Sent: Wed, 18 Nov 2009 11:03:32 -0500
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Subject: Fw: Vice Presidential News Clips for Wednesday, November 18, 2009
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----- Original Message -----
From: Bulletin News <VP-Editors@BulletinNews.com>
To: Alexander, Elizabeth; FOIA-6
Cc: Escudero, Adrian V.; Hoffman, Alan L.; Tomasini, AnnMarie; Bernal, Anthony R.; Blinken, Antony J.; Woyak, Brian J.; McKeon, Brian P.; Russell, Catherine M.; O'Donnell, Courtney; Hogan, Cynthia C.; Martens, Donald R.; Hire, Elisabeth; Oxhorn, Elizabeth A.; Allen, Elizabeth M.; Ryan, Evan M.; Person, Fran; Ziskend, Herbert M.; Carney, James F.; Bernstein, Jared; DeGraaf, Jason P.; O'Connor, Kevin C; White, Kirsten B.; membersOVPVPMILAIDE@whmo.mil <membersOVPVPMILAIDE@whmo.mil>; Donilon, Michael C.; Smith, Michele; Vela, Moises V.; Orloff, Nancy; Isaac, Nicole M.; Selfridge, Peter A.; Bleshman, Rachel; Klain, Ronald A.; Swan, Ryan S.; Fletcher, Sarah; Rosenthal, Sarah L.; Hawkins, Stacey T.; Henry, Sudafi; McSweeny, Terrell P.; McNulty, Thomas P.; Dirksen, Ward F.
Sent: Wed Nov 18 05:57:17 2009
Subject: Vice Presidential News Clips for Wednesday, November 18, 2009

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
DATE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2009 -- 6:15 AM EST

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WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

BIDEN LEADS IN NEW SENATE-RACE POLL (WILNJ)
By Cris Barrish, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
For the first time, an independent poll shows Attorney General Beau Biden leading U.S. Rep. Mike Castle in a hypothetical matchup for the Senate seat long held by Biden's father.
At least four previous polls made public since March had shown Republican Castle, who has declared his candidacy, leading Democrat Biden by 1 to 21 percentage points. Biden has not announced his candidacy, but has said he is seriously considering running.
But the poll released this week by Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc. of Harrisburg, shows Biden leading 45 percent to 40 percent, with 6 percent choosing another candidate and eight percent undecided.
The latest results were based on a single question about a race pitting Castle, the former two-term governor and nine-term congressman, against Biden, a first-term attorney general. Vice President Joe Biden held the seat from 1973 through January, when he resigned to be Barack Obama's running mate. Then-Gov. Ruth Ann Minner appointed Joe Biden's longtime aide, Ted Kaufman, to the post. Kaufman will not seek the seat.
The poll was taken Nov. 10-15 with 850 registered Delaware voters who voted in the 2006 or 2008 general election. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.36 percentage points. It's one of dozens, perhaps hundreds that would be conducted over the next 12 months if Biden faces Castle in a race that would be closely followed across the nation and hotly contested by both parties.
James Lee, Susquehanna's president, said that while participants were not asked reasons for their preference, it could stem from news coverage about Beau Biden's recent return from Iraq, where he spent a year as a National Guard lawyer. Lee also said Castle's recent "no" vote on the House health reform bill -- cast the weekend before polling -- might have cost him support.
"Castle's vote against the health care plan may have solidified some of the Democratic vote for Beau Biden," Lee said. Noting that polls in October showed Castle's lead eroding, Lee said the new one shows that "ultimately this race would tighten as Democrats start to come home."
Neither Beau Biden nor Castle would comment on the newest poll results.
Castle also could face a GOP primary against Christine O'Donnell, who ran unsuccessfully for the Senate in 2006 and 2008 and has said she plans to run again.

In the current poll, both candidates are widely favored by their own parties. Republicans favored Castle 72 percent to 17 percent, and Democrats liked Biden 65 percent to 21 percent. Biden's support among Democrats increased since Susquehanna's April poll, when it was only 52 percent for him, versus 36 percent against.
Democrats hold a substantial lead in voter registration over Republicans in Delaware, 286,282 to 180,039, according to the state Department of Elections.
Castle also dropped among voters who classified themselves as independent, a number that totals 142,315 in Delaware. He led almost 2 to 1 in Susquehanna's April survey, but only held a 5-point margin in the new poll.
Eric Schultz, spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, said he never "puts too much stock into polls 12 months from the election, but the new polls shows it's going to be a big battle with both sides all in. This poll shows that Castle is vulnerable."
Castle, who first ran for public office in 1966, has never lost in 15 Delaware elections -- for state House, state Senate, lieutenant governor, governor and since 1992, the U.S. House. Additional Facts
LATEST POLL
The poll, taken Nov. 10 to 15, surveyed 850 registered Delaware voters who voted in the 2006 or 2008 general election.
Attorney General Beau Biden: 45%
U.S. Rep. Mike Castle: 40%
6 percent chose another candidate; 8 percent were undecided
Margin of error: +/- 3.36 percentage points
Source: Susquehanna Polling and Research Inc. of Harrisburg

CASINO DEVELOPERS ROLL DICE (WILNJ)
By Maureen Milford, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
As Delaware considers whether to expand casino gambling in the state, the developers who put together the deal that became the $429 million Harrah's Chester Casino & Racetrack in nearby Chester, Pa., are buying waterfront land in Wilmington for a casino project.
Kevin Flynn, a real estate developer in Philadelphia and George Miller, a lawyer-entrepreneur in Atlantic City who worked with Donald Trump, have signed a sales contract on 20 acres overlooking the Christina River on the Seventh Street peninsula, Flynn said. He declined to give the price but said the sale is contingent on the passage of state legislation to allow additional venues, approval from the city and the resolution of issues related to access from I-495.
"We've looked all over Wilmington and this was the best site," said Flynn, a principle with F&M Peninsula Properties.
Earlier this decade, Flynn and Miller were among a trio that bought the land in Chester, got zoning approvals, secured a harness racing license, worked for gaming legislation in Pennsylvania and brought in the Las Vegas casino giant, Harrah's Entertainment Inc. They still own a portion of that project, which opened nearly three years ago.
For Delaware developers, F&M ups the ante in any potential horse race for a casino in Wilmington.
"These guys are not just local guys. They're the real deal," said Larry Tarabicos, attorney for F&M. "Kevin and George have done this before -- there's nothing that needs to be done in Wilmington that they haven't done before in the city of Chester. No one else to date that surfaced can say the same thing. These guys are not speculators."
A handful of other real estate developers have been working behind the scenes to position their Wilmington sites for consideration should the state decide to move beyond its three existing racinos. What all the sites share in common is proximity to one of the city's rivers.
Gambling in Delaware is currently limited to the horse racing tracks in Dover, Harrington and Stanton. Until this summer, gambling was limited to slot machines at those venues. The General Assembly legalized sports betting and table games and is studying whether to allow them at other sites.
Some legislators have said they want to expand gambling to sites in Sussex County and Wilmington.
Wilmington landowners, including Flynn, said they are waiting for the findings of the Sports and

Video Lottery Commission. The panel, created by the same law that permits sports betting and legalized table games, is charged with studying the impact of additional casino venues in Delaware.
"We're hoping the involvement of a legitimate casino developer might have some impact on the outcome," Tarabicos said.
The commission will not give thumbs up or down to additional casinos, but will lay out the economic impact of more venues, said Joe Rogalsky, spokesman for Gov. Jack Markell. The report to lawmakers is not expected to be completed until the beginning of January, Rogalsky said.
If the report finds a positive impact of the casinos, Markell and lawmakers would have to talk about "how to get there with legislation," Rogalsky said.
For existing landowners it could mean hitting the jackpot.
"There's no question a casino would be a desirable use for anybody," said Frank Acierno, a real estate investor who has roughly 17 acres off Governor Printz Boulevard near the Delaware River.
While Acierno said at this point he's not actively pushing his site, located across the highway from the vacant Merchants Square shopping center, he said there have been discussions with the city. Insiders said the project would need to be annexed into the city.
Acierno said he's also talked to officials at the Las Vegas casino organization controlled by gaming impresario Steve Wynn.
"It's not my business," Acierno said of gaming.
Greg Pettinaro of Pettinaro Enterprises in Newport, who owns a roughly 22-acre parcel on A Street in Southbridge, said his property could make a good casino site. His has no definite plan, at this point, but is waiting for the commission report and legislation, he said.
"It's definitely something we'd consider. When we know the criteria, we'll evaluate it and see if it's worth taking a run at," Pettinaro said.
Pettinaro said he might partner with a gaming company.
Another potential casino site, on A Street, is one first unveiled in 2003. A six-acre parcel on the south side of the Christina River just east of the Walnut Street Bridge, was part of a proposed hotel and slot-machine casino called Riverfest Slots.
Since then, some of the players in the development have changed, but landowners South Bank Associates, which includes Wilmington investors Hunter Lott and Denis O'Sullivan, would like their site to be considered if legislation is passed, Lott said. South Bank bought the former six-building Krapfcandoit property on A Street in 2001.
"We'll probably engage somebody to do economic analysis for us," Lott said. "We want to be able to be considered at the same time as everybody else."
Another site being discussed is the former NVF property on Maryland Avenue and Beech Street. Jerome Heisler Jr., one of the owners, declined to comment. But city officials said Heisler has met with Mayor James M. Baker.
The Seventh Street property secured by Flynn and Miller encompasses land that had previously been proposed for a gaming entertainment playground in 2005. Known as Diamond Point, it called for a hotel, slots casino, dinner theater, restaurants, shops and a public marina.
Now, Peninsula Ventures VIII LLC, which includes lawyer Andrew Aerenson, is selling a portion of its property to Flynn and Miller, Aerenson said. He said Peninsula Ventures would still retain an interest of the Flynn-Miller project.
"I think [Flynn and Miller] are probably going to look at something different now," Tarabicos said.
Flynn said he has not finalized any plans, but "has a lot of ideas."
"I think everybody's interested in having their site selected. I know we'll be ready," Aerenson said.

AFTER NEARLY 25 YEARS, NCCO SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE STEPPING DOWN (WILNJ)
By Sean O'Sullivan, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
WILMINGTON -- There will be a vacancy on New Castle County Superior Court at the end of this month while, at the same time, U.S. District Court in Wilmington will be marking its third year short a judge.
Superior Court Judge John E. Babiarz Jr. has notified Gov. Jack Markell of his intention not to seek a third term Nov. 25, when his term expires.
Babiarz, 68, currently the state's longest-serving Superior Court judge, was appointed to the bench

in 1985 and re-appointed, in 1997.
It will now be up to Markell to select a successor - who will be a member of the Democratic Party to maintain the political balance on the Delaware bench -- and submit that name to the state Senate for approval.
"I am proud and gratified to have been a part of this court and to have participated in every aspect of its work. I hope that I have made a contribution," wrote Babiarz in his letter to Markell.
Babiarz told Markell that Superior Court is "the most challenging jurisdiction in the court system," noting its important role in civil and criminal law - including death penalty cases -- and its role as an appellate court for state administrative agencies and local government.
Babiarz did not indicate his future plans in the letter and could not be reached for comment Tuesday, but Markell spokesman Joe Rogalsky said the judge has agreed to stay on until his replacement is seated.
The search process already is under way and today is the final day for applicants to submit their names to the state's Judicial Nominating Commission. Rogalsky said the governor hopes to have a name for the Senate to consider by January.
Before joining the bench, Babiarz was a private practice attorney who was a partner at Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnel and served as the president of the Delaware Trial Lawyers Association.
Meanwhile, a block up the street from New Castle County Superior Court, the federal court in Delaware still is waiting for someone to be named to fill the vacancy created by the departure of Judge Kent A. Jordan in December 2006 to the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals.
Politics and inaction by Democrats and Republicans in Washington have kept the seat empty for three years and there seems to be little urgency in the Capitol to make the Delaware court whole again.
Former U.S. Attorney Colm F. Connolly, a Republican, had been named as Jordan's replacement by President George W. Bush, but that nomination was never acted on by the U.S. Senate and expired at the end of Bush's term in 2008.
Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., submitted three names of Democrats to the White House in May, but the Obama administration has yet to send a nominee forward to the U.S. Senate for confirmation. There also have been no reports of the White House starting a background check for a nominee -- as is reportedly happening to fill the position of U.S. Attorney for Delaware.
The three people who are believed to be up for consideration are federal Magistrate Judge Leonard Stark, attorney Andre Bouchard and attorney Mary B. Graham.
There are only four district judges in Delaware so the absence of one has a significant impact. Many civil cases have been delayed and despite assistance from surrounding federal courts, which have taken on some of Delaware's civil cases to ease the load, federal court calendars in Delaware are packed with proceedings sometimes starting as early as 6:30 a.m. and often ending well past 5 p.m.
At least one judge's civil calendar for 2010 already is full.
While the Delaware federal judges are receiving some help on the civil side, they are not for criminal matters where three -- Chief Judge Gregory M. Sleet and District Judges Joseph J. Farnan and Sue L. Robinson -- continue to handle the work of four.
And looming as an additional burden for the court is that one of the three, Farnan, is eligible for retirement in June.
Neither Carper's office nor the White House offered an explanation on why it is taking so long to fill the vacant position on the federal bench in Delaware. According to the administrative offices of the U.S. Courts, there are 98 federal judicial vacancies across the country, including the one in Delaware, with nominations for 19 of those vacancies, including the one in Delaware, pending from the Obama administration in the U.S. Senate.
Carper's office issued a brief statement indicating that the senator has made it clear to the White House the importance of getting a nominee to the Senate to fill the vacancy soon.

PLUGGING IN TO SUN'S POWER (WILNJ)
By Jeff Montgomery, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
In a new sign of solar energy's burgeoning clout, a study has concluded that Newark and the University of Delaware could affordably tap rooftop sunlight for more than three-quarters of

daytime power needs using readily available equipment and financing.
The finding appeared in a study dubbed "Creating a Solar City," led by the university's Center for Energy and Environmental Policy (CEEP).
Using maps and aerial photos, researchers found thousands of Newark-area rooftop surfaces suitable for solar panel grids. By conservative standards, the combined areas could generate as much 96.4 megawatts, displacing up to 76.3 percent of city and university daytime consumption, and 32 percent of 24-hour average needs.
"We made it clear in the report that the potential is there," said John Byrne, CEEP director. "The project is financeable. It's cost-effective to do in Newark. Whether you can do it on the scale of the United States is another question." The study's authors recommended small steps initially, although the overall venture was described as "well within the ability" of residents, businesses and the university. Installation of 10 megawatts over the next five years, about 10 percent of the potential envisioned in the study, would meet Newark's share of Delaware's current minimum solar energy target for the year 2019.
"If people went to even modest energy conservation, plus solar, what the study points out is that it's well within the grasp of most cities to be self-sustaining," said Ken Becker, a financial expert and solar company founder who reviewed the report. Use of a third-party installer or utility would shield residents and businesses from up-front financing costs, he added.
The center study was the latest in a series of looks at renewable energy options, an effort sponsored by the Public Service Commission and state public advocate. Past studies have looked at everything from solar power for poultry houses to more-aggressive use of energy conservation contracts for government buildings.
Delaware -- ranked eighth nationwide last year based on per-capita installations of solar photovoltaic systems -- has seen a recent surge in solar projects and proposals. The rush led to cutbacks in utility rebate programs, prompted by worries that a years-long backlog for payments would only worsen as solar demand grows.
High public rebates and tax credits, supportive state policies and spillover from New Jersey's huge solar electricity installation market all have contributed to Delaware's standing, officials said. The state's small size also distorts its ranking, however, with a 10 megawatt project noticeably increasing Delaware's per-capita use.
Recent major installation proposals include a planned 10 megawatt solar farm in east Dover that would supply 2.3 percent of the capital city's needs, with a possibility of additional output from adjacent industrial rooftops. The University of Delaware earlier this year announced a 6 megawatt minimum solar goal under its plan to to reduce the greenhouse gas toll of its energy consumption.
Across the country, solar projects made up 13 percent of all utility company generating proposals this year, up from 6 percent in 2008, according to the Edison Electric Institute, an industry group.
"It's real. It works. The technology is out there. It's off-the-shelf," said Monique Hanis, spokeswoman for the Solar Energy Industries Association. "In the Mid-Atlantic states, it's very plausible."
Newark Electric Department director Sam Sneeringer was less bullish.
"It will be a long time before you could get everyone on. I don't know how it would work when it gets to the point where everyone has a system," Sneeringer said.
Newark Councilman Stu Markham, who had an energy-saving geothermal heating and cooling system installed in his home last year, said he wanted to know more about the findings. A city-sponsored rebate program to support solar and other clean energy investments, he said, already has a several year backlog.
"Certainly we're interested in solar and other alternative energy sources," Markham said, adding that he was speaking only as one council member. "But we don't have the money to invest right now. We have a severely tight budget."
Patricia J. Brill, a retired nurse and longtime resident of Nottingham Manor, said she supports pursuit of clean energy, but wants more questions asked.
"I'm all for anything that can save energy, but I live in a very densely shaded neighborhood, and people like trees here," Brill said. "I'd love to see it, and if we can make it work, I'm totally for it, but I'd want to know more about how practical it is in Delaware."
The CEEP report noted that its calculations were based only on rooftops and surfaces with the best exposures to sunlight. Potential electricity yields could prove even higher if solar panels are

installed in other workable but less than perfect areas.
A full-on solar rooftop campaign, the report cautioned, could swamp current subsidy programs, driving down the value of renewable energy credits. Those credits are bought and sold by utilities, helping to hold down the final price of solar installations.
At current rates, typical solar rigs for individual homes could cost from $10,890 to $17,626, with paybacks ranging from 7.5 to 12.5 years, depending on subsidy rates. A large-scale, 250 kilowatt commercial system could cost as much as $516,000, but would pay for itself in 5.5 to 8 years.
Brian C. Yerger, a consultant and analyst with AERCA Advisors in Wilmington who evaluated the CEEP report, said the fact that the financing worked out means the Newark project is feasible.
"It was financeable. That obviously goes a long way to making it practical and realistic," he said.
Rep. John Kowalko, D-Newark, said the idea should be explored.
"If we can get the investment money for the initial solar installation, it would have two benefits -- it would save money in the long run and it would provide another way to separate us from dependency on fossil fuels," Kowalko said.
State law currently obliges utilities to gradually increase use of solar, with a goal of covering 2 percent of needs through sunlight by 2019 -- or about 175 megawatts for all suppliers combined across the state.
Newark's share of the 2019 solar renewable goal would be about 10 megawatts, based on the city's portion of Delaware's population, the study noted. Local officials could start out with 10 megawatts, half the size of Dover's announced project, and gradually expand.
"If city planning embraced such goals for its own building stock, a 10 megawatt distributed solar power plant would serve nearly 10 percent of the community's daylight hours electricity needs," the report noted.
The state's new Sustainable Energy Utility, Byrne said, is seeking proposals for "sustainable community" renewable energy ventures that bundle individual proposals.
The bundling approach could make it easier for owners of a large block of large commercial buildings or farming groups to jointly invest in rooftop solar, wind or geothermal energy projects and qualify for subsidies.
State farm organizations already have shown interest in bundled or cooperative efforts to put wind and solar rigs around cropland or other idle property.
Scott Johnson, co-founder of Wilmington-based SolarDock, said that renewable energy and solar prospects are changing fast.
The Department of Energy has estimated that solar now accounts for less than 1 percent of the state's overall production, and will remain too costly for large, utility scale use.
Byrne said that the race to develop plug-in hybrid electric vehicles like those envisioned for Fisker Automotive's Boxwood Road plant could mean more markets for solar.
Carport-type charging stations equipped with rooftop panels could be deployed to give a daytime shot of juice to car users who otherwise would have to find a plug-in station or wait for overnight charge-ups.
Yerger, the financial adviser, said that hitching Newark to sunlight on a large scale could prove tricky.
"You'd have to have a lot of people on board," Yerger said. "But these projects are eminently more viable on a smaller scale."

