

SAVING THE PAST
Old House Trade Show
has help for homeowners
REAL ESTATE, 1F

A SHOWDOWN
Bowdoin, USM to meet
in NCAA women's tourney
SPORTS, 1D

MOVING ON
UMaine women reach
the league semifinals
SPORTS, 1D

WEATHER
Snow showers,
high near 40
8B

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Exchange uncovers fish scam, issues ban

● Two company buyers are ousted for life and two exchange workers are fired over the alleged scheme.

By DAVID HENCH
Staff Writer

Two buyers for a Maine seafood company have been banned for life from the Portland Fish Exchange after an investigation into the theft of fish and a pattern of exaggerating the weight of fish shipped from the exchange to customers.

The exchange's board of directors also suspended Maine Stream Seafood, the company that employs the men, from its seat on the city's fish exchange for three years. Two exchange employees accused of participating in the scheme were fired.

"The whole premise of the exchange is based on the integrity of the process," said Assistant City Attorney Penny Littell, who assembled the case against the fish buyers based on an investigation by Hank Soule, the exchange's general manager.

The company, through its attorney, denied any wrongdoing by the two

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Maine loses world-class researcher

● Thomas Maciag, who died this week at 57, 'trained and influenced a generation of scientists.'

By MARK PETERS
Staff Writer

Thomas Maciag gave a generation of doctors the building blocks for new medical breakthroughs, and gave Maine Medical Center Research Institute an international reputation that attracts top scientists to the state.

Maciag's death this week at age 57 will impact science and the Scarborough-based institute for decades to come, his colleagues say. The heart attack that caused his death was one of the medical problems his research is expected to help prevent.

"It is a sad irony this is what he succumbed to," said Robert Friesel, a scientist and colleague of Maciag's at the institute.

Maciag, who was director of basic

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Al-Qaida-linked group is one suspect in nation's worst-ever terrorist attack

Bombings kill 192 in Spain



Firefighters carry a stretcher from a bomb-damaged passenger train after several bomb attacks Thursday on commuter trains in Madrid. An al-Qaida-linked group claimed responsibility for the attacks, which killed 192 people, but Spanish investigators say Basque separatists are also suspected.

● Backpacks loaded with explosives detonate on four commuter trains in Madrid during rush hour.

By MAR ROMAN
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — A series of bombs hidden in backpacks exploded in quick succession Thursday, blowing apart four commuter trains, 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 the country's history.

Panicked rush-hour commuters trampled one another, abandoning their bags and shoes, after the first three bombs went off in a 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.

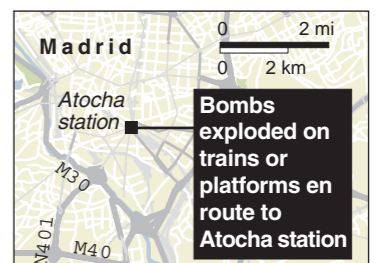
"March 11, 2004, now holds its place in the history of infamy," Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said.

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

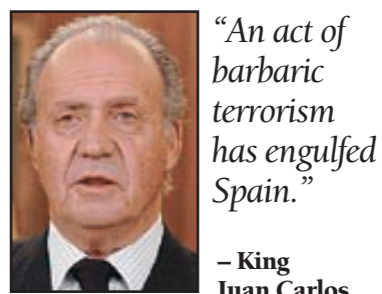
The attack occurred exactly 2½ years after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, and was Europe's worst since the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people.

The attacks also reawakened terrorism fears among investors. Stocks fell in London and in New York, where the Dow Jones industrial average dropped nearly 170 points. Today, Tokyo stocks opened sharply lower.

The 10 backpack bombs exploded in a 15-minute span, starting about 7:39 a.m., on trains along nine miles of commuter line from Santa Eugenia to the Atocha terminal, a bustling hub



SOURCES: ESRI, AND, TeleAtlas; AP Associated Press



"An act of barbaric terrorism has engulfed Spain."

— King Juan Carlos

INSIDE

Keeping focused on Sept. 11, President Bush dedicates a new memorial. 5A

for subway, commuter and long-distance trains just south of the famed Prado Museum. Police also found and detonated three other bombs.

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

"An act of barbaric terrorism has engulfed Spain with profound pain, repulsion and anger," King Juan Carlos said on national television.

Worst hit was a double-decker

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City to release new assessments

Numbers will be mailed April 2, but won't go into effect for a year

● Portland's city attorney rejects a newspaper request to provide tentative valuations immediately.

By KELLEY BOUCHARD
Staff Writer

Portland officials have decided to mail out new property values despite a decision last month to halt a revaluation that is expected to increase the overall residential tax burden by about 12.5 percent.

City Assessor Richard Blackburn said his office will finalize new property values during the next three weeks and mail them out on Friday, April 2. Still, the city will delay implementing the new values for one year, so tax bills won't reflect an increase in property values until July 2005. The new values will be updated at that time to reflect current market conditions.

The city had planned not to disclose the data while the revaluation was on hold. It decided to release the numbers after city councilors, residents and the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram asked for the information, even though it wasn't being used right away.

"It will give people some idea where they stand," said Councilor William Gorham. "Some people want to know so they can start setting aside money for next year."

Although the tax burden is expected to increase for homeowners, the revaluation — Portland's first in more than a decade — is expected to reduce the overall commercial property tax burden by about 8.8 percent.

The shift reflects the fact that residential property values in Portland have doubled or tripled

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Bay State lawmakers back ban on same-sex marriage

● At the same time, the constitutional amendment would permit gay civil unions.

By JENNIFER PETER
The Associated Press

BOSTON — A constitutional amendment that would eliminate the nation's first legally sanctioned gay marriages — but legalize civil unions — survived three votes Thursday and stood one vote away from victory for this legislative session.

The Legislature recessed just before midnight Thursday and planned to return

INSIDE

California court orders halt to gay marriages 12A

put on hold until the 2005-06 session, when a newly elected Legislature will be required to approve an identical measure before sending it to the voters in November 2006.

Even if the amendment does pass, it would not stop the gay marriages that are

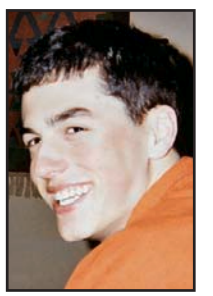
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James Jenner of Boston, left, and James Murphy of Cambridge, Mass., show support for same-sex marriage Thursday in front of the Statehouse in Boston while state legislators inside debated a constitutional ban.

"It's like a light went on, and oh my God, I've actually affected people."

— Patrick Vorce



For victims, arson's ruin still smolders

● A Kennebunk teen insists he's sorry, but a boatyard's owners say that won't help them rebuild.

By KEVIN WACK
Staff Writer

It all started with a late-night knock on a 14-year-old boy's bedroom window. Six hours later, flames had laid waste to a family business that took 17 laborious years to build.

Patrick Vorce of Kennebunk, one of the two youths convicted of setting the fire, is now 16. He is an inmate at a maximum-security juvenile facility in Pennsylvania, where he has served about one-fifth of a 30-month arson sentence.

Some believe Vorce — one of just 227 juveniles in the federal corrections system — is a victim of

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