

YUMA

AND REGION

B

THURSDAY

FEBRUARY 28, 2002

Border report:Waits improved but
unpredictable

DETAILS/B4

► **YUMA GLANCE****Refresher driving course
offered in Yuma**

A refresher driving course will be offered to motorists in the Yuma area who are 50 or older.

The American Association of Retired People is scheduling classes in the Yuma area. To sign up, call 783-9311.

The course will cover the changes in vision, hearing and reaction time that occur as motorists age. The course will also offer useful safety tips for driving. There will be no tests in the course.

► **STATE GLANCE****Reward offered in
missing couple's case**
PHOENIX — A \$1,000

reward is being offered for information leading to the whereabouts of a Phoenix couple missing since Feb. 3.

The couple apparently vanished on a trip to Tucson and Phoenix police suspect foul play.

► **LOTTERIES**

Winning numbers selected
Wednesday, February 27

ARIZONA

Fantasy Five - 26,7,14,1,34

Pick 3 - 0,0,8

The Pick - 9,11,24,37,41,38 &
Bonus Ball - 21

CALIFORNIA

Fantasy Five - 13,14,17,23,26

Daily 3 - 6,4,9

SuperLotto Plus -

13,26,29,37,42 &

Meganumber - 7

POWERBALL

1,2,6,19,45 & Powerball - 27

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Deputies of year named by Sheriff's Office

► Carl Siegfried and Michael Meyer are honored

BY KERRY POHLMAN
SUN STAFF WRITER

A deputy just starting his career and one whose life ended in the line of duty are Yuma County's officers of the year.

Deputies Carl Siegfried and Michael Meyer both received the honor.

Meyer, 40, was killed Aug. 13 when his car overturned on rain-slicked Highway 95. His family attended a banquet last week and accepted the award on his behalf.

Shortly before his death,

Meyer was named officer of the quarter. He began working for the sheriff's office in 1996. He patrolled the waterways and roadways of Yuma County.

"All of a sudden one day it's all over," Sheriff Ralph Ogden said. "He's missed. He was looked up to as the kind of person we'd all like to be."

Siegfried is a rookie, but the 27-year-old up-and-comer has gotten involved in some major cases. He was the case officer for a murder-suicide in December.

He writes good reports; he

SEE DEPUTIES/B4



PHOTO BY CHARLES WHITEHOUSE/THE SUN

YUMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTY Carl D. Siegfried is the co-officer of the year for the sheriff's office.



Reading all about it

► Students see the importance of literacy in various jobs

BY LINDSAY CESSNA
SUN STAFF WRITER

Reading and writing doesn't just have to do with school, students at Carver Elementary School learned Wednesday morning during the school event, A Celebration of Literacy.

Knowing how to read and write helps a biologist keep track of her findings and enables drivers on the road to identify important traffic signs.

Those insights were provided by Valerie Morrill, a conservation manager at Yuma Proving Ground, and Bertin Lewis, a senior street worker for the city of Yuma. They and other professionals took part in the Carver event, which is part of the national Read Across America. The event is held annually in conjunction with

Dr. Seuss' birthday, which is March 2.

"It's really important that the whole community gets involved in literacy," said Deb Drysdale, Carver's principal. "The community has asked what they can do, and this is one of the ways they can make a difference."

Through her presentation, Morrill took first-, second- and third-graders from Mr. Rodriguez's class on an expedition through the mountains near YPG.

"We are going on a virtual excursion, where we will have to take field notes of where different things were found," she said. "We are kind of playing detective, collecting clues to find and identify things."