SEU DISCUSSES BUYING DOVER SOLAR CREDITS (WILNJ)
By Aaron Nathans, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
NEWARK -- The Sustainable Energy Utility is expected to spend millions to buy renewable energy credits from a large Dover solar installation.
The SEU, the state-created, nonprofit energy efficiency organization, is negotiating a contract under which Delmarva Power would assume the purchase of the credits from a Dover solar park operator at the same price in about six years. Delmarva would also buy out the credits already purchased by the SEU.
The SEU Oversight Board met Tuesday at the University of Delaware, discussing the Dover Sun Park, which has been described as the first utility-scale solar power plant on the East Coast north of Florida. The plant will be built on 90 acres of the Garrison Oak Technology Park, owned by the

city of Dover.
Dover is expected to buy all of the electricity generated by the installation, which is expected to deliver between 14,000 and 19,000 megawatt hours per year, when it turns on late next year or in 2011.
Solar power is generally more expensive to produce than power generated from a fossil fuel burning plant. So to make solar more cost-effective, for each unit of electricity created by a solar installation, the owner also gets a credit to sell on the open market.
Utilities can buy the credits to fulfill their state-mandated renewable energy power purchase requirements.
LS Power of East Brunswick, N.J., is building the solar project, and is negotiating with Delmarva Power, Delaware's municipal utilities and the SEU to buy the renewable energy credits generated by the project.
"We're thrilled to be a significant partner in the development of this solar power plant here in Delaware," said Bridget Shelton, Delmarva spokeswoman. She said negotiations between LS and Delmarva are close to concluding.
Delmarva is required by state law to buy about one-hundredth of one percent of its electricity load from solar sources this year. That percentage increases steadily each year, and goes up sharply in 2016. By 2019, Delmarva will need to buy 2 percent of its load from solar sources.
One of the SEU's chairmen, John Byrne, said the idea behind the SEU's purchase of the credits is to make sure Delmarva still needs to buy more solar credits from other sources between now and 2016.
That will help make it possible for Delaware homeowners and small business owners to put up solar installations, he said.
The SEU is still negotiating the purchase price for the credits, Byrne said. A typical price for credits from a large project would be $250 to $275 per megawatt hour, he said.
The SEU will buy 20 percent of the solar park's credits, meaning the annual value of the SEU's purchase in the early years could be $700,000 to $1 million, declining as the solar panels become less effective with time.

RESIDENTS EAGER TO SEE PLANS FOR COLUMBUS INN (WILNJ)
By Adam Taylor, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
WILMINGTON -- Louis Capano III, who bought the Columbus Inn earlier this year, recently brought the chef for the restaurant he plans to re-open soon to a community meeting.
Capano said he was surprised to learn that residents eager to learn about his plans for the property would have been happier if he had brought a land-use planner instead.
The landmark Pennsylvania Avenue restaurant dates to 1789 but has been closed for two years.
Capano figured his plan to re-open the popular eatery in a few months would be welcomed with open arms, then he would figure out what he would do with the rest of the parcel in a few years.
But now, thanks to a change in the city's land-use plan last year, Capano has an immediate battle on his hands with City Council and some of the property's neighbors.
"I don't even want to fight," he said. "All I'm asking for is a little time, and I'd like to preserve my property rights while the rest of the property sits."
That's not how things will take place.
City officials and residents, still smarting from a plan by a different developer two years ago that almost saw a 10-story condominium tower rise on the property, want to know right away what his plans are for the rest of the property. And they want to link approval for a re-opening of the restaurant to a plan that would prohibit such a large building.
When Councilmen Paul Ignudo and Steve Martelli left the Nov. 9 meeting with Capano and the chef dissatisfied, they sent an e-mail to residents asking them to attend Tuesday night's Wilmington Planning Commission meeting to support a zoning change for the non-restaurant portion of the property that would limit the use to single homes.
The e-mail also suggested that residents oppose the zoning variances Capano needs to re-open the restaurant, which will be decided separately by the city's zoning board.
"We should seriously consider, as a community, whether or not we should support a use-variance for a property owner that is already not willing to work with the neighborhood," Ignudo's and

Martelli's e-mail said.
The reason a variance is needed for the restaurant is that the old Columbus Inn restaurant was always a nonconforming use in a residential neighborhood. City law requires that the nonconforming use status be renewed if a business is vacant for more than a year.
The issues surrounding the property pre-date Capano's purchase, beginning in 2007 when the property's then-owner Davis Cezna reached a sales agreement with Ocean Atlantic Associates. At that time, Ocean Atlantic announced plans to demolish part of the restaurant and put up the condo tower. The plan outraged many neighbors who said the building would be out of character with the neighborhood.
In response to that plan and other large projects in the Delaware Avenue, Trolley Square, 40 acres and Highlands neighborhoods, city officials scampered to rezone the entire area to prevent more big development proposals. The rezoning package was passed last year. The new zoning designations essentially call for smaller, less-dense uses of properties in the area.
But because the plans for the condo tower at the Columbus Inn property were filed before the changes were approved, the plan was allowed to proceed. City officials did include language in the rezoning specific to the Columbus Inn property stating that if the Ocean Atlantic deal fell through, the property's zoning allowing for large apartment buildings would be changed to prohibit them.
When Ignudo learned in August that Ocean Atlantic had backed out of the deal with Cezna, he introduced an ordinance that would change the zoning to allow for nothing larger than single or twin homes on the site. Ignudo said the purpose of the new zoning is to prevent a plan for another 10-story condo tower, now or in the future.
"This has nothing to do with Mr. Capano's proposal," Ignudo said. "It's about preserving the property in a way that is consistent with the rest of the neighborhood."
The planning commission, while reviewing Ignudo's ordinance last month, gave Capano 30 days to meet with the community. The hope was for a successful negotiation that would allow Capano to re-open the restaurant and build something on the rest of the site that all parties could agree on.
Since that effort failed, the commission Tuesday night attempted a compromise, voting to recommend that Council approve a zoning designation that would allow for an apartment building of up to five stories. Council could vote on that as early as next month.
Residents Susan Collins and Harry Haon object to that, saying that only single or twin homes are appropriate.
Capano isn't prepared to make a choice now and wants to keep the current zoning status intact to preserve his options.
"The community has been dealing with this for years, but I've only been dealing with it for days," he said. "In time I think I will come up with a plan that the community will be comfortable with. But I'm not building in the near future, and I just don't know what that plan is yet."

HIGH-DENSITY DEVELOPMENT GETS CLOSER TO REALITY (WILNJ)
By Angie Basiouny, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
Residents battling a high-density development proposed off U.S. 202 in Talleyville were dealt a blow Tuesday when New Castle County gave two recommendations for the project to move ahead.
The county Department of Land Use and the Planning Board agreed the 15-acre site, to be named Columbia Place at Garden of Eden Road, should be rezoned to accommodate a greater number of dwellings.
County Council still must give the ultimate approval, but the nods from the department and the board bolster developer Jerome Heisler's plan to buy the land from the Pilot School and convert it into an age-restricted community with a mix of 149 single-family homes, two-story town houses and condominiums.
Residents in adjacent Tavistock and Edenridge III are worried about how the proposed density of 10 units per acre -- higher than any of the surrounding neighborhoods -- will affect the character of the community and the quality of life.
Nearly a dozen residents voiced their concerns in a public hearing earlier this month that lasted more than two hours. The nine appointed members of the Planning Board followed up Tuesday with more than an hour of debate over whether they should follow the positive recommendation

offered by Land Use. They voted 4-3, with one member abstaining.
"I'm torn," said Planning Board member Victor Udo, explaining why he did not vote. "On one side, I think it's a good project, but on the other side I think the density is too much."
Residents said their fight isn't over yet.
They will continue working to persuade the 13 council members to oppose the rezoning when it comes before them for a vote, likely in January. Without a rezoning from "suburban" to "suburban transition," Heisler will be limited to a density of about 1.25 dwellings per acre.
"We're disappointed with the outcome," said Jim Higgins, who lives in Edenridge III. "We really believe ... this is dropping urban development in a suburban area."
At least one councilman, Robert Weiner, whose district includes the site, has said he will vote against the rezoning in support of his constituents.
Heisler declined to comment Tuesday.
He said previously that he believes Columbia Place is a good fit for the area already marked by heavy retail and residential. Land Use and Planning Board members agreed Tuesday, saying the project follows the county's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, which calls for infill development along nearly built-out corridors such as U.S. 202.
"In general, I feel like if we can't do this type of development here in this area, where can we do it?" longtime board member Mark Weinberg said.
Weinberg voted in favor of the rezoning but said it was "one of the most difficult" decisions he's ever made, partly because of the well-articulated arguments made by the residents.
The Pilot School wants to relocate about a mile north and needs to sell the land to do so. Heisler did not disclose the amount of money the school is seeking, but he told county officials he needs the density to make the deal work.
Officials said the financial issues between Heisler and the school were irrelevant in researching whether the project should be granted greater density.
Higgins said hearing the lengthy debate was an eye-opener for the residents. The project is considered a redevelopment, which means Heisler is entitled to density bonuses offered under a county law devised several years ago to encourage developers to stay away from building on pristine land.
Higgins said residents need to be more involved with elected leaders in the crafting of land-use legislation.
"One of the big lessons of all of this that I'm learning is that we in the civic community all fall down on the job by not being on top of this stuff as the rules are written," he said.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXTENDED FOR 14 WEEKS (WILNJ)
By The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
Out of work Delawareans will be eligible for an additional 14 weeks of unemployment benefits after the state implemented an extension approved by the federal government last week.
"These benefits will help Delawareans who have been hit hard by the national economic recession get back on their feet," Gov. Jack Markell said in a statement Tuesday.
The extension allows residents to collect benefits for a maximum of 93 weeks, an extension from the previous 79-week maximum. Anyone whose unemployment benefits had run out can qualify for the extended benefits. The extension will be federally funded.
Information regarding eligibility is available at www.delawareworks.com or by calling the Unemployment Insurance Information Hotline at 761-6576 for New Castle County residents and (800) 794-3032 for Kent and Sussex county residents.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR YOUNG ONES (WILNJ)
By Edward L. Kenney, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
With three early childhood centers -- and another on the way if the upcoming referendum passes -- the Appoquinimink School District has buttressed with action the belief that children should start learning well before grade school.
But it has not stopped there. Rather than wait for children ages 3 to 5 to enroll in the centers, district leaders have developed an outreach program that trains Middletown-area day care

providers to give the children an even earlier head start.
"In the past, the school district and the community providers sort of passed [like ships] in the night, so to speak, yet we're all sharing the same kids," said Sandra Cohee, principal at the Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center. "We give them a more in-depth view of what we do at school. This has opened up a conduit of information."
Cohee, the leaders of the other two early childhood centers and an educational diagnostician make up the leadership in a newly formed Preschool Coalition Committee that plans training for the day care providers.
The district has worked with the providers informally for the past 10 years, beginning when the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center opened its doors as the first such center in the district, she said.
But this year marks an effort to give the initiative better structure, a move necessitated both because of district growth and the growing number of day care centers in the Middletown area, now about 15.
"There are other districts that are doing similar things, but not as formalized as we are doing it," Cohee said. "It's a great idea. And it really has opened up communication, so we are on the same page as the providers."
"Developing this liaison helps to build a bridge," added committee member Lucia Weathers, assistant principal at the Townsend Early Childhood Center.
Licensed day care providers are required by state law to receive 18 hours of training a year in subjects such as classroom management, parental involvement, developing fine and gross motor skills, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
Providers usually have to pay for that training, but the district offers it free, holding sessions as part of evening dinner meetings that have drawn as many as 75 day care people.
Meetings are held every two to three months and are assigned a training theme, Cohee said. One scheduled for January will be about discipline.
Rene Nolen, the principal at the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center and a member of the Preschool Coalition Committee, said the district also can teach things that will help the children with social skills such as sharing and teamwork, paving the way for the more academic lessons to come.
"Then when they get here, they're ready for reading and words and counting," she said.
"The kindergarten year is so critical," added fellow committee member Kathy Gertley, a district educational diagnostician who used to go out on her own to the day care centers before things got better organized. "It just sets them up for success in their educational career.
"We want them to instill in them the love of learning," she said of the day care providers.
As an owner of the Kiddie Academy childcare center in Middletown, Susan Tudor appreciates the training the district is giving her 20 teachers.
"It's a good opportunity to get those hours and not have to pay for it," she said. "In early childcare, it's definitely not a career you go into to make money. As a business owner, I wish I could say I will pay for all your training, but I can't afford it."
Tudor also likes what the teachers are taking away from the training, which cannot help but benefit the 115 children at her day care center.
"I think it helps educate my teachers, giving them different ideas," she said. "They can kind of feed off each other. I think it gives them a chance to grow together. It keeps my teachers fresh and aware of what's going on out there."
Said Weathers, "Those centers know that we value what they do, and just knowing that helps them to keep coming back."

BACK TO SCHOOL, BUT IN A DIFFERENT DRESS (WILNJ/AP)
By Alan Clendenning, Associated Press
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
SAO PAULO -- Brushing back freshly dyed blond hair as she posed for pictures, the Brazilian woman whose short pink dress got her kicked out of college said Tuesday she's enjoying her newfound fame, but wants go back to school -- with a security guard.
Just the day before, 20-year-old Geisy Arruda took her first trip on an airplane so she could relive her experience in a comedy skit on one of Brazil's most popular television shows.

Star-struck business executives on the flight to Rio de Janeiro asked if she really was Geisy, then used their cell phones to snap pictures of themselves with her.
It was heady stuff for a 20-year-old freshman from a blue-collar industrial suburb who says she just wants to get a tourism degree so she can fulfill dreams of working for a resort or a cruise line someday.
She'd already appeared on two of Brazil's top interview programs, recounting how she was hounded from the campus of Bandeirantes University in October by male students yelling "Whore! Whore!" and was then expelled by school officials.
The private university, which doesn't have a conservative reputation, backtracked amid a national uproar and said last week she was welcome to return for her regular routine of night classes.
But Arruda's lawyer says she won't go back until she's promised a well-trained security guard to accompany her on campus.
Wearing a black halter top with dressy eggplant-colored satin shorts for an interview with the Associated Press, the daughter of a cleaning company supervisor and a housewife beamed after finding out the AP is an American news agency.
"How cool!" she gushed just before the start of the interview in her lawyer's office.
Then to the photographer as she adjusted her lengthy tresses and took a last look at her brightly painted red nails: "Hey guy, do I look pretty?"
She said she's still stumped that an outfit, no matter how short, would cause such an uproar in a tropical nation where skimpy clothing and tiny bikinis barely raise an eyebrow.
And she again denied the university's claim that she paraded provocatively and raised the dress, resulting in the expulsion.
Arruda said one young man said he liked her looks, then more joined in. Soon other students loudly proclaimed they wanted to have sex with her, snapping pictures with their cell phones.
Hundreds were drawn to the scene, creating a sort of mob mentality, Arruda said. Chants of "Whore! Whore!" erupted from the mob as she was escorted from the university in a borrowed white lab coat.
"It was total terror," Arruda recalled. "And the worst thing was that I had no idea why it was happening."
"I think they just didn't want to study and this was fun for them, the big happening at school for the year, and I was just the joke of the year," Arruda said.
Arruda said she had worn the dress to classes once before, in March, with no reaction. Arruda said she chose the dress because she was heading to a birthday party with friends after class.
After fleeing the campus in tears, she hasn't returned. A spokeswoman for the university said Tuesday that students who scared and ridiculed her in the near riot won't be expelled.
Arruda is convinced her future is in tourism, and now she might get a job more easily, whether she eventually graduates from Bandeirantes University or not.
Above all, she said, she wants to make more money to help her parents move from the roughly built concrete block home they expanded bit by bit over the years to accommodate a growing family after moving to Sao Paulo from Brazil's impoverished northeast about 30 years ago.
Arruda thinks it's a funny twist of fate that she became famous in Brazil and across the planet after her story went wild on the Internet.
"I still can't believe it," she said. "It's like a real strange, stupid movie."

EVEN SANTAS STARTING TO GUARD AGAINST SWINE FLU (WILNJ/AP)
By Holly Ramer, Associated Press
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
CONCORD, N.H. -- Forget cookies and milk. Santa wants the swine flu vaccine.
Many of the nation's Santas want to be given priority for the vaccine, and not just because of those runny-nosed kids. There's also the not-so-little matter of that round belly. Research has suggested obesity could be a risk factor.
Swine flu has become such a concern that the Amalgamated Order of Real Bearded Santas featured a seminar on the illness at a recent conference in Philadelphia. The group also urged its members to use hand sanitizer and take vitamins to boost their immune systems.
The president of the organization said he also hopes parents will keep sick kids away.
"We don't want any child to go without seeing Santa, but it's not worth bringing your child to the

mall, infecting the Santa and infecting the other children," Nicholas Trolli said.
He recalled a boy who informed him last year that he had a fever and had stayed home from school. But, the child said, his mother thought it was a good day to visit Santa.
Ernest Berger, president of another group called Santa America, asked an Alabama congressman last week to designate Santas a priority group for the swine flu vaccine, like health care workers or infant caregivers.
A spokesman for Republican Rep. Jo Bonner confirmed Berger's request and said staff members were looking into it.
Berger hopes Santas will use hand sanitizer and encourage children to do the same, without turning the experience into a hygiene lecture.
"It's a delicate balance here. This is not an exercise in health care. This is visiting Santa," he said.
Berger estimates that about two-thirds of all American Santas are overweight, and about a third are morbidly obese.
That raises health concerns because some research has suggested obesity could be a risk factor for severe swine flu.
A high proportion of those who have gotten severely ill from swine flu have been obese or extremely obese. But health officials have also said that might be due to the fact that heavy people tend to have asthma and other conditions that make them more susceptible.
The 200 or so Santas who volunteer to visit sick or grieving children through Santa America will be washing their suits daily instead of weekly and will not be wearing gloves this year so they can wash their hands frequently, Berger said.
John Scheuch of Prairie Village, Kan., said he might suggest to parents that they come back another time if a child is visibly ill.
"The kids are in the strollers, sniffling and coughing and hacking. ... In the meantime, they're interacting with other kids in line."
Scheuch, executive director of Santa America, has taken some personal precautions.
"I've had my H1N1. I've had my seasonal flu shot. This is my year for my pneumonia booster," he said. "I don't know what else I can do except encapsulate myself in plastic."
In Nashua, N.H., hand-sanitizing stations have been set up around the Pheasant Lane Mall, including just outside the picket fence surrounding the Santa Claus area. But on a recent Saturday, not one of the dozen or so families who passed through used it.
Susen Mesco, owner of American Events and Promotions in Denver, Colo., said her Santas will be changing gloves every three hours and washing them in anti-bacterial soap.
Dr. Jack Turco, director of health services at Dartmouth College, said Santa might consider greeting children from a few feet away rather than holding them on his lap, or asking children with coughs to stand in a separate line.
"If we take this really seriously, and I think we should because people are dying, it wouldn't be inappropriate to say this is a year maybe we shouldn't do these mass gatherings," he said.

