

subcommittee in Washington, D.C., that current standards are inadequate. A ban on university-paid recruiting visits is the most-severe change under consideration, he said.

"I can honestly say that would be one of the most ridiculous things I've ever heard in my life — and you can print that," Iowa State University men's basketball coach Wayne Morgan said Thursday.

Like Morgan, coaches and athletic administrators at the U of I, Iowa State, Drake

See NCAA, Page 10A