The class had the chance to see a variety of things that Morrill had collected in the wild

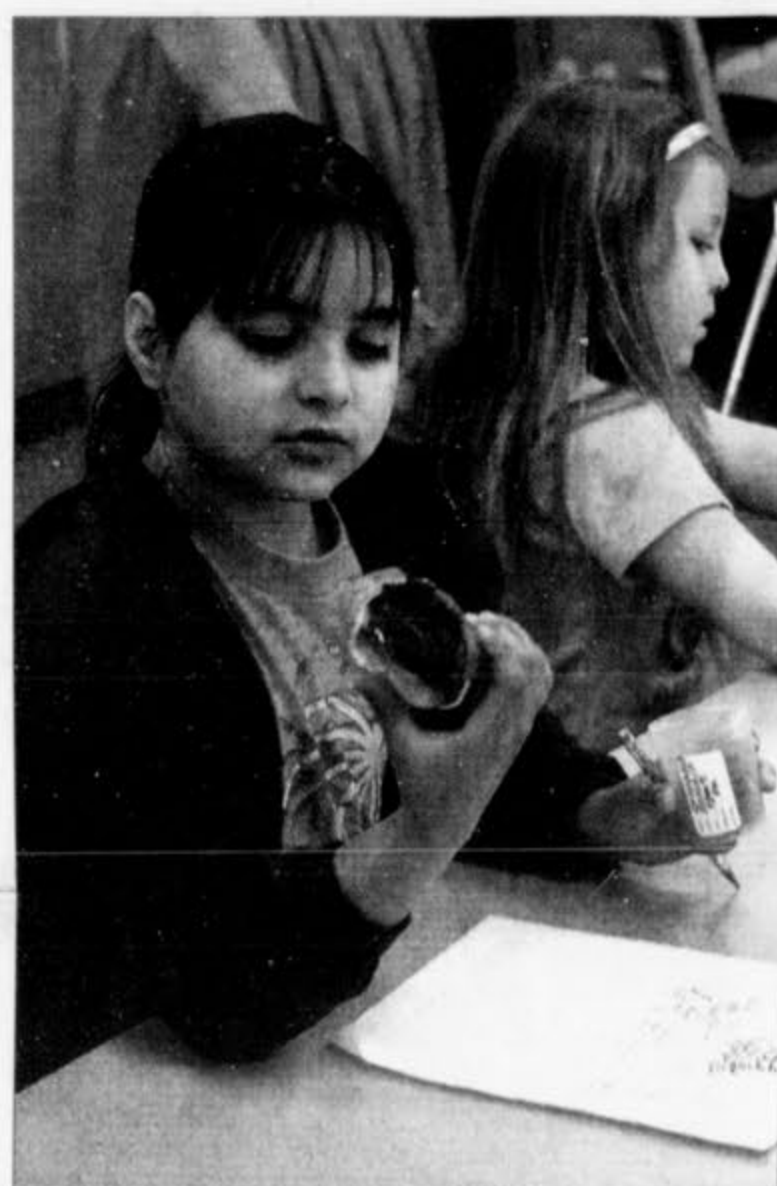


PHOTO BY LINDSAY CESSNA/THE SUN

ESTRELA CASTRO (above), a third-grader at Carver School, examines a turtle shell and moose droppings passed around during Valerie Morrill's presentation at her school. Morrill was one of the many professionals who made presentations at the school to celebrate the national Read Across America. Bertin Lewis (at top left), a senior street worker for the city of Yuma, also held a presentation on street signs.

and write down what they determined about them.

"The main thing is as a scientist, I know how important writing skills are," she told the children. "I have to be able to describe what I found. It's really an important part in science, it's how you share your results with peers."

Some of the findings Morrill brought to the class were a saguaro boot, which is a bird nest inside a saguaro cactus; dried desert horn lizards; a turtle shell; and dried bats.

One of the lizards has a teddy bear snolla stuck to its back, which is evidence used to determine how it died, she said.

"I liked it so much; I have never seen this stuff," said Estrella Castro, a third-grader.

"I like everything."

Mrs. Ingram's first-grade class got a lesson on street signs. They learned the meaning behind the variety of signs that can be seen along Yuma's streets, including pedestrian crossing and crosswalk signs and the stoplight crossing signs.

"I think it is very nice that they come in and teach us," said Teresa Moreno. "I learned that a red light means stop and a green light means go."