ABUNDANCE OF FOOD DRIVES MAKES IT EASY TO HELP NEEDY FOR HOLIDAYS (WILNJ)
By The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
With a little more than a week to go before Thanksgiving, and requests for help more numerous this year, the Delaware Food Bank says it is running at about the same donation level as last year, thanks to some big food drives.
Collections by the University of Delaware, Chase, Wilmington Trust, Sallie Mae, Sodexo, DART and the Delaware Air National Guard, among others, have helped keep the shelves and freezers full for Thanksgiving baskets and dinners, said Kim Kostes, spokeswoman for the food bank.
DART's Stuff the Bus campaign saw a big increase in donations, up to 29,152 pounds of food from last year's 18,687.
The food bank, soup kitchens and other ministries that feed the hungry still need turkeys and other items for Thanksgiving dinners and baskets, with a lot of turkey and food drives set for the weekend and Monday to make the holiday deadline.
All say they are experiencing dramatic rises in need because of the continued effects of a depressed economy. At the Ministry of Caring's Emmanuel Dining Room on North Jackson Street, the number of baskets that area residents have signed up for has risen to 1,000 this year from 750

last November.
Here are the ongoing food drives The News Journal has been notified about so far, with new notifications at the top. If your organization is conducting a food drive, please send information about it, including daytime contact phone numbers for drive organizers, to features@delawareonline.com. We welcome Christmas food drive information, but will not print it until after Thanksgiving.
Ministry of Caring
WJBR's Turkeython to benefit The Ministry of Caring will be from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday Vans will be on site at the Pathmarks on Kirkwood Highway, Concord Pike and People's Plaza in Glasgow to collect birds, boxed stuffing and canned goods. Between the three sites, the group hopes to raise 1,000 turkeys. For more information, call 765-1160.
Delaware City Fire Company
The fire company's food drive will be Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will benefit the Delaware Food Bank.
Non-perishables may be dropped off at the Delaware City Fire House at 815 Fifth St., Delaware City through Sunday. For more information, call 834-9336.
Delaware Military Academy
The academy will hold a turkey drive Saturday between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and cadets will man a drive-through drop-off site at the campus, 112 Middleboro Road, near Banning Park. This is the second year the academy has collected turkeys that will be donated to Amvets Post 100 for needy military families.
In addition, the cadets have collected items and will be preparing military care packages to be sent to military troops serving abroad. For more information, call 998-0745.
UD Student Government Association
On Thursday and Friday, the Student Government Association at the University of Delaware is sponsoring a Thanksgiving food drive. Collection on Thursday will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the gallery at the Perkins Student Center. On Friday, donations can be dropped off from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Multipurpose Room C in the Trabant University Center and in the Collins Room at Perkins. All donations will go to the Food Bank of Delaware.
Bear Library
The Bear Library hosts an ongoing food collection for the Delaware Food Bank. Nonperishable food items are accepted during regular library hours, which are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday through Saturday; and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. The library is at 101 Governor's Place in Governors Square Shopping Center. For more information, call the reference desk at 838-3300.
Sunday Breakfast Mission
While Sunday Breakfast Mission leaders report strong response to a WSFS food drive and cash donations, the Wilmington charity had only three turkeys left last week. The mission distributes food boxes to needy families just prior to Thanksgiving, and leaders said they need 1,200 for their Great Thanksgiving Outreach.
Turkeys can be delivered to the mission at 110 N. Poplar St. For more information, call 652-8314.
Harvest Market Natural Food Store
Since June, the Harvest Market Natural Food Store in Hockessin has been making weekly donations of fresh and nonperishable foods to local food banks and shelters. For the month of November, the store has partnered with the Sunday Breakfast Mission to incorporate the donations with additional gifts from customers for the Thanksgiving drive.
Nonperishable donations are accepted all week, and fresh donations may be brought to the store each Wednesday. The store, at 7417 Lancaster Pike, is open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the week and from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday. It is closed Sunday.
Norman Oliver/NOR Enterprises annual turkey drive
Donations of turkeys and nonperishable food, such as stuffing mix and other side dishes, will be collected Tuesday through Tuesday, when they will be distributed to needy Wilmington residents. The drive, more than 25 years old, has a goal of 2,500 turkeys this year.
Donations can be dropped off at NOR Enterprises offices at 1213 B St. in South Wilmington. For more information, call 655-8250.
Giant Food drive

Area Giant Food stores have launched their 22nd annual Good Neighbor Food and Funds Drive. Through Dec. 31, customers will have an opportunity to donate money or nonperishable food at the cash registers to benefit the Food Bank of Delaware.
Giant allows customers to add $1, $3 or $5 donations to their grocery bills.
The store provides collection carts for food items for the food bank.
Wilmington Jaycees turkey drive
The Wilmington Jaycees hope to provide a full Thanksgiving meal -- turkey included -- for 500 of the city's neediest families through the West End Neighborhood House.
But corporate support in these trying times has been hard to get, so they are asking anyone who gets a free turkey through grocery store points to donate the $14 they would have spent on a turkey so a needy family can have a happy Thanksgiving.
Donations can be made via Paypal at this link: http://wilmingtonjaycees.com/ Donate-A-Turkey.htm
Pump It Up Turkey Jump
Pump It Up, an indoor inflatable party facility, will hold a Turkey Jump to benefit the Food Bank of Delaware on Nov. 25.
From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. that day, anyone who brings a nonperishable food item to donate to the food bank will get $1 off the admission price of $8 for the open, non-reserved playtime.
For more information, go to www.pumpitupparty.com.
Friends of Newark Library drive for Food Bank of Delaware
The Friends of the Newark Library maintain an ongoing food drive for the Food Bank of Delaware. Collection barrels are next to the circulation desk.
They accept canned meats, peanut butter, pork and beans, canned soups and stews, fruit juice, beverages, instant breakfasts, canned vegetables, canned beans, canned fruits, rice and rice mixes, pasta and pasta mixes, powdered milk, evaporated milk, powdered creamer, pancake and waffle mix, baking mixes, cooking oils, condiments and powdered or liquid baby formula. They also accept diapers, toothpaste, mouthwash, dental floss, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, bar soap, liquid hand soap and paper products.
They will not accept baby food or homemade foods.
For more information, go to http://friendsofthenewarkfreelibrary.webs.com/fooddrive.htm
Basket Brigade of Delaware
With a goal of 2,000 turkeys, the group is sponsoring a turkey drive, with drop-off locations at all Seasons Pizza locations, and a virtual turkey drive on http://basketbrigadeofde.org.
Those who drop off a turkey at Seasons Pizza will receive a coupon for a free medium pizza.
Those who donate $15 or more online will be entered in a drawing for two Eagles tickets, including sideline pregame passes, for the Dec. 27 game against Denver. The drawing will be held on basket delivery day, Nov. 23.

POLICE DOG DIES AFTER TUMOR IS DIAGNOSED (WILNJ)
By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
Bandit, a New Castle County policed dog that was rushed to the University of Pennsylvania Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital after becoming ill, was euthanized Monday after being diagnosed with a inoperable brain tumor, police said Tuesday.
The 6-year-old German shepherd suddenly became ill Sunday night and immediately was hospitalized, county police Senior Cpl. Trinidad Navarro said.
Doctors discovered Bandit had an inoperable tumor on his brain stem.
Because of the dog's dire condition and the fact he was suffering, he was euthanized, Navarro said.
Bandit was surrounded by his handler Cpl. Paul Chickadel, family and friends when he died.
Navarro said the last time Bandit worked was Saturday night.
In 2008, Chickadel and Bandit were assigned to the A-Squad. The pair assisted in numerous money sniffs that resulted in $32,445 in seizures in drug investigations.
The pair handled 389 canine calls for service last year and also supported patrol in making four arrests.
In June, the team was certified in narcotics detection, tracking and patrol work by the National Police Canine Association.

Bandit served on the county police force for four years.
Navarro said arrangements have not been finalized for a memorial service.
Meanwhile, the condition of police dog Diablo, who was wounded last week in the line of duty, remains stable and unchanged, Navarro said.
Diablo developed pneumonia and is recovering from surgery in the hospital's intensive care unit.

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Said Weathers, "Those centers know that we value what they do, and just knowing that helps them to keep coming back."

POLICE: LIQUOR STORE CLERK FATALLY SHOOTS WOULD-BE ROBBER (WILNJ)
By Ira Porter, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
One of two men trying to rob a Wilmington liquor store Tuesday night was shot and killed by a store clerk who exchanged fire with the bandits in the store.
Police Master Sgt. Steven Barnes said the man killed in the 9:30 p.m. gunfire at Favor's Liquor Store, 1020 N. Walnut St., was able to exit the store and stagger 30 feet along a sidewalk before collapsing. Paramedics treated him, and he was rushed to Christiana Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 10:15 p.m.
The second holdup man fled on foot and police were using a dog to try and track him in the area near the store along 10th and 11th streets.
The clerk, said to be in his late 50s or early 60s, was being interviewed at police headquarters.
Police said they found a .22-caliber handgun in the store that they think was left behind by one of the men attempting the robbery.
Two women were in the back of the store at the time of the robbery, but police do not know if they witnessed the crime.
Police said two men wearing masks entered the store brandishing handguns and ordered the clerk to hand over money from the register. They then rounded the counter in an attempt to get at the register and grab the cash themselves.
But the clerk also had a gun and opened fire, striking one of the masked men and forcing both to flee. Police do not know if the other gunman was hit during the exchange and were checking to see if any other gunshot victims show up at local hospitals.
Passers-by asked police about what happened as traffic was blocked off between 10th and 11th on Walnut.
A woman, who did not want to give her name, said she frequents the store, and the clerk is a "nice man."
"He usually has good deals on his cigarettes and beer," she said. "If someone tried to rob his store what was he supposed to do? He had to protect himself."
Police did not release the identities of the clerk or the man who died in the incident.

MIDDLETOWN CHASE ENDS IN MAN'S ARREST (WILNJ)
By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
A 19-year-old Townsend man was arrested Monday night after he allegedly stole a car outside a Townsend convenience store and led police on a pursuit through Middletown.
State police charged Vincenzo A. Tollis, 19, of Walnut Street, with felony reckless endangering, motor vehicle theft, disregarding a police officer's signal, resisting arrest, reckless driving, driving while suspended, habitual offender and nine other traffic offenses.
The incident unfolded about 6:38 p.m. outside Townsend Valero Shore Stop at 4235 Dupont Parkway. The car's owner left her 1996 Pontiac Bonneville running in the parking lot while she ran into the store to buy a pack of cigarettes, said state police spokesman Senior Cpl. Jeff Whitmarsh. Tollis allegedly jumped into her running car and took off.
Police issued a general broadcast to be on the lookout for the car, which was spotted a short time later by some probation and parole officers who were in the Arby's parking lot on U.S. 301 in Middletown.
The probation and parole officers started following the car, which turned into Middletown Village and down Liborio Drive, a dead end street, Whitmarsh said.
At that point, Tollis stopped the car as the officers got out of their vehicle and approached him on foot. As they did, Tollis put the car in reverse and accelerated in the direction of the officers, who had to jump out of the way, Whitmarsh said.

Tollis drove east out of the neighborhood as additional officers converged on the area trying to find the car, he said.
Officers located the car on Cedar Lane Road and said Tollis drove into the community of Dove Run, speeding up and driving recklessly until officers discontinued the pursuit.
Whitmarsh said Tollis then took a fast turn into a curb on Remington Drive, leaving the Pontiac inoperable.
He ran off on foot and was found in a wooded area near Middletown High School by a state police K-9 team.
He is being held in the Young Correctional Institution in lieu of $13,500 cash bail.
Police are asking any witnesses to the vehicle theft at the Valero Shore Stop to call Troop 9 at 378-5218, ext.622, or Delaware Crime Stoppers at (800)TIP-3333.

POLICE SAY TWO MEN ROBBED WOMAN'S WEDDING RING (WILNJ)
By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
A Wilmington woman out for an early morning walk Saturday in Brandywine Park with her husband was robbed at gunpoint by two thieves who stole her wedding ring.
Wilmington police later arrested Bryan D. Roberts, of the 1800 block of N. Tatnall St., and Kendal Morris, of the 900 block of Linden St., both 18, and charged them with first-degree robbery, first-degree attempted robbery and conspiracy.
Roberts also was charged with aggravated menacing and carrying a concealed dangerous instrument, Master Sgt. John O'Connor said.
The incident occurred about 7:45 a.m. Saturday in the area of 16th and West streets. According to police, the couple was walking along a footpath when they were approached by the two men, one of whom carried what appeared to be a handgun, O'Connor said.
The man shoved the barrel of the gun in the woman's stomach and said, "Give me what ya got," according to court records.
The victims told the bandits that they didn't have anything.
Then 42-year-old woman took off her gold wedding band and handed it over to the gunman, police said. The two assailants turned to her 42-year-old husband and told him to remove his ring, but he couldn't get it off. The victim said the assailants kept yanking at her husband's ring but couldn't remove it.
Then they patted down the two victims to see if they were hiding any other valuables and ran west on North Park Drive toward the Brandywine Zoo with only the woman's inscribed slender gold band valued at $50.
The victims provided officers with a description of the assailants and they searched the area and found two men matching the bandits' descriptions headed west in the 1000 block of W. 18th St., O'Connor said.
The officers stopped the duo and found Roberts with a handgun -- later identified as a pellet gun -- in the waistband of his pants under his shirt.
Police later conducted a photo line-up for the victim who identified the two men.
Both men were committed to Young Correctional Institution in lieu of bail.

TROOPERS RECRUITING FOR NCCO CITIZENS ACADEMY (WILNJ)
By The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
Delaware State Police are looking for people interested in participating in the 2009-2010 Citizens Police Academy in New Castle County.
Classes will start Dec. 22 and last for seven weeks. They will be held on Tuesday nights at Troop 2 in Glasgow.
Citizens will visit other troops, hear presentations and learn about the state police.
Anyone interested in participating can email dsp_pio@state.de.us or call Senior Cpl. Jeff Whitmarsh at 598-5188 during regular business hours.

SUSSEX CORRECTIONAL INMATE, 36, DIES (WILNJ)
By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009
A Newark man in prison for a felony died Friday at Beebe Medical Center in Lewes, prison officials reported Monday.
The Department of Correction said Gernell J. Archie, 36, who was sentenced to more than eight years for possession of a deadly weapon, robbery, and theft, was housed at the Sussex Correctional Institution.
Archie began serving his sentence on March 30, 2008.
He was pronounced dead at 5:55 p.m. His body was to be turned over to the state Medical Examiner's Office.
No foul play is suspected.

BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

POLICE CAR AHEAD OF BIDEN CRASHES (NYT)
By Anahad O'Connor
New York Times, November 18, 2009
A police car assisting Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s motorcade collided with another vehicle on the West Side of Manhattan on Tuesday as Mr. Biden was on his way to appear on a television show, the police said.
The accident took place just before 6 p.m. on the corner of West 49th Street and 10th Avenue as the police car was driving ahead of Mr. Biden's motorcade to help clear the way, the authorities said. Mr. Biden was on his way to a taping of "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart," which is recorded at a studio on 11th Avenue near West 52nd Street.
The police car, the authorities said, was part of an "advance element" of the motorcade made up of three marked police cars that traveled about three minutes ahead of Mr. Biden's vehicle to help clear the way and make sure there were no "breakdown issues" along the way.
As the marked cars traveled west on 49th Street with lights and sirens on, one of them collided with a livery cab at the intersection. Two officers and the driver of the livery cab were taken to a hospital with neck and back injuries, the police said. None of the injuries were serious.
Mr. Biden was informed of the crash after taping the show, and spoke with one of the injured officers from Air Force 2 on his way back to Washington, a spokeswoman said. She added that Mr. Biden was happy to hear that all those who were injured had been released from the hospital.
It was the second accident involving Mr. Biden's motorcade this week. On Monday, a sheriff's vehicle escorting Mr. Biden's motorcade in Albuquerque was hit by a car that went around two units blocking an intersection, injuring a sergeant in the vehicle.
Last week, a man in Maryland was killed when he was hit by two Secret Service cars: a limousine sometimes used by Mr. Biden, and a Chevrolet Suburban used in his motorcade. Mr. Biden was not in the limousine or the Suburban at the time of the accident.

NY POLICE CAR IN ACCIDENT AHEAD OF BIDEN MOTORCADE (AP)
By Colleen Long, The Associated Press
Associated Press, November 18, 2009
NEW YORK -- A police car working ahead of Vice President Joe Biden's motorcade was involved in a minor traffic accident Tuesday evening, but it wasn't part of the procession and the vice president was unhurt.
Three unmarked police vehicles, with their lights and sirens on, were traveling 5 to 10 minutes ahead of the motorcade on Manhattan's West Side and were checking traffic before Biden passed en route to an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," chief police spokesman Paul Browne said.
The cars were going through an intersection when the second one collided with a livery cab around 5:40 p.m. Traffic had stopped for the police, but the livery cab driver pulled out around the line of vehicles and was trying to go through the intersection, police said.
A passenger in the livery cab refused medical attention at the scene. The cab driver and two police officers were examined at a hospital and were released.
The police vehicles had been sent out as a routine patrol ahead of Biden, and the motorcade was not involved, Browne said.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford said the motorcade continued on its route to the Comedy Central channel show's studio, a few blocks from the accident site.
Biden was told about the accident after taping the show. He spoke with one of the injured officers and the officers' supervisor from his plane on the way back to Washington, D.C., his spokeswoman Elizabeth Alexander said.
"He was very happy to hear reports that the injuries were not serious and that all involved have already been released from the hospital," Alexander said.
In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.
Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraiser for two New Mexico Democrats.