Moreno said her favorite part was when Lewis turned on the walk and stop signs that pedestrians use to cross at an intersection.

"The red hand means you have to stop," she said. "When

SEE READ/B4

Authorities find body believed to be that of missing San Diego girl

► Search warrants for neighbor are unsealed

ASSOCIATED PRESS

EL CAJON, Calif. — Authorities said Wednesday they believe they have discovered the body of a missing 7-year-old girl whose disappearance 26 days ago touched off one of the biggest searches in California.

"Tonight we believe that Danielle van Dam's body has been found," San Diego County District Attorney Paul Pfingst said.

Volunteers who have tirelessly searched for the girl since she vanished from her home discovered the body of a small girl in an unincorporated area 25 miles east of San Diego, in a cluster of oak trees across from a sand mine.

The child was wearing a plastic necklace similar to one Danielle was wearing in thousands of flyers posted throughout the county after her disappearance. An earring matching the description of a pair she was wearing the night of her disappearance was also found, Pfingst said.

Initial reports from the scene indicated that the body had been burned but authorities declined late Wednesday to discuss the condition of the remains, pending an autopsy, except to say that they were badly decomposed.

Danielle was last seen on Feb. 1, when her father put her to bed in her family's north San Diego home. She was discovered missing the next morning. A search for her involving thousands of volunteers has stretched from Mexico to the desert east of San Diego.

A neighbor of the van Dam family, David Westerfield, 50, pleaded innocent Tuesday to charges of murder, kidnapping and possession of child pornography. He was being held without bond in isolation in a San Diego jail.

Search warrants unsealed by a San Diego Superior Court judge Wednesday disclosed that police entered Westerfield's home on Feb. 5 searching for child pornography. Investigators searched the self-employed engineer's computer for explicit images involving children.

The next day a judge granted a warrant to review calls made to and from Westerfield's cell phone on the weekend of Danielle's disappearance.

Westerfield spent that weekend traveling around San Diego County in his motor home, stopping in the desert east of San Diego.

Police also received permission to search a dry cleaner in Poway, a nearby suburb, for Westerfield's bedding and clothing. Westerfield reportedly had taken seat cushions from

Ladd carves himself a niche at Olympics

► Local winter visitor's wood carving talents took him to Salt Lake City

BY LINDSAY CESSNA
SUN STAFF WRITER

It might be hard for Doug Ladd to top his latest accomplishment.

Ladd, who has done everything from traveling the world to delivering Christmas gifts to thousands of poor children, spent the past two weeks at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Ladd said it was his wood carving of the Gold Spike that got him there.

"I had carved a depiction of the driving of the Gold Spike, which occurred on May 10, 1869, at Promontory, Utah," he said. "The director of the Olym-

pic Committee from Box Elder County (in Utah) came to my studio in Rapid City, S.D., saw the carving and said he had to have it for the Olympic games."

Ladd was also asked to be the Ambassador of Goodwill for Utah.

"As the ambassador, I greeted people and told them about Box County," he said.

Ladd talked about his experiences at the Olympics in front of the Optimist Club of Yuma on Wednesday.

"I got all dressed up to show the way I looked for two weeks in Salt Lake," he told the group. "These are my badges of honor — the press pass was for all events at the Olympic games

and the credentials were cleared by the Secret Service. It was very good to be so important."

During the two weeks he was at the Olympics,

Ladd was interviewed by 12 different newspapers and by ABC, NBC, CNN and ESPN.

"I did not warrant the amount of attention I got," he said.

Though Ladd was in Salt Lake City during the entire Olympic stretch, he never got the chance to watch a competition. That was because he spent 16 hours each day at a booth in the World Media Center, where he showcased his carvings and acted as the representative for



DOUG LADD

Box County. Ladd did, however, get the chance to meet several Olympic athletes.

"The key to my stay there was the wonderful people I met," he said. "It was the best 16 hours I spent everyday. I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

Ladd said he met 26 different athletes, most of whom were medalists.