Associated Press writer Virginia Byrne contributed to this report.

POLICE CAR AHEAD OF JOE BIDEN'S MOTORCADE CRASHES ON WAY TO FILM 'DAILY SHOW WITH JON STEWART' (NYDN)
By John Lauinger, Daily News Staff Writer
New York Daily News, November 18, 2009
An NYPD squad car traveling ahead of a motorcade for Vice President Joseph Biden crashed into a livery cab in rush-hour traffic on the West Side on Tuesday, police said.
The motorcade for Biden - in town to film an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" - was not involved in the 5:40 p.m. smash-up, a police source told the Daily News.
Biden made it to the studio just fine, and the taping wrapped up shortly before 7 p.m., a spokesman for Comedy Central confirmed.
The squad car with two detectives scouting the route for the motorcade was headed west on 49th St. when it was T-boned by a cab going north on 10th Ave.
The two detectives suffered minor injuries, and a third person was also injured.
The cab was registered in Nassau County to Zahid Butt. His registration was current but was revoked several times in recent years for lack of automobile insurance, state records show.
About five minutes later, the motorcade passed by on 49th St., said a witness

JOE BIDEN UNSCATHED IN WEST SIDE CRASH (NYPOST)
By Murray Weiss, John Doyle And Laurie Kamens
New York Post, November 18, 2009
A car responsible for clearing a path for Vice President Biden's motorcade was involved in a West Side collision that sent three people to the hospital today, sources said.
Biden, who was headed to an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," was not hurt. It was the second accident involving a Biden trip in two days.
The latest crash occurred at 5:40 p.m. at West 49th Street and Tenth Avenue.
Biden's motorcade, which was going to make it's way uptown to the show's 11th Avenue studio, was about ten minutes away at the time, authorities said.
Cops had stopped traffic on Tenth to clear a path for Biden when a livery cab tried to get around it by driving up the left lane.
Meanwhile, three unmarked police cars were headed west on 49th Street. At the intersection the middle car hit the livery cab, police and federal sources said.
"They t-boned him," said Joe Lewis, a clerk at the nearby Skyline Hotel.
The livery driver and two Intelligence Division cops in the middle car suffered neck and back injuries and were taken to Roosevelt Hospital where they were treated and released. The cab had a passenger who was treated at the scene for a minor injury and was released.
Witnesses said the passenger side door of the cab was caved in and the police car's bumper was ripped off.
But cops were able to push the crash cars aside so that Biden was able to continue on his way to the studio to tape the show that aired at 11 p.m.
The crash was a bizarre echo of an accident in Biden's motorcade on Monday.
The vice president was in Albuquerque, N.M. to help Democratic candidates when a woman drove

around two police vehicles who were blocking an intersection for the vice president's motorcade. The woman struck the car of a sheriff's deputy, who was rushed to a hospital for evaluation.

NEW YORK POLICE IN CRASH AHEAD OF BIDEN MOTORCADE (AFP)
AFP, November 18, 2009
NEW YORK - A New York police cruiser driving ahead of US Vice President Joe Biden's motorcade struck another car in mid-town Manhattan Tuesday, injuring four people, city police said.
"At 1730 hours (2230 GMT) an advance element comprised of three police cars, lights and sirens operating, was traveling west on West 49th Street when the second of the three struck a Lincoln Town Car," New York Police Department Lieutenant Mike Wysokowski told AFP.
"It was not the vice president's motorcade," the officer stressed, noting that the police were running Biden's route "several minutes before the actual motorcade."
He said two officers and two occupants of the other car were hurt. He did not describe the injuries.
Wysokowski said he was not immediately aware of whether the accident affected Biden's travel.
The vice president was in downtown New York for a taping of satirical news program The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, where he made no reference to the incident, though he acknowledged that having the street cleared ahead of his motorcade was a welcome vice-presidential perk.
"Hell, I've never driven in New York with no traffic before," he said.
The crash is the third in a week involving the vice president's motorcade or Secret Service detail.
On November 11, the Washington Post reported that two cars normally part of Biden's detail hit and killed a pedestrian in Maryland.
On Monday, the Alberquerque Journal reported that a deputy sheriff escorting the vice-president's motorcade in New Mexico was hit and injured by a car.

ACCIDENT INVOLVING BIDEN'S ADVANCE TEAM (WABC)
WABC, November 18, 2009
NEW YORK (WABC) -- An accident involving an advance team for the Vice President's motorcade left two police officers and two others injured.
The accident happened at 10th Avenue and West 49th Street at 5:40 p.m.
Investigators say three unmarked police vehicles, with their lights and sirens on, were traveling ahead of the motorcade on the West Side. One of those police vehicles struck a taxi that had gone around traffic stopped because of the motorcade.
A passenger in the livery cab refused medical attention at the scene. The cab driver and two police officers were examined at a hospital and were released.
The advance team drives the motorcade route several minutes before the motorcade itself. Vice President Joe Biden was visiting New York City for a television appearance.
Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford said the motorcade continued on its route to the Comedy Central channel show's studio, a few blocks from the accident site.
In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.
Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraise for two New Mexico Democrats.

BIDEN'S SECURITY DETAIL SLAMS TAXI IN MIDTOWN (NBCNY)
NBC New York, November 18, 2009
Vice President Joe Biden was in midtown today for a taping of the John Stewart show, and his security detail hit a bit of a snag while paving his way to the show.
Three advance vehicles belonging to the NYPD were moving down 49th Street near 10th Avenue when they slammed into the back of a livery cab, officials said. The cars apparently had lights and sirens on at the time, officials said.
Four people -- two NYPD officers and two civilians -- were injured, NYPD spokeswoman Barbara Chen said.
Mr. Biden wasn't in the trail of cars at the time. His official motorcade was not affected and continued on as planned, the NYPD said.
Last week, two of the Vice President's official vehicles were involved in a tragedy outside of

Washington.
According to The Hill.com, two Secret Service employees struck and killed a man last Wednesday in the cars the agency uses to transport Biden.
The vehicles had just been flown back to the D.C.-area from Fort Lewis, Wash., where they had driven the vice president before and after he spoke to a crowd of troops for Veterans Day.

TWO NYPD OFFICERS INJURED IN VP MOTORCADE CRASH (NY1)
NY1, November 18, 2009
Two city police officers suffered minor injuries Tuesday during an accident involving the Vice President Joe Biden's motorcade in Manhattan.
It happened at 49th Street and 10th Avenue in Hell's Kitchen.
Officials say members of the Vice President's advance team collided with a livery cab.
The Vice President was not involved in the accident.
The police officers and the driver of the livery cab suffered minor injuries.
One witness says they saw the police escort but had no idea there was an accident.
"We got to the corner and we saw a bunch of bright lights. And next thing you know I see this. And then they pulling out the guy in this car that car and I'm like what happened?" said one witness.
Vice President Biden was on his way to tape an episode of "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

BIDEN'S POLICE ADVANCE CAR INVOLVED IN MIDTOWN CRASH (WINS)
WINS-AM New York, November 18, 2009
WASHINGTON (AP /1010 WINS) -- The Secret Service says a police advance car working ahead of Vice President Joe Biden's motorcade was involved in a traffic accident Tuesday evening in New York.
The car wasn't part of the motorcade and the vice president was unhurt. New York City police say two police officers and a livery cab driver were hospitalized with minor injuries.
The accident happened around 5:40 p.m. at West 49th Street and 10th Avenue.
Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford says the motorcade continued on its route.
Biden was headed to appear on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."
In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.
Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraise for two New Mexico Democrats.
Previously, on Nov. 11 in Washington D.C., a pedestrian was killed after a crash involving the vice president's motorcade.

VP BIDEN MAKES 6TH "DAILY SHOW" APPEARANCE (WDEL)
By Frank Gerace
WDEL 1150AM, November 18, 2009
Vice President Biden defends the Obama administration's economic policies on a late-night comedy show.
On Comedy Central's "The Daily Show", Biden told host Jon Stewart new job figures on the government's economic stimulus website, recovery-dot-gov, aren't wildly exaggerated.
Biden said the economy's turning around, thanks to the stimulus package, but job recovery will lag behind by about 12 to 18 months.
Biden's appearance on the show was his 6th, the previous one in August 2007, when he was competing with his current boss for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

BIDEN BOWS (HARTC)
By Roger Catlin
Hartford Courant, November 18, 2009
It was a weird coincidence that the two vice presidential candidates in last year's election were both being featured on TV interview shows. Sarah Palin, of course, was all over the airwaves, first on Oprah, and then with Barbara Walters and by the end of the week probably with your local meteorology team.
Then tonight, the elected vice president Joe Biden showed up on "The Daily Show with Jon

Stewart." Biden had appeared on the show before during the campaign (including the day he announced his candidacy for president) but he's never been on as sitting veep.
His role was mostly to defend the administration, with talking points about jobs coming around the corner, inheriting a big mess from the last administration, and how the stimulus money has been used. Just about the best moment was the beginning, when after a day of cable distress about the President bowing in China, Biden and Stewart both met each other with similarly deep bows.

ACCOUNTING FOR STIMULUS JOBS: BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR (WP)
Congress demands elusive figures, then expresses outrage over errors
By Alec Macgillis
Washington Post, November 18, 2009
Another day, another flurry of outrage over the jobs numbers claimed by the government for the administration's $787 billion economic stimulus program.
House Appropriations Committee Chairman David R. Obey (D-Wis.) released a blistering statement Tuesday, taking to task flawed data in the federal figures that show $160 billion in spending had created or saved at least 640,000 jobs.
His criticism came in response to two ABC News stories. The first reported that the administration deleted 60,000 jobs from its list after it became clear that the figures were overstated. Then, on Monday, the network reported that the government had claimed $761,420 in spending and 30 jobs created in Arizona's 15th Congressional District -- a district that does not exist.
"The inaccuracies . . . are outrageous, and the administration owes itself, the Congress and every American a commitment to work night and day to correct the ludicrous mistakes," Obey said. "We designed the Recovery Act to be open and transparent. . . . Whether the numbers are good news or bad news, I want the honest numbers and I want them now."
But it is worth asking whether the administration's problem stems primarily from its decision to provide the numbers in the first place.
From the start, the Obama administration framed the stimulus act as a job-creating initiative, saying that it would create or save 3.5 million jobs over the next two years. Skeptics noted that this would be a very hard number to verify -- after all, how can one know for sure whether a job has been "saved"? But the administration and congressional Democrats not only stuck with that number, they also promised an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability, saying they would require recipients of the money to report how it had been spent and how many jobs they created or saved with it.
More and more, it is looking like this approach may have been a strategic mistake.
It is exceedingly difficult for even the most conscientious government agency or contractor to calculate the jobs impact of a stimulus grant or contract. How can one know for sure whether a job would have been lost in the absence of stimulus money? If money helped cover someone's paycheck for only a few weeks or months, how should that be counted? If money has been allocated but will not be spent for several months, should its jobs impact be tallied now or later?
A close examination of the stimulus reports suggests plenty of instances in which the number of created jobs is being understated, as some recipients of multiple millions of dollars report that they have yet to save or create a single job.
Even advocates for government transparency wonder whether the Obama administration would have been better off not trying to provide actual job tallies, instead simply requiring clear reports on how the money was spent -- information that is more useful and reliable.
"I would not have framed it as a jobs bill or a jobs law, as they have done," Gary Bass, the director of the government watchdog group OMB Watch, said in a recent interview.
As it is, the administration has left itself open to near-daily assaults on the credibility of the jobs numbers. Finding flaws in the data is as easy as shooting fish in a barrel, and reporters have been all too happy to fire away -- first reporting the numbers with fanfare when they are announced, despite all their obvious shortcomings, and then, days or weeks later, reporting that they are not entirely sound.
The constant barrage of such stories may be taking a toll. In the new Washington Post-ABC News poll, 23 percent of respondents say they think the stimulus act has hurt the economy, and 39 percent say that it has made no difference.
The White House pushed back against Obey's statement Tuesday with a lengthy retort from Ed

DeSeve, the adviser to Vice President Biden who is in charge of implementing the stimulus. DeSeve argued that it was unfair to slight the administration for culling the 60,000 questionable jobs at the same time as it was being blamed for letting other questionable jobs slip through. The mistakes in the data have represented a sliver of the whole and often are clerical flubs that don't really touch on the heart of the reporting, he argued. "Transparency is going to be messy -- but it is better than the alternative," he wrote.

"It would be great if every report filed was correct the first time, on time, and contained no errors. But that's not realistic when 130,000 reports are being filed in a 10-day period," he said.

Chances are, there will be plenty more outrage-filled reports of faulty figures in the weeks and months to come. Republicans have asked the head of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, Earl Devaney, to appear Thursday before the House oversight committee. His task: to answer for the validity of jobs numbers that Congress demanded, only to now be surprised to find that they are less than perfect.

PUSH TO CURB CREDIT-CARD RATES FADES (BOS)
Democrats resist consumer outcry
By Michael Kranish, Globe Staff
Boston Globe, November 18, 2009

WASHINGTON - Efforts in Congress to cap credit-card interest rates are faltering because of opposition from Democrats and a lack of specific support from the White House, despite growing consumer outrage over a rush by banks to impose rates as high as 30 percent.

During the 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama vowed to back a strict limit on credit-card interest rates. But the White House is not yet behind any particular plan this year. While Obama has chastised credit-card companies, his spokeswoman declined to say this week how he planned to follow through on his campaign pledge.

Obama finds the behavior of credit-card lenders "outrageous" and "looks forward to reviewing additional legislation that caps interest rates," but he has not taken a specific position, spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Vice President Joe Biden, whose home state of Delaware is headquarters to many credit-card companies, did not respond to requests for comment.

The Senate soundly defeated legislation in May that was introduced by Senator Bernard Sanders, the Vermont Independent, to cap most credit-card interest rates at 15 percent. Nearly half of the Democratic senators joined Republicans in defeating the measure, 60 to 33.

Consumer groups say the problem of skyrocketing interest rates has only worsened since that vote, as banks scramble to boost rates in advance of a new rule scheduled to take effect in February, requiring banks to give consumers a 45-day advance notice of rate increases.

Sanders said many of the credit cards in the hands of American consumers are issued by four banks that received taxpayer bailout money after last year's economic meltdown: Citigroup, Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Wells Fargo.

"People are disgusted. We bailed these [companies] out and they then had the gumption to raise interest rates on the American people," Sanders said in an interview.

Sanders said he plans to reintroduce his proposal to cap rates at 15 percent; he predicted it will have more support this time. (Representing Massachusetts, Senator John F. Kerry supported the cap in May; the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who was fighting brain cancer, did not vote. Senator Paul Kirk, who took Kennedy's seat, has not declared a position on the issue, his spokesman said.)

But Sanders faces strong opposition from many Democrats, particularly those who have major credit-card business in their states. One prominent opponent, Senator Thomas R. Carper of Delaware, said in an interview that he understands the anger among consumers who have received letters from credit-card issuers informing them of big rate hikes. But Carper said he opposes any effort to cap the rates because it would hurt the ability of banks to charge higher rates to customers who have a greater risk of default.

"The question is, should banks be able to price for risk?" Carper said. "In a free market economy, I think they should."

Carper said that if consumers don't like the credit-card rates, they can pay off their balances and shop for a better rate from another company.

Senator Tim Johnson, a Democrat from South Dakota, another home to credit card companies, explained his vote against credit-card legislation in a May press release. The measure, he said, "could hurt South Dakota jobs and consumers."
The threat of another vote on Sanders's proposal is prompting companies to make a renewed push against caps. Bill Himpler, executive vice president of the American Financial Services Association, an industry trade group, said it is easy "from a populist standpoint" to embrace a cap on interest rates. But he said many firms could continue to offer credit if the rate was capped at 15 to 18 percent, as some have suggested.
"You lose money at 18 percent because it is a very labor-intensive business line to offer consumer credit," he said. "Where you cap rates you end up having credit tightened and the cost of credit being greater for the consumer."
The Consumer Federation of America, which worked to pass the 45-day advance notice requirement on rate hikes that takes effect in February, said it has not taken a position on the Sanders proposal.
"We want to give the law a little time to work," legislative director Travis Plunkett said yesterday. He warned that the federation would closely monitor to see if credit-card companies stop "the most abusive practices."
Senate Finance Committee chairman Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, who supported the 15 percent cap, has proposed legislation that would temporarily freeze certain interest rates, but only until February when the notification law takes effect.
For decades, many states had usury laws capping credit-card interest rates as low as 6 percent. But those rules were upended in 1978 by a Supreme Court ruling that a national lending company based in a state without a rate cap could charge any rate to customers who lived in a state with a cap. As a result, many credit card companies moved to states with lenient rules such as Delaware and South Dakota.
Biden, who served as Delaware's US senator from 1973 until last January, has long been noted for his ties to the credit-card business. Biden's top contributor has been MBNA Corp., a company based in Delaware that was a major credit-card issuer and was bought by Bank of America in 2005.
Biden received $214,000 during his Senate career from MBNA-related donors, according to the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

NORM: BIDEN FINDS RANK HAS ITS PRIVILEGES (LVSRJ)
By Norm Clarke
Las Vegas Review-Journal, November 18, 2009
Sometimes you make exceptions at a members-only golf club.
Especially if someone from the office of Vice President Joe Biden is on the telephone, calling back a second time with a more pointed request.
It happened Sunday morning at The Golf Club at South Shore, at Lake Las Vegas.
When the first call came in at 7 a.m., asking whether Biden could play the course, the PGA professional running the pro shop declined, citing the club's members-only policy.
A few minutes later, another call: a Biden staffer telling the club pro "you know the vice president would really like to play" and asked whether he could talk to a manager.
The club reversed its stand, and Biden arrived about 11 a.m. with a half-dozen Secret Service personnel.
"We came to our senses, out of courtesy of the position," said Mark Barrett, with a chuckle. He's the club's membership sales director.
Biden's visit "really created a buzz," said Barrett, a welcome boost after recent tough times at Lake Las Vegas.
Biden played 17 holes before heading to a fundraiser for Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev.
KIMMEL JOINS REGIS AND KELLY
Las Vegan Jimmy Kimmel returns home to join "Live! With Regis and Kelly" for a taping here.
Kimmel attended Clark High School and attended UNLV before embarking on a career path that led to his late-night talk-show with ABC.
Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa tape four shows in two days, starting Sunday, at Encore Theater at Wynn Las Vegas.