"For every Olympian who came to my area, I carved a miniature buffalo," he said. "I carved over 600 pieces while I was there."

Ladd also collected several autographs and the collectible Olympic pins, for which he traded some of his carvings.

Ladd has pictures and other memorabilia from his trip, but he plans to do something else to

SEE LADD/B4

SEE MISSING/B4

Waiting times at border are improved but unpredictable

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Wait times on the U.S.-Mexican border since Sept. 11 are improved but unpredictable, while passenger traffic is significantly lower, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said Wednesday.

The U.S. Chamber surveyed more than 45 chambers of commerce in the southernmost counties of Texas, California, New Mexico and Arizona to measure the effects of the attacks on border economies and lifestyle.

The U.S. Chamber used the findings to call on Congress to invest more in border infrastructure. It also pressed lawmakers to extend the deadline for Mexicans to get high-tech border crossing visas to help boost border economies.

Theresa Brown, the chamber's manager for immigration

and labor issues, said reduced wait times were due to "Herculean efforts" from federal officials.

"There's a lot of unpredictability and everyone is working overtime. We don't think it's a sustainable situation," Brown said.

The chamber said the survey is unscientific and many of the statistics are personal estimates of those interviewed because the figures are not systematically collected. But the chamber said the survey provided "on-the-ground" assessments from businesspeople that could be useful to national policymakers.

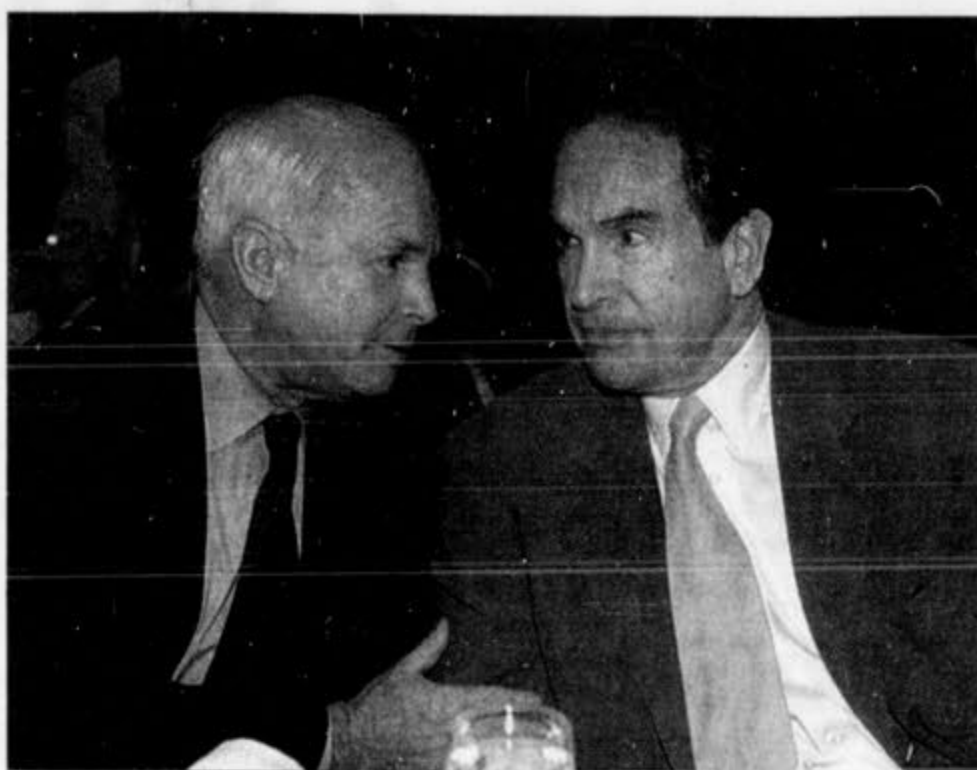
The report found border gridlock led to lost manufacturing and retail business and that the attacks significantly reduced the number of people crossing for work, school and tourism. The expiration of a

deadline for Mexicans to get crossing cards containing electronic identification information also has kept traffic down.

The chamber said most waits at the border crossings have improved considerably since Sept. 11, but they remain significantly higher at some crossings than before the attacks.

The chamber found wait times had improved in part because people have become more familiar with new security procedures. Others are using other ports of entry, crossing at off-peak times, reducing the number of times they cross or cutting out "doing lunch" across the border.

The Del Rio chamber estimates the number of people crossing is down 25 percent since Sept. 11. Pharr reported a 20 percent drop, while Edinburg estimates crossings have fallen 30 percent to 40 percent.



SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (left) speaks with actor-director Warren Beatty before giving a speech on fund-raising reform to Town Hall Los Angeles, Tuesday. McCain says California's Proposition 45, which would ease term limits, is a soft-money loophole.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

McCain opposes term limit rollback

► Says California proposition would undermine limits on campaign cash

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., chief congressional proponent of campaign finance reform, said Wednesday relaxing California's term-limit law would undermine the state's new limits on campaign contributions.

McCain, who campaigned for president in California and elsewhere two years ago on his proposal to reduce the role of money in politics, said his opposition to Proposition 45 is based solely on the prospect that special interests would be able to spend large sums of money on state lawmakers who want to extend their time in office.

Proposition 45 would allow lawmakers to run for a maximum of four additional years in office if their constituents sign petitions.

McCain said he fears a donor who is now limited to contributing \$3,000 per election to a candidate for the Legislature would underwrite the costly signature-gathering

campaign to allow him to run again.

Supporters of Proposition 45 say the contributions limit applies to petition drives as well. Opponents say the contributions limit law does not specifically address petitions, meaning the matter is unsettled.

Since so many signatures are needed — 75,000 in some districts — most politicians would hire companies to gather them. At \$1.50 a signature — a moderate estimate of the cost, said Dan Schnur, a senior adviser to opponents of Proposition 45 — a lawmaker could spend more than \$100,000.

Or, said McCain, "A donor could just write a check to the petition firm. I believe it is a soft-money loophole."

At worst, McCain said, a contributor to a legislative leader could write checks to cover the cost of gathering signatures for other lawmakers whose votes the leader needs to win or retain his position.

Voters in 2000 approved a \$3,000 per election limit on

contributions to legislative candidates.

Sandy Polka, an official with the Yes on 45 campaign, said the new law would prohibit the kind of contributions McCain described. And, she said, if the Fair Political Practices Commission ruled that the limits did not apply, Sen. John Burton, the Senate's president pro tem and a supporter of Proposition 45, has said he would amend the law to specifically bar large donors from paying for petition drives.

"There is no loophole," Polka said.

Schnur said he held out little hope that lawmakers would move quickly to limit contributions. "A body of incumbent politicians is not going to rush out to close a loophole that allows them to raise money in such huge amounts," he said.

McCain said Schnur, who worked on McCain's presidential campaign, called him to enlist his help. McCain said he has no plans to do anything other than interviews on the topic.

But Schnur is banking on McCain's popularity among Californians will help to sway voters to oppose Proposition 45.

ASU presidential search down to two finalists

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — The search to find Arizona State University's next president has been narrowed to two people.

Michael M. Crow, 46, executive vice provost at Columbia University, and Karen A. Holbrook, 59, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost at the University of Georgia, were named the two finalists Wednesday.

The state Board of Regents, which oversees Arizona's three major universities, said the two ASU finalists are scheduled to interview Thursday in Tempe with a 35-member search committee.

It will make recommendations to the regents, which is expected to select the new president at a March 15 meeting.

At Georgia, Holbrook made notable progress in medical research, helping persuade the

Georgia Board of Regents last year to create the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute, which has programs in infectious disease and immunity, public health and molecular medicine.

Crow has ties to Arizona, having served as a consultant to Arizona State on strategic research initiatives for 10 years and taking part in the "Greater Phoenix 2100" research initiative at the university last spring.