The first airing on Monday will include Mark Harmon of CBS' "NCIS," Kelly performing with the cast of "Le Reve, the new "Project Runway" winner and "America Idol" winner David Cook.
Tuesday features Kimmel plus a segment in which Kelly revisits the chapel where she and Mark Conseulo got married May 1, 1996, after eloping.
On Wednesday, Kelly visits the cast of "Love" at The Mirage.
After taking Thursday off for Thanksgiving, Regis and wife Joy on Friday debut their new album "Regis & Joy: Just You -- Just Me." They celebrate their 40th anniversary in March. Also on Friday: Regis takes a helicopter trip along the Strip on his way to the Grand Canyon, several chefs engage in a cook-off with turkey leftovers and Uncle Kracker performs.
MEDIA UPDATE
Former KVBC-TV, Channel 3, weatherman John Fredericks has told friends he's moving to North Carolina. Fredericks recently came under police scrutiny, according to KLAS-TV, Channel 8, and was told by police to stop making calls to a woman he met through an Internet dating service. ...
UFC fan favorite Stephan Bonnar and Andrea Brown, public relations director at MGM Mirage, were married Oct. 30 at a villa in Tuscany, near Siena, Italy. They met nine years ago in Chicago when he became a personal trainer and she was his first client. Bonnar became part of UFC lore on April 9, 2005, when he and Forrest Griffin staged what has been voted the greatest fight in UFC history. ...
Karin Firmani, orphaned at age 4 in Yugoslavia and adopted by an Italian family from Kenosha, Wis., won the meatball/pizza cook-off Tuesday at Ciao Ciao Apizza Angelato, 4460 S. Durango Drive. Judges included comedian Marty Allen, Anthony Crivello of "Phantom: The Las Vegas Spectacular," KVBC-TV, Channel 3, morning show host Kim Wagner and yours truly.
THE SCENE AND HEARD
"Peepshow" star Holly Madison and a Lucille Ball impersonator will take turns stomping grapes about 3 p.m. today at the annual Paris Las Vegas Beaujolais Nouveau celebration. They will play out a scene reminiscent of an iconic "Lucy" scene. The event coincides with the start of the traditional uncorking of Beaujolais in France. ...
Deal of the Day: Happy hour at SeaBlue, a Michael Mina restaurant at MGM Grand. Sunday-Friday, 5:30-7 p.m., half-price lobster corndogs, half-price calamari, $1 oysters, $1 gulf prawns, $2 draft beers (Stella Artois and Fat Tire).
THE PUNCH LINE
"Nearly had to pull out of campaign after spraining her winking muscle." -- From David Letterman's Top Ten Surprises in the Sarah Palin book

BIDEN TOUTS STIMULUS BENEFITS IN VEGAS (POL)
By Alexander Burns
Politico, November 18, 2009
Vice President Joe Biden, speaking at the Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, said the federal stimulus had provided 190,000 Nevadans with unemployment insurance, pumping $500 million into people's pockets through tax cuts and saving the jobs of about 4,000 educators in the state, according to a pool report of the event.
"In American history, in world history, there's only a handful of inflection points. We are at an inflection point in world history," Biden said at a fundraiser for Nevada Rep. Dina Titus, encouraging attendees to get involved in politics to "bend the arc of history - literally, bend it."
"In the next four to six years, our future will be determined for the next 40 years," Biden said. "This is a great chance, and this is going to be a tough slog. Next year, this is going to be the place where the decision will be made. Rome wasn't built in a day, but we've come a long way."
The vice president also was scheduled to participate in a roundtable at the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport - which has received $11.7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding to improve air travel - to boost the impact of stimulus spending on small-business lending, clean-technology investment, infrastructure projects and teaching jobs.
Titus, introducing Biden at the Atomic Testing Museum, praised Cash for Clunkers, the stimulus package and the first-time homebuyer tax credit.
"Even the old-timers are impressed so much is going on," she said. "It's not a time for the fainthearted."
In addition to the federal stimulus, Biden was giving a dose of vice presidential fundraising

stimulus to several vulnerable Democratic House members. In Phoenix, he was scheduled to attend a fundraiser for Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick and Harry Mitchell, and he was planning stops in Albuquerque, N.M., to boost freshman Reps. Harry Teague and Martin Heinrich.

BIDEN STOPS BY ALBUQUERQUE FOR A FUNDRAISER (NMI)
By Matthew Reichbach
The New Mexico Independent, November 18, 2009
Vice President Joe Biden appeared in Albuquerque for a fundraiser for potentially vulnerable Democratic Congressmen Martin Heinrich and Harry Teague on Monday. Congressman Ben Ray Lujan was in attendance but was not a focus of the fundraising.
Biden spoke for a little more than half an hour at the Hotel Albuquerque, according to a pool report by Albuquerque Journal writer Dan Boyd. The "about 100? attendees paid $1,000 to attend the event.
"They're good Democrats, but they also have heads of their own and minds of their own and it seems to me that's what you guys produce out here," Biden said, speaking of Heinrich and Teague.
The two Democrats are a part of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's Frontline Program, a program designed to help vulnerable Democratic candidates win re-election.
The state Republican party issued a statement saying that the fundraising event showed that Teague was "desperate" because Republican candidate Steve Pearce outraised Teague in the 3rd quarter of 2009. Teague still has more cash on hand.
"To the detriment of New Mexico families, Representative Teague has delivered votes that further the left-wing agenda of Nancy Pelosi and the Obama administration," Republican Party of New Mexico executive director Ryan Cangiolosi. "Today, Vice President Biden is returning the favor by helping Mr. Teague fill his campaign coffers safely outside Teague's district where many of these policies are unpopular."
In a separate statement, the party noted that Heinrich had attacked his Republican opponent for not reimbursing the county for $5,000 incurred for security for a fundraising event headlined by then-President George W. Bush.
More from the pool:
Biden said both representatives are fighting to better the lives of middle-class families, and contrasted that with Republican members of Congress who he described as believers in Wall Street.
"I know what the Republicans are against," he said. "I haven't figured out what they're for."
"Change really has come to Washington," Teague said. "But we still have a lot of work ahead of us."
"It is incredible to have someone there who not only knows the last names of heads of state, but actually knows them," Heinrich said of Biden. Biden served as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee while a member of the Senate.
Biden also addressed the financial crisis that has been a source of concern for many Americans.
"We inherited a black hole this country had fallen into," he said. "I don't think anybody knew how deep this recession was at the time."
Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, House Speaker Ben Lujan, D-Santa Fe, former Oklahoma senator Fred Harris, New Mexico Democratic Party Chairman Javier Gonzales and former U.S. ambassador to Spain Ed Romero were all also in attendance according to the pool report.
This wasn't the first fundraiser for Biden, who has attended 26 fundraisers for Democratic House members so far this year according to Hotline. Tomorrow, Biden will be at a more public event - the Vice President will be on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart. It will be the first time a sitting Vice President has appeared on the show, though it will be Biden's sixth appearance overall.
Biden appeared in Mesilla, New Mexico last year during the Presidential campaign.
Part of Biden's motorcade was involved in an accident, according to the Albuquerque Journal.
"Police say a woman drove around two police units blocking the intersection and hit a car driven by a sergeant with BCSO," the paper reported on their blog.
In 2006, a Rio Rancho police motorcycle officer that was part of a George W. Bush motorcade was involved in a fatal crash in Albuquerque. Print

BIDEN RETURNS TO STATE TO GIVE DODD CAMPAIGN MAXIMUM ATTENTION (NHR)
By Mary E. O'Leary
New Haven Register, November 17, 2009
For the third time this fall, U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., is getting personal attention from the top echelon of the Obama administration as he faces his toughest re-election in 30 years.
Vice President Joseph Biden will come to Hartford Dec. 11 to stump for Dodd at a $500 a plate luncheon fundraiser at the Connecticut Science Center.
This comes two months after Biden shared a platform at the Fairfield Park and Ride with the senator, where the vice president drew attention to the use of federal stimulus money for a nearby Merritt Parkway project.
President Barack Obama then headlined a $1,000 a plate fundraiser for Dodd in Stamford on Oct. 23. The event raised $1 million for the Democratic Party, Dodd's re-election and for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.
"The vice president and Senator Dodd worked hand-in-hand on so many issues throughout the years, and he knows first-hand how hard Chris has worked for the people back home in Connecticut.
"We expect this event to be an entertaining one, with a lot of good-natured ribbing, as well as some serious talk about the work Chris is doing for the people of Connecticut and the country, while partnering with President Obama and Vice President Biden," said Jay Howser, Dodd's campaign manager.
The latest Quinnipiac University Poll said voters disapproved 54 percent to 40 percent of the job Dodd is doing.
In a head-to-head match-up with Rob Simmons, Dodd would lose 49 percent to 38 percent, while also losing to newcomer Linda McMahon, 43 percent to 41 percent.
A total of five Republicans are vying for the GOP nomination to run against Dodd, and Dodd either loses or ties in theoretical match-ups with all of them, although 49 percent to 88 percent of the voters say they don't know enough to offer a favorable or unfavorable opinion about them.
The senator, as chairman of the Banking Committee, is advancing financial regulation and credit card reforms, while also leading the fight on health care - all of which are top priorities for the Obama administration.
The poll found 56 percent of the voters support giving people the option of being covered by a government health insurance plan, which Dodd has been championing, but for those whose major concern is the economy, the poll found they favor a Republican candidate.
The poll has been criticized by Dodd supporters as over-representative of registered Republicans and unaffiliated voters and for not tapping likely voters who are more likely to cast a ballot in 2010.
At this point in the race, they are not as concerned with the head-to-head outcomes, but there is expected to be an increased effort among women and unaffiliated.
The high profile fundraisers are good for bringing in money, but don't necessarily translate into voter support.
The Quinnipiac University Poll found 75 percent of the voters said Obama's visit doesn't make a difference on how they will vote on Dodd.

AS KARZAI STARTS NEW TERM, DOUBTS GROW THAT HE'LL FINISH (MCT)
By Dion Nissenbaum
McClatchy, November 18, 2009
KABUL, Afghanistan - On the eve of Afghan President Hamid Karzai's swearing-in for a second term, speculation is growing that he could be forced to step aside before he finishes his next five years in office.
The challenge before him is monumental: Regain the trust of voters disenchanted by the fraud-tainted election that returned him to power, assure frustrated world leaders that the billions of dollars spent trying to stabilize Afghanistan haven't been wasted or stolen and, with the help of U.S. and NATO forces, recover control of large parts of the country from Taliban fighters.
The 51-year-old president has to please contradictory forces to survive: the discredited Afghan political allies who helped him win re-election, and the international community, which is demanding an end to cronyism and to pervasive government corruption.
Karzai has to assure President Barack Obama quickly that he has a credible partner if Obama

decides to send as many as 40,000 more American soldiers to the fight in Afghanistan.
Karzai will have to help build a competent Afghan military capable of battling emboldened insurgents who now are operating in much of his country. He also has to contain a thriving opium industry that's the source of 90 percent of the world's heroin supply, often with the complicity of corrupt officials and police officers.
"It would take a miracle," said Abdullah Abdullah, the one-time foreign minister who abandoned a planned runoff against Karzai earlier this month because of concerns that the second round of voting could be as tainted as the first round was. "And, as Muslims, we don't believe miracles are possible now."
"The leadership in Afghanistan is getting more and more oblivious to the situation on the ground," Abdullah told McClatchy. "It's becoming obsessed with its own ideas, which are out of touch with reality."
The mood at the inauguration Thursday at the presidential palace is likely to be decidedly more somber than it was five years ago, when then-Vice President Dick Cheney led a high-profile delegation to Kabul as Karzai became Afghanistan's first democratically elected president.
Vice President Joe Biden, who has a strained relationship with Karzai, won't attend. Few world leaders are planning to fly to Kabul for an inauguration that will take place under heavy security, bracing for potential Taliban attacks.
Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the highest-profile American leader who's expected to take part in the inauguration, warned Karzai last weekend that the United States might suspend civilian aid to Afghanistan unless he takes new steps to prevent the money from being squandered or stolen.
With Karzai chafing at the international pressure, Obama's advisers are divided over how much support to offer the Afghan president.
Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal, America's top military commander in Afghanistan, has warned Obama that the United States could lose the war against the Taliban unless he agrees to send as many as 40,000 more soldiers over the next year.
However, some administration officials are reluctant to pursue an Iraq-style "military surge" until they're convinced that Karzai will match it with a "political surge" capable of restoring a measure of confidence in the Afghan government.
Chief among the skeptics is U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, a retired Army general, who's raised reservations about a major infusion of troops without a commitment from Karzai to fight corruption.
Eikenberry outlined his concerns Monday when he joined top Karzai ministers in unveiling a new anti-corruption task force in Kabul.
"Ordinary Afghans must be convinced that the powerful can no longer exploit their positions to make themselves wealthy while the less fortunate struggle to find work and to feed their families," Eikenberry said.
"The appearance of luxurious mansions around Kabul with many expensive cars ... surrounded by private armed guards, is a worrisome sign that some Afghans are cheating their people while claiming to be in their service."
Eikenberry and American officials in Kabul have been working quietly with Karzai to ensure that discredited Afghan leaders don't dominate his next Cabinet.
American and Afghan officials told McClatchy that the U.S. had given Karzai a list of 40 people whom it considered clean enough to be part of the new Cabinet. However, Karzai also faces pressure to reward shady political allies who helped him win re-election. Should he fall short of U.S. demands, some expect the Obama administration to push the Afghan president from power long before his term ends.
Sarwar Mohammed Roshan, who served as Karzai's campaign manager when he ran for president the first time, said the U.S. might have to support a caretaker government eventually to replace Karzai.
"If we don't do something drastic, believe me, we will be sorry," said Roshan, who suggested that adding more troops now would be counterproductive. "Bringing in more troops and keeping the status quo would create the impression that the Americans are making Afghans kneel before this (Karzai) gang."
Ashraf Ghani, the former finance minister who challenged Karzai for the presidency this year, echoed those concerns.

"Hamid Karzai assumes his second term as president without a honeymoon," Ghani wrote in a recent opinion piece for The Guardian newspaper in London.
"He faces a crisis of both domestic and international confidence," Ghani wrote, "and has the option to become either a statesman or an outcast."
MORE FROM MCCLATCHY
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ABC'S NIGHTLINE ADMITS THEY'RE IN TOWN FOR JOE ARPAIO'S SWEEP, DENIES COORDINATION; AND GRAFFITI ON JOE'S JAI (PNT)
By Stephen Lemons
Phoenix New Times, November 18, 2009
Joe claims ABC just happened to be in town when the sweep started in this Channel 3 piece
Following up on my blog post of yesterday, wherein I quoted sources telling me that Arpaio's latest anti-immigration sweep was done with an out-of-town film crew in mind, specifically one from ABC national news, I finally got a rep from ABC on the horn. She confirmed that a crew from ABC Nightline was in Phoenix for the sweep, but denied that the dragnet had been staged for ABC's purposes.
"No, not at all," replied Nightline spokeswoman Alison Bridgman of the allegation. "We were already there. We've done profiles of Sheriff Joe in the past. This was already arranged."
Bridgman explained that an interview with Arpaio had been scheduled for Monday, and that the news show learned of the sweep while on the ground in Phoenix. She said Nightline correspondent Martin Bashir did the interview with our corrupt top constable. So far, there's no air date for the piece, according to Bridgman.
During his press conference yesterday, Arpaio copped the same line when someone asked him about ABC being along for the ride.
from Joe's Twitter
Well, it's only saying what everyone thinks...
"Oh, so I arranged this because ABC is here?" asked Joe, rhetorically. "The answer is no, we happened to be here. And they're smart enough to know that they may want to film the sheriff."
Thing is, ABC could be on the level, and Arpaio, not. Would it surprise anyone that Arpaio's PR hacks made sure the ABC interview was planned for a day a sweep was to begin? Or orchestrated one just because a big media outlet was swingin' by?
See, I know Arpaio tipped off others that there would be a sweep, and that ABC was flying in. Everything was set in stone as of last week. If that ain't a fix, I don't know what is.
Arpaio's credibility sunk to an all-time new low after he claimed on his Twitter account yesterday that he'd had a meeting with Vice President Joe Biden, who'd flown in to Phoenix to pimp the effect of the stimulus on job creation. According to Biden's deputy press secretary Annie Tomasini, Arpaio showed up uninvited to a meeting Biden had with local Democrats at the Wyndham Hotel. All he got was a handshake in the hallway as Biden was leaving.
Which makes me wonder about this new Joe Tweet where he claims that one of his buildings has been tagged with an obscenity. (Specifically, the Sheriff's office property building, part of his vast incarceration complex.) Arpaio maliciously suggests that activists protesting his news conference may have done it.
Puente leader Salvador Reza scoffed at this latest piece of Joe baloney, denying responsibility on behalf of his movement.
How do we know this isn't another fake story our two-faced sheriff's shilling? (Joe does have a pic on his Twitter page, which I've reproduced above.) I'll have to drive down to Durango to check it out, and, hopefully, compliment the artist.
Makes me wonder: How secure can Joe's jails be if you can walk right up to one of his secure buildings and spraypaint humongo letters on the side? What's to keep someone from sticking a ladder up there? Sheesh.

ARPAIO LAUNCHES NEW IMMIGRATION SWEEP (YWV)

By Mike Sakal And Bill Bertolino
YourWestValley.com, November 18, 2009
Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio launched a two-day crime-suppression and illegal-immigration sweep on Monday, as dozens of protesters lined a south Phoenix street close to where the sheriff outlined the plans at a crowded press conference.
It is the second such operation since the federal government stripped Arpaio of street-level immigration patrols under the direction of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
Arpaio contends he still can seek to identify illegal immigrants during street patrols using state laws against human smuggling and sanctions for employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants.
The sheriff said his office plans to target semi-trailers and other load vehicles along alternative routes Valleywide, where human smugglers could be attempting to avoid checkpoints, such as those along Interstate 10 and Interstate 17, en route to drop houses.
"We are also noticing a significant change in travel routes," Arpaio said. "State highways still remain the main travel paths for smugglers and their co-conspirators, but more and more vehicles are being apprehended at alternative, out-of-the-way routes."
Arpaio said anyone who films the stops along the interstate, including what he described as "open-borders groups," would be arrested, saying it is illegal to stop and stand unless it's an emergency.
"These open-borders activists will be warned only once," he said.
Dozens of protesters along Lower Buckeye Road stood with signs carrying statements, such as "We are human" and "I will not be bullied."
During the press conference, Arpaio downplayed questions about whether he was grandstanding while Vice President Joe Biden and the national media were in town. Biden spoke in Phoenix Monday morning about the national economy.
"This is just another example of Arpaio's lack of respect for the Obama Administration and he continues to thumb his nose at the administration," said protestor Lydia Guzman, president of SOMOS America. Guzman was among a group of protestors across the street from the entrance of the MCSO training building.
"Arpaio's sweep was nothing but political posturing," she said.
Mercedes Mercado-Ochoa, a member of the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens, said she believes Arpaio is doing the sweeps just to impress the national media in town.
"He's spending so much taxpayer money on these crime sweeps that it's not funny anymore," she said. "He should be held accountable to the taxpayers for the amount he is spending on these sweeps."
The sweep will entail 200 members of Arpaio's volunteer posse and reserves, as well as sheriff's office deputies. Helicopters will also assist in the operation, which Arpaio said will have a "substantial focus" on the crime of human smuggling.
This is Arpaio's 13th crime sweep. Since March 2006, the sheriff's office reports it has arrested a total of 3,532 human-smuggling suspects or illegal immigrants.
The sheriff's sweeps have drawn criticism that Arpaio's deputies racially profile people. The U.S. Department of Justice is investigating Arpaio's office over allegations of discrimination and unconstitutional searches and seizures.