Finding leaves school funding issue up to Legislature

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — It looks like lawmakers will have to act after all on a school funding issue that has pitted state Superintendent of Public Instruction Jaime Molera against some senators.

The Attorney General's office has concluded that school district funds unspent at the end of the fiscal year must be

counted in calculating a school spending limit imposed by the state, a spokesman said Wednesday.

That means statewide school spending will exceed the limits with the addition of tax revenue under voter-approved Proposition 301 for teacher pay increases.

At issue in the Legislature is whether lawmakers will allow the schools to exceed the

spending limits so they can use all of the Prop 301 money for the teacher pay increases.

Some senators have criticized Molera's handling of the spending-limit issue. He has responded that inaction by lawmakers would jeopardize the raises for teachers.

The Senate Finance Committee resumes consideration of the issue Thursday.

DEPUTIES

FROM PAGE B1

gets compliments from the public, Ogden said.

"He is so motivated it's almost contagious. ... He never complains about taking calls or any additional duties that may come his way," Sgt. J.D. Stromberg said of Siegfried. "He will take a call without it being assigned to him."

Colleagues describe him as easygoing, always doing his work with a smile.

"I love this (work)," Siegfried said. "This is the most adventurous job I've ever had."

Siegfried, originally from Prescott, graduated from

Yavapai College and took a job in the agricultural field. But it just wasn't that fun, he said.

Law enforcement runs in the family. His brother is a sergeant with the Yuma Police Department.

Siegfried and his wife, Diana, have two children: Elizabeth, 3, and C.J., 1.

Meyer was a father of six children. His wife, Penny, and children Jacob, Francine, Kathleen, Charlene and Wayne still live in Yuma.

"I felt honored to share the award with him," Siegfried said.

Kerry Pohlman can be reached at kpohlman@yumasun.com or 539-6872.

LADD

FROM PAGE B1

make it a permanent memory. He is going to carve the Olympic symbol and pictures of the heroes he met into a large piece of wood on which he also plans to stick all of his pins.

"These pins are something special to me, something I will have forever," he said. "I had the time of my life. I met the greatest friends and I feel so humble."

After Ladd spoke to the Optimist Club of Yuma, the club's president, Louie Galaviz, presented him with a certificate of honorary membership.

"We had (Doug) speak because we wanted to get more information about his experiences at the Olympics and the people he met and talked to," Galaviz said. "It's definitely interesting."

Lindsay Cessna can be reached at lcessna@yumasun.com or 539-6855.

MISSING

FROM PAGE B1

his motor home and clothing in for cleaning after his weekend in the desert.

Over the coming days, police twice searched Westerfield's home and examined three of his vehicles.

Judge Cynthia Bashant released the documents at the request of Copley Press, the publisher of The San Diego Union-Tribune.

Bashant will decide Monday whether to release documents filed by police justifying the search warrants, which may shed more light on why investigators focused so intensely on Westerfield.

California law requires that search warrants be made public 10 days after they are executed unless there is a compelling interest to seal them, said Guylyn Cummins, attorney for Copley Press.

On the Net: <http://www.daniellemissing.com>

READ

FROM PAGE B1

light up when you can go. If the red hand starts blinking, you keep walking, but hurry."

Shardasia Scarborough said her favorite sign was the octagon-shaped stop sign.

"He told me a lot that I didn't know," she said of Lewis' presentation.

Drysdale said the school tried to get a variety of presenters from different professions around Yuma.

"It was really important to us to collect a diverse group of individuals," she said. "We have a group presenting Latin American literature and a teacher doing black history."

Lindsay Cessna can be reached at lcessna@yumasun.com or 539-6855.

Local hot lines

► To report graffiti, call 329-2828.

► To report information about a crime, call Silent Witness at 782-7463 (78-CRIME). If the information leads to the arrest and indictment of a suspect, the caller could be paid a cash reward of as much as \$2,000. All Silent Witness information is confidential and callers aren't asked their names.

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