AP TURNS HEADS FOR DEVOTING 11 REPORTERS TO PALIN BOOK 'FACT CHECK' (FOX)
By Robert Shaffer
FOX News, November 18, 2009
Reviewing books and holding public figures accountable is at the core of good journalism, but the Associated Press' treatment of Palin's book seems an unprecedented move at the wire service
Sarah Palin is no normal politician, and at the Associated Press, apparently "Going Rogue" is no normal book.
When the former Republican vice presidential candidate and former Alaska governor wrote her autobiography, the AP found a copy before its release date and assigned 11 people to fact check all 432 pages.
The AP claims Palin misstated her record with regard to travel expenses and taxpayer-funded bailouts, using statements widely reported elsewhere. But it also speculated into Palin's motives for writing "Going Rogue: An American Life," stating as fact that the book "has all the characteristics of a pre-campaign manifesto."

Palin quickly hit back on a Facebook post titled "Really? Still Making Things Up?"
"Imagine that," the post read. "11 AP reporters dedicating time and resources to tearing up the book, instead of using the time and resources to 'fact check' what's going on with Sheik Mohammed's trial, Pelosi's health care takeover costs, Hasan's associations, etc. Amazing."
The AP, an organization with over 4,000 employees and 49 Pulitzer Prizes earned for asking the hard questions, wouldn't comment on their own reporting for this story.
Reviewing books and holding public figures accountable is at the core of good journalism, but the treatment Palin's book received appears to be something new for the AP. The organization did not review for accuracy recent books by the late Sen. Ted Kennedy, then-Sen. Joe Biden, either book by Barack Obama released before he was president or autobiographies by Bill or Hillary Clinton. The AP did more traditional news stories on those books.
The attraction to Palin doesn't appear to be partisan, since AP didn't fact-check recent political tomes by Republicans Rudy Giuliani or Newt Gingrich.
The AP, however, regularly writes "fact checks" for major political speeches, such as a September health care speech by President Obama.
Doug Underwood, a University of Washington journalism professor who covered Washington politics in the late 1970s for Gannett, said Palin brings some negative attention on herself with a history of bad interviews and misstatements. In addition, the press cannot ever be perfectly consistent or fair, he said.
Still, the media treated Biden and Palin differently, he said.
Biden's book "Promises to Keep" became an instant best-seller when he was chosen to be Obama's running mate, but was not fact-checked by the AP and only received passing interest. In a story last year on Biden's Vietnam War draft deferments due to asthma, the reporter notes Biden didn't mention the malady in his book.
Palin is not the standard presidential possibility for 2012, Underwood said.
"She's a figure who's a politician, but also a part of popular culture," he said.
Palin supporters believe 11 reporters poring over every word of her book is excessive- and further proof of the media's obsession and maltreatment of the hockey mom from Wasilla.
"They're obsessed with trying to discredit her," said Adrienne Ross, New York state organizer for the 2012 Draft Sarah Committee. "Because she's a conservative woman, they make fun of her accent, comment about her looks. She doesn't come in the package they want her to come in."

WHAT TO WATCH (WP)
By Garance Franke-Ruta
Washington Post, November 18, 2009
-- President Obama started his Wednesday in Beijing, on what was Tuesday night in Washington, by sitting down with reporters from CBS, CNN, Fox and NBC. He also met with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. In the evening, he departs for Seoul.
-- Back in the Eastern time zone, first lady Michelle Obama takes her nutrition and health messages to Hollin Meadows Elementary School in Alexandria in the morning, highlighting the Agriculture Department's Healthier U.S. School Challenge.
-- It's also a day for the first and second ladies to focus on the White House's military families project. Jill Biden stuffs packages and speaks at the first "USO Care Package for Women" party, at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill in the morning. In the afternoon, she and the first lady will host a gathering at the White House celebrating women in the military. Veterans and current servicewomen will be joined there by Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. James Cartwright, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their wives, and other military and administration officials.
-- The Labor Department releases the consumer price index for October, and the Commerce Department releases the October housing-starts report.
-- The Senate Judiciary Committee at 9:30 a.m. holds an oversight hearing on the Justice Department. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. testifies.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL NEWS CLIPS

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WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Biden Leads In New Senate-race Poll (WILNJ)

By Cris Barrish, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

For the first time, an independent poll shows Attorney General Beau **Biden** leading U.S. Rep. Mike Castle in a hypothetical matchup for the Senate seat long held by **Biden**'s father.

At least four previous polls made public since March had shown Republican Castle, who has declared his candidacy, leading Democrat **Biden** by 1 to 21 percentage points. **Biden** has not announced his candidacy, but has said he is seriously considering running.

But the poll released this week by Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc. of Harrisburg, shows **Biden** leading 45 percent to 40 percent, with 6 percent choosing another candidate and eight percent undecided.

The latest results were based on a single question about a race pitting Castle, the former two-term governor and nine-term congressman, against **Biden**, a first-term attorney general. Vice President Joe **Biden** held the seat from 1973 through January, when he resigned to be Barack Obama's running mate. Then-Gov. Ruth Ann Minner appointed Joe **Biden**'s longtime aide, Ted Kaufman, to the post. Kaufman will not seek the seat.

The poll was taken Nov. 10-15 with 850 registered Delaware voters who voted in the 2006 or 2008 general election. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.36 percentage points. It's one of dozens, perhaps hundreds that would be conducted over the next 12 months if **Biden** faces Castle in a race that would be closely followed across the nation and hotly contested by both parties.

James Lee, Susquehanna's president, said that while participants were not asked reasons for their preference, it could stem from news coverage about Beau **Biden**'s recent return from Iraq, where he spent a year as a National Guard lawyer. Lee also said Castle's recent "no" vote on the House health reform bill -- cast the weekend before polling -- might have cost him support.

"Castle's vote against the health care plan may have solidified some of the Democratic vote for Beau **Biden**," Lee said. Noting that polls in October showed Castle's lead eroding, Lee said the new one shows that "ultimately this race would tighten as Democrats start to come home."

Neither Beau **Biden** nor Castle would comment on the newest poll results.

Castle also could face a GOP primary against Christine O'Donnell, who ran unsuccessfully for the Senate in 2006 and 2008 and has said she plans to run again.

In the current poll, both candidates are widely favored by their own parties. Republicans favored Castle 72 percent to 17 percent, and Democrats liked **Biden** 65 percent to 21 percent. **Biden**'s support among Democrats increased since Susquehanna's April poll, when it was only 52 percent for him, versus 36 percent against.

Democrats hold a substantial lead in voter registration over Republicans in Delaware, 286,282 to 180,039, according to the state Department of Elections.

Castle also dropped among voters who classified themselves as independent, a number that totals 142,315 in Delaware. He led almost 2 to 1 in Susquehanna's April survey, but only held a 5-point margin in the new poll.

Eric Schultz, spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, said he never "puts too much stock into polls 12 months from the election, but the new polls shows it's going to be a big battle with both sides all in. This poll shows that Castle is vulnerable."

Castle, who first ran for public office in 1966, has never lost in 15 Delaware elections -- for state House, state Senate, lieutenant governor, governor and since 1992, the U.S. House. Additional Facts

LATEST POLL

The poll, taken Nov. 10 to 15, surveyed 850 registered Delaware voters who voted in the 2006 or 2008 general election.

Attorney General Beau **Biden**: 45%

U.S. Rep. Mike Castle: 40%
6 percent chose another candidate; 8 percent were undecided
Margin of error: +/- 3.36 percentage points
Source: Susquehanna Polling and Research Inc. of Harrisburg

Casino Developers Roll Dice (WILNJ)

By Maureen Milford, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

As Delaware considers whether to expand casino gambling in the state, the developers who put together the deal that became the $429 million Harrah's Chester Casino & Racetrack in nearby Chester, Pa., are buying waterfront land in Wilmington for a casino project.

Kevin Flynn, a real estate developer in Philadelphia and George Miller, a lawyer-entrepreneur in Atlantic City who worked with Donald Trump, have signed a sales contract on 20 acres overlooking the Christina River on the Seventh Street peninsula, Flynn said. He declined to give the price but said the sale is contingent on the passage of state legislation to allow additional venues, approval from the city and the resolution of issues related to access from I-495.

"We've looked all over Wilmington and this was the best site," said Flynn, a principle with F&M Peninsula Properties.

Earlier this decade, Flynn and Miller were among a trio that bought the land in Chester, got zoning approvals, secured a harness racing license, worked for gaming legislation in Pennsylvania and brought in the Las Vegas casino giant, Harrah's Entertainment Inc. They still own a portion of that project, which opened nearly three years ago.

For Delaware developers, F&M ups the ante in any potential horse race for a casino in Wilmington.

"These guys are not just local guys. They're the real deal," said Larry Tarabicos, attorney for F&M. "Kevin and George have done this before -- there's nothing that needs to be done in Wilmington that they haven't done before in the city of Chester. No one else to date that surfaced can say the same thing. These guys are not speculators."

A handful of other real estate developers have been working behind the scenes to position their Wilmington sites for consideration should the state decide to move beyond its three existing racinos. What all the sites share in common is proximity to one of the city's rivers.

Gambling in Delaware is currently limited to the horse racing tracks in Dover, Harrington and Stanton. Until this summer, gambling was limited to slot machines at those venues. The General Assembly legalized sports betting and table games and is studying whether to allow them at other sites.

Some legislators have said they want to expand gambling to sites in Sussex County and Wilmington.

Wilmington landowners, including Flynn, said they are waiting for the findings of the Sports and Video Lottery Commission. The panel, created by the same law that permits sports betting and legalized table games, is charged with studying the impact of additional casino venues in Delaware.

"We're hoping the involvement of a legitimate casino developer might have some impact on the outcome," Tarabicos said.

The commission will not give thumbs up or down to additional casinos, but will lay out the economic impact of more venues, said Joe Rogalsky, spokesman for Gov. Jack Markell. The report to lawmakers is not expected to be completed until the beginning of January, Rogalsky said.

If the report finds a positive impact of the casinos, Markell and lawmakers would have to talk about "how to get there with legislation," Rogalsky said.

For existing landowners it could mean hitting the jackpot.

"There's no question a casino would be a desirable use for anybody," said Frank Acierno, a real estate investor who has roughly 17 acres off Governor Printz Boulevard near the Delaware River.

While Acierno said at this point he's not actively pushing his site, located across the highway from the vacant Merchants Square shopping center, he said there have been discussions with the city. Insiders said the project would need to be annexed into the city.

Acierno said he's also talked to officials at the Las Vegas casino organization controlled by gaming impresario Steve Wynn.

"It's not my business," Acierno said of gaming.

Greg Pettinaro of Pettinaro Enterprises in Newport, who owns a roughly 22-acre parcel on A Street in Southbridge, said his property could make a good casino site. His has no definite plan, at this point, but is waiting for the commission report and legislation, he said.

"It's definitely something we'd consider. When we know the criteria, we'll evaluate it and see if it's worth taking a run at," Pettinaro said.

Pettinaro said he might partner with a gaming company.

Another potential casino site, on A Street, is one first unveiled in 2003. A six-acre parcel on the south side of the Christina River just east of the Walnut Street Bridge, was part of a proposed hotel and slot-machine casino called Riverfest Slots.

Since then, some of the players in the development have changed, but landowners South Bank Associates, which includes Wilmington investors Hunter Lott and Denis O'Sullivan, would like their site to be considered if legislation is passed, Lott said. South Bank bought the former six-building Krapfcandoit property on A Street in 2001.

"We'll probably engage somebody to do economic analysis for us," Lott said. "We want to be able to be considered at the same time as everybody else."

Another site being discussed is the former NVF property on Maryland Avenue and Beech Street. Jerome Heisler Jr., one of the owners, declined to comment. But city officials said Heisler has met with Mayor James M. Baker.

The Seventh Street property secured by Flynn and Miller encompasses land that had previously been proposed for a gaming entertainment playground in 2005. Known as Diamond Point, it called for a hotel, slots casino, dinner theater, restaurants, shops and a public marina.

Now, Peninsula Ventures VIII LLC, which includes lawyer Andrew Aerenson, is selling a portion of its property to Flynn and Miller, Aerenson said. He said Peninsula Ventures would still retain an interest of the Flynn-Miller project.

"I think [Flynn and Miller] are probably going to look at something different now," Tarabicos said.

Flynn said he has not finalized any plans, but "has a lot of ideas."

"I think everybody's interested in having their site selected. I know we'll be ready," Aerenson said.

After Nearly 25 Years, NCCo Superior Court Judge Stepping Down (WILNJ)

By Sean O'Sullivan, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

WILMINGTON -- There will be a vacancy on New Castle County Superior Court at the end of this month while, at the same time, U.S. District Court in Wilmington will be marking its third year short a judge.

Superior Court Judge John E. Babiarz Jr. has notified Gov. Jack Markell of his intention not to seek a third term Nov. 25, when his term expires.

Babiarz, 68, currently the state's longest-serving Superior Court judge, was appointed to the bench in 1985 and re-appointed, in 1997.

It will now be up to Markell to select a successor - who will be a member of the Democratic Party to maintain the political balance on the Delaware bench -- and submit that name to the state Senate for approval.

"I am proud and gratified to have been a part of this court and to have participated in every aspect of its work. I hope that I have made a contribution," wrote Babiarz in his letter to Markell.

Babiarz told Markell that Superior Court is "the most challenging jurisdiction in the court system," noting its important role in civil and criminal law - including death penalty cases -- and its role as an appellate court for state administrative agencies and local government.

Babiarz did not indicate his future plans in the letter and could not be reached for comment Tuesday, but Markell spokesman Joe Rogalsky said the judge has agreed to stay on until his replacement is seated.

The search process already is under way and today is the final day for applicants to submit their names to the state's Judicial Nominating Commission. Rogalsky said the governor hopes to have a name for the Senate to consider by January.

Before joining the bench, Babiarz was a private practice attorney who was a partner at Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnel and served as the president of the Delaware Trial Lawyers Association.

Meanwhile, a block up the street from New Castle County Superior Court, the federal court in Delaware still is waiting for someone to be named to fill the vacancy created by the departure of Judge Kent A. Jordan in December 2006 to the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals.

Politics and inaction by Democrats and Republicans in Washington have kept the seat empty for three years and there seems to be little urgency in the Capitol to make the Delaware court whole again.

Former U.S. Attorney Colm F. Connolly, a Republican, had been named as Jordan's replacement by President George W. Bush, but that nomination was never acted on by the U.S. Senate and expired at the end of Bush's term in 2008.

Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., submitted three names of Democrats to the White House in May, but the Obama administration has yet to send a nominee forward to the U.S. Senate for confirmation. There also have been no reports of the White House starting a background check for a nominee -- as is reportedly happening to fill the position of U.S. Attorney for Delaware.

The three people who are believed to be up for consideration are federal Magistrate Judge Leonard Stark, attorney Andre Bouchard and attorney Mary B. Graham.

There are only four district judges in Delaware so the absence of one has a significant impact.

Many civil cases have been delayed and despite assistance from surrounding federal courts, which have taken on some of Delaware's civil cases to ease the load, federal court calendars in Delaware are packed with proceedings sometimes starting as early as 6:30 a.m. and often ending well past 5 p.m.

At least one judge's civil calendar for 2010 already is full.

While the Delaware federal judges are receiving some help on the civil side, they are not for criminal matters where three -- Chief Judge Gregory M. Sleet and District Judges Joseph J. Farnan and Sue L. Robinson -- continue to handle the work of four.

And looming as an additional burden for the court is that one of the three, Farnan, is eligible for retirement in June.

Neither Carper's office nor the White House offered an explanation on why it is taking so long to fill the vacant position on the federal bench in Delaware. According to the administrative offices of the U.S. Courts, there are 98 federal judicial vacancies across the country, including the one in Delaware, with nominations for 19 of those vacancies, including the one in Delaware, pending from the Obama administration in the U.S. Senate.

Carper's office issued a brief statement indicating that the senator has made it clear to the White House the importance of getting a nominee to the Senate to fill the vacancy soon.

Plugging In To Sun's Power (WILNJ)

By Jeff Montgomery, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

In a new sign of solar energy's burgeoning clout, a study has concluded that Newark and the University of Delaware could affordably tap rooftop sunlight for more than three-quarters of daytime power needs using readily available equipment and financing.

The finding appeared in a study dubbed "Creating a Solar City," led by the university's Center for Energy and Environmental Policy (CEEP).

Using maps and aerial photos, researchers found thousands of Newark-area rooftop surfaces suitable for solar panel grids. By conservative standards, the combined areas could generate as much 96.4 megawatts, displacing up to 76.3 percent of city and university daytime consumption, and 32 percent of 24-hour average needs.

"We made it clear in the report that the potential is there," said John Byrne, CEEP director. "The project is financeable. It's cost-effective to do in Newark. Whether you can do it on the scale of the United States is another question." The study's authors recommended small steps initially, although the overall venture was described as "well within the ability" of residents, businesses and the university. Installation of 10 megawatts over the next five years, about 10 percent of the potential envisioned in the study, would meet Newark's share of Delaware's current minimum solar energy target for the year 2019.

"If people went to even modest energy conservation, plus solar, what the study points out is that it's well within the grasp of most cities to be self-sustaining," said Ken Becker, a financial expert and solar company founder who reviewed the report. Use of a third-party installer or utility would shield residents and businesses from up-front financing costs, he added.

The center study was the latest in a series of looks at renewable energy options, an effort sponsored by the Public Service Commission and state public advocate. Past studies have looked at everything from solar power for poultry houses to more-aggressive use of energy conservation contracts for government buildings.

Delaware -- ranked eighth nationwide last year based on per-capita installations of solar photovoltaic systems -- has seen a recent surge in solar projects and proposals. The rush led to cutbacks in utility rebate programs, prompted by worries that a years-long backlog for payments would only worsen as solar demand grows.

High public rebates and tax credits, supportive state policies and spillover from New Jersey's huge solar electricity installation market all have contributed to Delaware's standing, officials said. The state's small size also distorts its ranking, however, with a 10 megawatt project noticeably increasing Delaware's per-capita use.

Recent major installation proposals include a planned 10 megawatt solar farm in east Dover that would supply 2.3 percent of the capital city's needs, with a possibility of additional output from adjacent industrial rooftops. The University of Delaware earlier this year announced a 6 megawatt minimum solar goal under its plan to to reduce the greenhouse gas toll of its energy consumption.

Across the country, solar projects made up 13 percent of all utility company generating proposals this year, up from 6 percent in 2008, according to the Edison Electric Institute, an industry group.

"It's real. It works. The technology is out there. It's off-the-shelf," said Monique Hanis, spokeswoman for the Solar Energy Industries Association. "In the Mid-Atlantic states, it's very plausible."

Newark Electric Department director Sam Sneeringer was less bullish.

"It will be a long time before you could get everyone on. I don't know how it would work when it gets to the point where everyone has a system," Sneeringer said.

Newark Councilman Stu Markham, who had an energy-saving geothermal heating and cooling system installed in his home last year, said he wanted to know more about the findings. A city-sponsored rebate program to support solar and other clean energy investments, he said, already has a several year backlog.

"Certainly we're interested in solar and other alternative energy sources," Markham said, adding that he was speaking only as one council member. "But we don't have the money to invest right now. We have a severely tight budget."

Patricia J. Brill, a retired nurse and longtime resident of Nottingham Manor, said she supports pursuit of clean energy, but wants more questions asked.

"I'm all for anything that can save energy, but I live in a very densely shaded neighborhood, and people like trees here," Brill said. "I'd love to see it, and if we can make it work, I'm totally for it, but I'd want to know more about how practical it is in Delaware."

The CEEP report noted that its calculations were based only on rooftops and surfaces with the best exposures to sunlight. Potential electricity yields could prove even higher if solar panels are installed in other workable but less than perfect areas.

A full-on solar rooftop campaign, the report cautioned, could swamp current subsidy programs, driving down the value of renewable energy credits. Those credits are bought and sold by utilities, helping to hold down the final price of solar installations.

At current rates, typical solar rigs for individual homes could cost from $10,890 to $17,626, with paybacks ranging from 7.5 to 12.5 years, depending on subsidy rates. A large-scale, 250 kilowatt commercial system could cost as much as $516,000, but would pay for itself in 5.5 to 8 years.

Brian C. Yerger, a consultant and analyst with AERCA Advisors in Wilmington who evaluated the CEEP report, said the fact that the financing worked out means the Newark project is feasible.

"It was financeable. That obviously goes a long way to making it practical and realistic," he said.

Rep. John Kowalko, D-Newark, said the idea should be explored.

"If we can get the investment money for the initial solar installation, it would have two benefits -- it would save money in the long run and it would provide another way to separate us from dependency on fossil fuels," Kowalko said.

State law currently obliges utilities to gradually increase use of solar, with a goal of covering 2 percent of needs through sunlight by 2019 -- or about 175 megawatts for all suppliers combined across the state.

Newark's share of the 2019 solar renewable goal would be about 10 megawatts, based on the city's portion of Delaware's population, the study noted. Local officials could start out with 10 megawatts, half the size of Dover's announced project, and gradually expand.

"If city planning embraced such goals for its own building stock, a 10 megawatt distributed solar power plant would serve nearly 10 percent of the community's daylight hours electricity needs," the report noted.

The state's new Sustainable Energy Utility, Byrne said, is seeking proposals for "sustainable community" renewable energy ventures that bundle individual proposals.

The bundling approach could make it easier for owners of a large block of large commercial buildings or farming groups to jointly invest in rooftop solar, wind or geothermal energy projects and qualify for subsidies.

State farm organizations already have shown interest in bundled or cooperative efforts to put wind and solar rigs around cropland or other idle property.

Scott Johnson, co-founder of Wilmington-based SolarDock, said that renewable energy and solar prospects are changing fast.

The Department of Energy has estimated that solar now accounts for less than 1 percent of the state's overall production, and will remain too costly for large, utility scale use.

Byrne said that the race to develop plug-in hybrid electric vehicles like those envisioned for Fisker Automotive's Boxwood Road plant could mean more markets for solar.

Carport-type charging stations equipped with rooftop panels could be deployed to give a daytime shot of juice to car users who otherwise would have to find a plug-in station or wait for overnight charge-ups.

Yerger, the financial adviser, said that hitching Newark to sunlight on a large scale could prove tricky.

"You'd have to have a lot of people on board," Yerger said. "But these projects are eminently more viable on a smaller scale."

SEU Discusses Buying Dover Solar Credits (WILNJ)

By Aaron Nathans, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

NEWARK -- The Sustainable Energy Utility is expected to spend millions to buy renewable energy credits from a large Dover solar installation.

The SEU, the state-created, nonprofit energy efficiency organization, is negotiating a contract under which Delmarva Power would assume the purchase of the credits from a Dover solar park operator at the same price in about six years. Delmarva would also buy out the credits already purchased by the SEU.

The SEU Oversight Board met Tuesday at the University of Delaware, discussing the Dover Sun Park, which has been described as the first utility-scale solar power plant on the East Coast north of Florida. The plant will be built on 90 acres of the Garrison Oak Technology Park, owned by the city of Dover.

Dover is expected to buy all of the electricity generated by the installation, which is expected to deliver between 14,000 and 19,000 megawatt hours per year, when it turns on late next year or in 2011.

Solar power is generally more expensive to produce than power generated from a fossil fuel burning plant. So to make solar more cost-effective, for each unit of electricity created by a solar installation, the owner also gets a credit to sell on the open market.

Utilities can buy the credits to fulfill their state-mandated renewable energy power purchase requirements.

LS Power of East Brunswick, N.J., is building the solar project, and is negotiating with Delmarva Power, Delaware's municipal utilities and the SEU to buy the renewable energy credits generated by the project.

"We're thrilled to be a significant partner in the development of this solar power plant here in Delaware," said Bridget Shelton, Delmarva spokeswoman. She said negotiations between LS and Delmarva are close to concluding.

Delmarva is required by state law to buy about one-hundredth of one percent of its electricity load from solar sources this year. That percentage increases steadily each year, and goes up sharply in 2016. By 2019, Delmarva will need to buy 2 percent of its load from solar sources.

One of the SEU's chairmen, John Byrne, said the idea behind the SEU's purchase of the credits is to make sure Delmarva still needs to buy more solar credits from other sources between now and 2016.

That will help make it possible for Delaware homeowners and small business owners to put up solar installations, he said.

The SEU is still negotiating the purchase price for the credits, Byrne said. A typical price for credits from a large project would be $250 to $275 per megawatt hour, he said.

The SEU will buy 20 percent of the solar park's credits, meaning the annual value of the SEU's purchase in the early years could be $700,000 to $1 million, declining as the solar panels become less effective with time.

Residents Eager To See Plans For Columbus Inn (WILNJ)

By Adam Taylor, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

WILMINGTON -- Louis Capano III, who bought the Columbus Inn earlier this year, recently brought the chef for the restaurant he plans to re-open soon to a community meeting.

Capano said he was surprised to learn that residents eager to learn about his plans for the property would have been happier if he had brought a land-use planner instead.

The landmark Pennsylvania Avenue restaurant dates to 1789 but has been closed for two years. Capano figured his plan to re-open the popular eatery in a few months would be welcomed with open arms, then he would figure out what he would do with the rest of the parcel in a few years.

But now, thanks to a change in the city's land-use plan last year, Capano has an immediate battle on his hands with City Council and some of the property's neighbors.

"I don't even want to fight," he said. "All I'm asking for is a little time, and I'd like to preserve my property rights while the rest of the property sits."

That's not how things will take place.

City officials and residents, still smarting from a plan by a different developer two years ago that almost saw a 10-story condominium tower rise on the property, want to know right away what his plans are for the rest of the property. And they want to link approval for a re-opening of the restaurant to a plan that would prohibit such a large building.

When Councilmen Paul Ignudo and Steve Martelli left the Nov. 9 meeting with Capano and the chef dissatisfied, they sent an e-mail to residents asking them to attend Tuesday night's Wilmington Planning Commission meeting to support a zoning change for the non-restaurant portion of the property that would limit the use to single homes.

The e-mail also suggested that residents oppose the zoning variances Capano needs to re-open the restaurant, which will be decided separately by the city's zoning board.

"We should seriously consider, as a community, whether or not we should support a use-variance for a property owner that is already not willing to work with the neighborhood," Ignudo's and Martelli's e-mail said.

The reason a variance is needed for the restaurant is that the old Columbus Inn restaurant was always a nonconforming use in a residential neighborhood. City law requires that the nonconforming use status be renewed if a business is vacant for more than a year.

The issues surrounding the property pre-date Capano's purchase, beginning in 2007 when the property's then-owner Davis Cezna reached a sales agreement with Ocean Atlantic Associates. At that time, Ocean Atlantic announced plans to demolish part of the restaurant and put up the condo tower. The plan outraged many neighbors who said the building would be out of character with the neighborhood.

In response to that plan and other large projects in the Delaware Avenue, Trolley Square, 40 acres and Highlands neighborhoods, city officials scampered to rezone the entire area to prevent more big development proposals. The rezoning package was passed last year. The new zoning designations essentially call for smaller, less-dense uses of properties in the area.

But because the plans for the condo tower at the Columbus Inn property were filed before the changes were approved, the plan was allowed to proceed. City officials did include language in the rezoning specific to the Columbus Inn property stating that if the Ocean Atlantic deal fell through, the property's zoning allowing for large apartment buildings would be changed to prohibit them.

When Ignudo learned in August that Ocean Atlantic had backed out of the deal with Cezna, he introduced an ordinance that would change the zoning to allow for nothing larger than single or twin homes on the site. Ignudo said the purpose of the new zoning is to prevent a plan for another 10-story condo tower, now or in the future.

"This has nothing to do with Mr. Capano's proposal," Ignudo said. "It's about preserving the property in a way that is consistent with the rest of the neighborhood."

The planning commission, while reviewing Ignudo's ordinance last month, gave Capano 30 days to meet with the community. The hope was for a successful negotiation that would allow Capano to re-open the restaurant and build something on the rest of the site that all parties could agree on.

Since that effort failed, the commission Tuesday night attempted a compromise, voting to recommend that Council approve a zoning designation that would allow for an apartment building of up to five stories. Council could vote on that as early as next month.

Residents Susan Collins and Harry Haon object to that, saying that only single or twin homes are appropriate.

Capano isn't prepared to make a choice now and wants to keep the current zoning status intact to preserve his options.

"The community has been dealing with this for years, but I've only been dealing with it for days," he said. "In time I think I will come up with a plan that the community will be comfortable with. But I'm not building in the near future, and I just don't know what that plan is yet."

High-density Development Gets Closer To Reality (WILNJ)

By Angie Basiouny, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Residents battling a high-density development proposed off U.S. 202 in Talleyville were dealt a blow Tuesday when New Castle County gave two recommendations for the project to move ahead.

The county Department of Land Use and the Planning Board agreed the 15-acre site, to be named Columbia Place at Garden of Eden Road, should be rezoned to accommodate a greater number of dwellings.

County Council still must give the ultimate approval, but the nods from the department and the board bolster developer Jerome Heisler's plan to buy the land from the Pilot School and convert it into an age-restricted community with a mix of 149 single-family homes, two-story town houses and condominiums.

Residents in adjacent Tavistock and Edenridge III are worried about how the proposed density of 10 units per acre -- higher than any of the surrounding neighborhoods -- will affect the character of the community and the quality of life.

Nearly a dozen residents voiced their concerns in a public hearing earlier this month that lasted more than two hours. The nine appointed members of the Planning Board followed up Tuesday with more than an hour of debate over whether they should follow the positive recommendation offered by Land Use. They voted 4-3, with one member abstaining.

"I'm torn," said Planning Board member Victor Udo, explaining why he did not vote. "On one side, I think it's a good project, but on the other side I think the density is too much."

Residents said their fight isn't over yet.

They will continue working to persuade the 13 council members to oppose the rezoning when it comes before them for a vote, likely in January. Without a rezoning from "suburban" to "suburban transition," Heisler will be limited to a density of about 1.25 dwellings per acre.

"We're disappointed with the outcome," said Jim Higgins, who lives in Edenridge III. "We really believe ... this is dropping urban development in a suburban area."

At least one councilman, Robert Weiner, whose district includes the site, has said he will vote against the rezoning in support of his constituents.

Heisler declined to comment Tuesday.

He said previously that he believes Columbia Place is a good fit for the area already marked by heavy retail and residential. Land Use and Planning Board members agreed Tuesday, saying the project follows the county's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, which calls for infill development along nearly built-out corridors such as U.S. 202.

"In general, I feel like if we can't do this type of development here in this area, where can we do it?" longtime board member Mark Weinberg said.

Weinberg voted in favor of the rezoning but said it was "one of the most difficult" decisions he's ever made, partly because of the well-articulated arguments made by the residents.

The Pilot School wants to relocate about a mile north and needs to sell the land to do so. Heisler did not disclose the amount of money the school is seeking, but he told county officials he needs the density to make the deal work.

Officials said the financial issues between Heisler and the school were irrelevant in researching whether the project should be granted greater density.

Higgins said hearing the lengthy debate was an eye-opener for the residents. The project is considered a redevelopment, which means Heisler is entitled to density bonuses offered under a county law devised several years ago to encourage developers to stay away from building on pristine land.

Higgins said residents need to be more involved with elected leaders in the crafting of land-use legislation.

"One of the big lessons of all of this that I'm learning is that we in the civic community all fall down on the job by not being on top of this stuff as the rules are written," he said.

Unemployment Benefits Extended For 14 Weeks (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Out of work Delawareans will be eligible for an additional 14 weeks of unemployment benefits after the state implemented an extension approved by the federal government last week.

"These benefits will help Delawareans who have been hit hard by the national economic recession get back on their feet," Gov. Jack Markell said in a statement Tuesday.

The extension allows residents to collect benefits for a maximum of 93 weeks, an extension from the previous 79-week maximum. Anyone whose unemployment benefits had run out can qualify for the extended benefits. The extension will be federally funded.

Information regarding eligibility is available at www.delawareworks.com or by calling the Unemployment Insurance Information Hotline at 761-6576 for New Castle County residents and (800) 794-3032 for Kent and Sussex county residents.

Working Together For Young Ones (WILNJ)

By Edward L. Kenney, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

With three early childhood centers -- and another on the way if the upcoming referendum passes -- the Appoquinimink School District has buttressed with action the belief that children should start learning well before grade school.

But it has not stopped there. Rather than wait for children ages 3 to 5 to enroll in the centers, district leaders have developed an outreach program that trains Middletown-area day care providers to give the children an even earlier head start.

"In the past, the school district and the community providers sort of passed [like ships] in the night, so to speak, yet we're all sharing the same kids," said Sandra Cohee, principal at the Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center. "We give them a more in-depth view of what we do at school. This has opened up a conduit of information."

Cohee, the leaders of the other two early childhood centers and an educational diagnostician make up the leadership in a newly formed Preschool Coalition Committee that plans training for the day care providers.

The district has worked with the providers informally for the past 10 years, beginning when the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center opened its doors as the first such center in the district, she said.

But this year marks an effort to give the initiative better structure, a move necessitated both because of district growth and the growing number of day care centers in the Middletown area, now about 15.

"There are other districts that are doing similar things, but not as formalized as we are doing it," Cohee said. "It's a great idea. And it really has opened up communication, so we are on the same page as the providers."

"Developing this liaison helps to build a bridge," added committee member Lucia Weathers, assistant principal at the Townsend Early Childhood Center.

Licensed day care providers are required by state law to receive 18 hours of training a year in subjects such as classroom management, parental involvement, developing fine and gross motor skills, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Providers usually have to pay for that training, but the district offers it free, holding sessions as part of evening dinner meetings that have drawn as many as 75 day care people.

Meetings are held every two to three months and are assigned a training theme, Cohee said. One scheduled for January will be about discipline.

Rene Nolen, the principal at the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center and a member of the Preschool Coalition Committee, said the district also can teach things that will help the children with social skills such as sharing and teamwork, paving the way for the more academic lessons to come.

"Then when they get here, they're ready for reading and words and counting," she said.

"The kindergarten year is so critical," added fellow committee member Kathy Gertley, a district educational diagnostician who used to go out on her own to the day care centers before things got better organized. "It just sets them up for success in their educational career.

"We want them to instill in them the love of learning," she said of the day care providers.

As an owner of the Kiddie Academy childcare center in Middletown, Susan Tudor appreciates the training the district is giving her 20 teachers.

"It's a good opportunity to get those hours and not have to pay for it," she said. "In early childcare, it's definitely not a career you go into to make money. As a business owner, I wish I could say I will pay for all your training, but I can't afford it."

Tudor also likes what the teachers are taking away from the training, which cannot help but benefit the 115 children at her day care center.

"I think it helps educate my teachers, giving them different ideas," she said. "They can kind of feed off each other. I think it gives them a chance to grow together. It keeps my teachers fresh and aware of what's going on out there."

Said Weathers, "Those centers know that we value what they do, and just knowing that helps them to keep coming back."

Back To School, But In A Different Dress (WILNJ/AP)

By Alan Clendenning, Associated Press

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

SAO PAULO -- Brushing back freshly dyed blond hair as she posed for pictures, the Brazilian woman whose short pink dress got her kicked out of college said Tuesday she's enjoying her newfound fame, but wants go back to school -- with a security guard.

Just the day before, 20-year-old Geisy Arruda took her first trip on an airplane so she could relive her experience in a comedy skit on one of Brazil's most popular television shows.

Star-struck business executives on the flight to Rio de Janeiro asked if she really was Geisy, then used their cell phones to snap pictures of themselves with her.

It was heady stuff for a 20-year-old freshman from a blue-collar industrial suburb who says she just wants to get a tourism degree so she can fulfill dreams of working for a resort or a cruise line someday.

She'd already appeared on two of Brazil's top interview programs, recounting how she was hounded from the campus of Bandeirantes University in October by male students yelling "Whore! Whore!" and was then expelled by school officials.

The private university, which doesn't have a conservative reputation, backtracked amid a national uproar and said last week she was welcome to return for her regular routine of night classes.

But Arruda's lawyer says she won't go back until she's promised a well-trained security guard to accompany her on campus.

Wearing a black halter top with dressy eggplant-colored satin shorts for an interview with the Associated Press, the daughter of a cleaning company supervisor and a housewife beamed after finding out the AP is an American news agency.

"How cool!" she gushed just before the start of the interview in her lawyer's office.

Then to the photographer as she adjusted her lengthy tresses and took a last look at her brightly painted red nails: "Hey guy, do I look pretty?"

She said she's still stumped that an outfit, no matter how short, would cause such an uproar in a tropical nation where skimpy clothing and tiny bikinis barely raise an eyebrow.

And she again denied the university's claim that she paraded provocatively and raised the dress, resulting in the expulsion.

Arruda said one young man said he liked her looks, then more joined in. Soon other students loudly proclaimed they wanted to have sex with her, snapping pictures with their cell phones. Hundreds were drawn to the scene, creating a sort of mob mentality, Arruda said. Chants of "Whore! Whore!" erupted from the mob as she was escorted from the university in a borrowed white lab coat.

"It was total terror," Arruda recalled. "And the worst thing was that I had no idea why it was happening."

"I think they just didn't want to study and this was fun for them, the big happening at school for the year, and I was just the joke of the year," Arruda said.

Arruda said she had worn the dress to classes once before, in March, with no reaction. Arruda said she chose the dress because she was heading to a birthday party with friends after class.

After fleeing the campus in tears, she hasn't returned. A spokeswoman for the university said Tuesday that students who scared and ridiculed her in the near riot won't be expelled.

Arruda is convinced her future is in tourism, and now she might get a job more easily, whether she eventually graduates from Bandeirantes University or not.

Above all, she said, she wants to make more money to help her parents move from the roughly built concrete block home they expanded bit by bit over the years to accommodate a growing family after moving to Sao Paulo from Brazil's impoverished northeast about 30 years ago.

Arruda thinks it's a funny twist of fate that she became famous in Brazil and across the planet after her story went wild on the Internet.

"I still can't believe it," she said. "It's like a real strange, stupid movie."

Even Santas Starting To Guard Against Swine Flu (WILNJ/AP)

By Holly Ramer, Associated Press

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

CONCORD, N.H. -- Forget cookies and milk. Santa wants the swine flu vaccine.

Many of the nation's Santas want to be given priority for the vaccine, and not just because of those runny-nosed kids. There's also the not-so-little matter of that round belly. Research has suggested obesity could be a risk factor.

Swine flu has become such a concern that the Amalgamated Order of Real Bearded Santas featured a seminar on the illness at a recent conference in Philadelphia. The group also urged its members to use hand sanitizer and take vitamins to boost their immune systems.

The president of the organization said he also hopes parents will keep sick kids away.

"We don't want any child to go without seeing Santa, but it's not worth bringing your child to the mall, infecting the Santa and infecting the other children," Nicholas Trolli said.

He recalled a boy who informed him last year that he had a fever and had stayed home from school. But, the child said, his mother thought it was a good day to visit Santa.

Ernest Berger, president of another group called Santa America, asked an Alabama congressman last week to designate Santas a priority group for the swine flu vaccine, like health care workers or infant caregivers.

A spokesman for Republican Rep. Jo Bonner confirmed Berger's request and said staff members were looking into it.

Berger hopes Santas will use hand sanitizer and encourage children to do the same, without turning the experience into a hygiene lecture.

"It's a delicate balance here. This is not an exercise in health care. This is visiting Santa," he said.

Berger estimates that about two-thirds of all American Santas are overweight, and about a third are morbidly obese.

That raises health concerns because some research has suggested obesity could be a risk factor for severe swine flu.

A high proportion of those who have gotten severely ill from swine flu have been obese or extremely obese. But health officials have also said that might be due to the fact that heavy people tend to have asthma and other conditions that make them more susceptible.

The 200 or so Santas who volunteer to visit sick or grieving children through Santa America will be washing their suits daily instead of weekly and will not be wearing gloves this year so they can wash their hands frequently, Berger said.

John Scheuch of Prairie Village, Kan., said he might suggest to parents that they come back another time if a child is visibly ill.

"The kids are in the strollers, sniffling and coughing and hacking. ... In the meantime, they're interacting with other kids in line."

Scheuch, executive director of Santa America, has taken some personal precautions.

"I've had my H1N1. I've had my seasonal flu shot. This is my year for my pneumonia booster," he said. "I don't know what else I can do except encapsulate myself in plastic."

In Nashua, N.H., hand-sanitizing stations have been set up around the Pheasant Lane Mall, including just outside the picket fence surrounding the Santa Claus area. But on a recent Saturday, not one of the dozen or so families who passed through used it.

Susen Mesco, owner of American Events and Promotions in Denver, Colo., said her Santas will be changing gloves every three hours and washing them in anti-bacterial soap.

Dr. Jack Turco, director of health services at Dartmouth College, said Santa might consider greeting children from a few feet away rather than holding them on his lap, or asking children with coughs to stand in a separate line.

"If we take this really seriously, and I think we should because people are dying, it wouldn't be inappropriate to say this is a year maybe we shouldn't do these mass gatherings," he said.

Abundance Of Food Drives Makes It Easy To Help Needy For Holidays (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

With a little more than a week to go before Thanksgiving, and requests for help more numerous this year, the Delaware Food Bank says it is running at about the same donation level as last year, thanks to some big food drives.

Collections by the University of Delaware, Chase, Wilmington Trust, Sallie Mae, Sodexo, DART and the Delaware Air National Guard, among others, have helped keep the shelves and freezers full for Thanksgiving baskets and dinners, said Kim Kostes, spokeswoman for the food bank.

DART's Stuff the Bus campaign saw a big increase in donations, up to 29,152 pounds of food from last year's 18,687.

The food bank, soup kitchens and other ministries that feed the hungry still need turkeys and other items for Thanksgiving dinners and baskets, with a lot of turkey and food drives set for the weekend and Monday to make the holiday deadline.

All say they are experiencing dramatic rises in need because of the continued effects of a depressed economy. At the Ministry of Caring's Emmanuel Dining Room on North Jackson Street, the number of baskets that area residents have signed up for has risen to 1,000 this year from 750 last November.

Here are the ongoing food drives The News Journal has been notified about so far, with new notifications at the top. If your organization is conducting a food drive, please send information about it, including daytime contact phone numbers for drive organizers, to features@delawareonline.com. We welcome Christmas food drive information, but will not print it until after Thanksgiving.

Ministry of Caring

WJBR's Turkeython to benefit The Ministry of Caring will be from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday Vans will be on site at the Pathmarks on Kirkwood Highway, Concord Pike and People's Plaza in Glasgow to collect birds, boxed stuffing and canned goods. Between the three sites, the group hopes to raise 1,000 turkeys. For more information, call 765-1160.

Delaware City Fire Company

The fire company's food drive will be Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will benefit the Delaware Food Bank.

Non-perishables may be dropped off at the Delaware City Fire House at 815 Fifth St., Delaware City through Sunday. For more information, call 834-9336.

Delaware Military Academy

The academy will hold a turkey drive Saturday between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and cadets will man a drive-through drop-off site at the campus, 112 Middleboro Road, near Banning Park. This is the second year the academy has collected turkeys that will be donated to Amvets Post 100 for needy military families.

In addition, the cadets have collected items and will be preparing military care packages to be sent to military troops serving abroad. For more information, call 998-0745.

UD Student Government Association

On Thursday and Friday, the Student Government Association at the University of Delaware is sponsoring a Thanksgiving food drive. Collection on Thursday will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the gallery at the Perkins Student Center. On Friday, donations can be dropped off from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30

p.m. at Multipurpose Room C in the Trabant University Center and in the Collins Room at Perkins. All donations will go to the Food Bank of Delaware.

Bear Library

The Bear Library hosts an ongoing food collection for the Delaware Food Bank. Nonperishable food items are accepted during regular library hours, which are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday through Saturday; and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. The library is at 101 Governor's Place in Governors Square Shopping Center. For more information, call the reference desk at 838-3300.

Sunday Breakfast Mission

While Sunday Breakfast Mission leaders report strong response to a WSFS food drive and cash donations, the Wilmington charity had only three turkeys left last week. The mission distributes food boxes to needy families just prior to Thanksgiving, and leaders said they need 1,200 for their Great Thanksgiving Outreach.

Turkeys can be delivered to the mission at 110 N. Poplar St. For more information, call 652-8314.

Harvest Market Natural Food Store

Since June, the Harvest Market Natural Food Store in Hockessin has been making weekly donations of fresh and nonperishable foods to local food banks and shelters. For the month of November, the store has partnered with the Sunday Breakfast Mission to incorporate the donations with additional gifts from customers for the Thanksgiving drive.

Nonperishable donations are accepted all week, and fresh donations may be brought to the store each Wednesday. The store, at 7417 Lancaster Pike, is open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the week and from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday. It is closed Sunday.

Norman Oliver/NOR Enterprises annual turkey drive

Donations of turkeys and nonperishable food, such as stuffing mix and other side dishes, will be collected Tuesday through Tuesday, when they will be distributed to needy Wilmington residents. The drive, more than 25 years old, has a goal of 2,500 turkeys this year.

Donations can be dropped off at NOR Enterprises offices at 1213 B St. in South Wilmington. For more information, call 655-8250.

Giant Food drive

Area Giant Food stores have launched their 22nd annual Good Neighbor Food and Funds Drive.

Through Dec. 31, customers will have an opportunity to donate money or nonperishable food at the cash registers to benefit the Food Bank of Delaware.

Giant allows customers to add $1, $3 or $5 donations to their grocery bills.

The store provides collection carts for food items for the food bank.

Wilmington Jaycees turkey drive

The Wilmington Jaycees hope to provide a full Thanksgiving meal -- turkey included -- for 500 of the city's neediest families through the West End Neighborhood House.

But corporate support in these trying times has been hard to get, so they are asking anyone who gets a free turkey through grocery store points to donate the $14 they would have spent on a turkey so a needy family can have a happy Thanksgiving.

Donations can be made via Paypal at this link: http://wilmingtonjaycees.com/ Donate-A-Turkey.htm

Pump It Up Turkey Jump

Pump It Up, an indoor inflatable party facility, will hold a Turkey Jump to benefit the Food Bank of Delaware on Nov. 25.

From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. that day, anyone who brings a nonperishable food item to donate to the food bank will get $1 off the admission price of $8 for the open, non-reserved playtime.

For more information, go to www.pumpitupparty.com.

Friends of Newark Library drive for Food Bank of Delaware

The Friends of the Newark Library maintain an ongoing food drive for the Food Bank of Delaware. Collection barrels are next to the circulation desk.

They accept canned meats, peanut butter, pork and beans, canned soups and stews, fruit juice, beverages, instant breakfasts, canned vegetables, canned beans, canned fruits, rice and rice mixes, pasta and pasta mixes, powdered milk, evaporated milk, powdered creamer, pancake and waffle mix, baking mixes, cooking oils, condiments and powdered or liquid baby formula. They also accept diapers, toothpaste, mouthwash, dental floss, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, bar soap, liquid hand soap and paper products.

They will not accept baby food or homemade foods.

For more information, go to http://friendsofthenewarkfreelibrary.webs.com/fooddrive.htm

Basket Brigade of Delaware

With a goal of 2,000 turkeys, the group is sponsoring a turkey drive, with drop-off locations at all Seasons Pizza locations, and a virtual turkey drive on http://basketbrigadeofde.org.

Those who drop off a turkey at Seasons Pizza will receive a coupon for a free medium pizza. Those who donate $15 or more online will be entered in a drawing for two Eagles tickets, including sideline pregame passes, for the Dec. 27 game against Denver. The drawing will be held on basket delivery day, Nov. 23.

Police Dog Dies After Tumor Is Diagnosed (WILNJ)

By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Bandit, a New Castle County policed dog that was rushed to the University of Pennsylvania Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital after becoming ill, was euthanized Monday after being diagnosed with a inoperable brain tumor, police said Tuesday.

The 6-year-old German shepherd suddenly became ill Sunday night and immediately was hospitalized, county police Senior Cpl. Trinidad Navarro said.

Doctors discovered Bandit had an inoperable tumor on his brain stem.

Because of the dog's dire condition and the fact he was suffering, he was euthanized, Navarro said.

Bandit was surrounded by his handler Cpl. Paul Chickadel, family and friends when he died.

Navarro said the last time Bandit worked was Saturday night.

In 2008, Chickadel and Bandit were assigned to the A-Squad. The pair assisted in numerous money sniffs that resulted in $32,445 in seizures in drug investigations.

The pair handled 389 canine calls for service last year and also supported patrol in making four arrests.

In June, the team was certified in narcotics detection, tracking and patrol work by the National Police Canine Association.

Bandit served on the county police force for four years.

Navarro said arrangements have not been finalized for a memorial service.

Meanwhile, the condition of police dog Diablo, who was wounded last week in the line of duty, remains stable and unchanged, Navarro said.

Diablo developed pneumonia and is recovering from surgery in the hospital's intensive care unit.

Working Together For Young Ones (WILNJ)

By Edward L. Kenney, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

With three early childhood centers -- and another on the way if the upcoming referendum passes -- the Appoquinimink School District has buttressed with action the belief that children should start learning well before grade school.

But it has not stopped there. Rather than wait for children ages 3 to 5 to enroll in the centers, district leaders have developed an outreach program that trains Middletown-area day care providers to give the children an even earlier head start.

"In the past, the school district and the community providers sort of passed [like ships] in the night, so to speak, yet we're all sharing the same kids," said Sandra Cohee, principal at the Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center. "We give them a more in-depth view of what we do at school. This has opened up a conduit of information."

Cohee, the leaders of the other two early childhood centers and an educational diagnostician make up the leadership in a newly formed Preschool Coalition Committee that plans training for the day care providers.

The district has worked with the providers informally for the past 10 years, beginning when the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center opened its doors as the first such center in the district, she said.

But this year marks an effort to give the initiative better structure, a move necessitated both because of district growth and the growing number of day care centers in the Middletown area, now about 15.

"There are other districts that are doing similar things, but not as formalized as we are doing it," Cohee said. "It's a great idea. And it really has opened up communication, so we are on the same page as the providers."

"Developing this liaison helps to build a bridge," added committee member Lucia Weathers, assistant principal at the Townsend Early Childhood Center.

Licensed day care providers are required by state law to receive 18 hours of training a year in subjects such as classroom management, parental involvement, developing fine and gross motor skills, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Providers usually have to pay for that training, but the district offers it free, holding sessions as part of evening dinner meetings that have drawn as many as 75 day care people.

Meetings are held every two to three months and are assigned a training theme, Cohee said. One scheduled for January will be about discipline.

Rene Nolen, the principal at the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center and a member of the Preschool Coalition Committee, said the district also can teach things that will help the children with social skills such as sharing and teamwork, paving the way for the more academic lessons to come.

"Then when they get here, they're ready for reading and words and counting," she said.

"The kindergarten year is so critical," added fellow committee member Kathy Gertley, a district educational diagnostician who used to go out on her own to the day care centers before things got better organized. "It just sets them up for success in their educational career.

"We want them to instill in them the love of learning," she said of the day care providers.

As an owner of the Kiddie Academy childcare center in Middletown, Susan Tudor appreciates the training the district is giving her 20 teachers.

"It's a good opportunity to get those hours and not have to pay for it," she said. "In early childcare, it's definitely not a career you go into to make money. As a business owner, I wish I could say I will pay for all your training, but I can't afford it."

Tudor also likes what the teachers are taking away from the training, which cannot help but benefit the 115 children at her day care center.

"I think it helps educate my teachers, giving them different ideas," she said. "They can kind of feed off each other. I think it gives them a chance to grow together. It keeps my teachers fresh and aware of what's going on out there."

Said Weathers, "Those centers know that we value what they do, and just knowing that helps them to keep coming back."

Police: Liquor Store Clerk Fatally Shoots Would-be Robber (WILNJ)

By Ira Porter, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

One of two men trying to rob a Wilmington liquor store Tuesday night was shot and killed by a store clerk who exchanged fire with the bandits in the store.

Police Master Sgt. Steven Barnes said the man killed in the 9:30 p.m. gunfire at Favor's Liquor Store, 1020 N. Walnut St., was able to exit the store and stagger 30 feet along a sidewalk before collapsing. Paramedics treated him, and he was rushed to Christiana Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 10:15 p.m.

The second holdup man fled on foot and police were using a dog to try and track him in the area near the store along 10th and 11th streets.

The clerk, said to be in his late 50s or early 60s, was being interviewed at police headquarters. Police said they found a .22-caliber handgun in the store that they think was left behind by one of the men attempting the robbery.

Two women were in the back of the store at the time of the robbery, but police do not know if they witnessed the crime.

Police said two men wearing masks entered the store brandishing handguns and ordered the clerk to hand over money from the register. They then rounded the counter in an attempt to get at the register and grab the cash themselves.

But the clerk also had a gun and opened fire, striking one of the masked men and forcing both to flee. Police do not know if the other gunman was hit during the exchange and were checking to see if any other gunshot victims show up at local hospitals.

Passers-by asked police about what happened as traffic was blocked off between 10th and 11th on Walnut.

A woman, who did not want to give her name, said she frequents the store, and the clerk is a "nice man."

"He usually has good deals on his cigarettes and beer," she said. "If someone tried to rob his store what was he supposed to do? He had to protect himself."

Police did not release the identities of the clerk or the man who died in the incident.

Middletown Chase Ends In Man's Arrest (WILNJ)

By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

A 19-year-old Townsend man was arrested Monday night after he allegedly stole a car outside a Townsend convenience store and led police on a pursuit through Middletown.

State police charged Vincenzo A. Tollis, 19, of Walnut Street, with felony reckless endangering, motor vehicle theft, disregarding a police officer's signal, resisting arrest, reckless driving, driving while suspended, habitual offender and nine other traffic offenses.

The incident unfolded about 6:38 p.m. outside Townsend Valero Shore Stop at 4235 Dupont Parkway. The car's owner left her 1996 Pontiac Bonneville running in the parking lot while she ran into the store to buy a pack of cigarettes, said state police spokesman Senior Cpl. Jeff Whitmarsh.

Tollis allegedly jumped into her running car and took off.

Police issued a general broadcast to be on the lookout for the car, which was spotted a short time later by some probation and parole officers who were in the Arby's parking lot on U.S. 301 in Middletown.

The probation and parole officers started following the car, which turned into Middletown Village and down Liborio Drive, a dead end street, Whitmarsh said.

At that point, Tollis stopped the car as the officers got out of their vehicle and approached him on foot. As they did, Tollis put the car in reverse and accelerated in the direction of the officers, who had to jump out of the way, Whitmarsh said.

Tollis drove east out of the neighborhood as additional officers converged on the area trying to find the car, he said.

Officers located the car on Cedar Lane Road and said Tollis drove into the community of Dove Run, speeding up and driving recklessly until officers discontinued the pursuit.

Whitmarsh said Tollis then took a fast turn into a curb on Remington Drive, leaving the Pontiac inoperable.

He ran off on foot and was found in a wooded area near Middletown High School by a state police K-9 team.

He is being held in the Young Correctional Institution in lieu of $13,500 cash bail.

Police are asking any witnesses to the vehicle theft at the Valero Shore Stop to call Troop 9 at 378-5218, ext.622, or Delaware Crime Stoppers at (800)TIP-3333.

Police Say Two Men Robbed Woman's Wedding Ring (WILNJ)

By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

A Wilmington woman out for an early morning walk Saturday in Brandywine Park with her husband was robbed at gunpoint by two thieves who stole her wedding ring.

Wilmington police later arrested Bryan D. Roberts, of the 1800 block of N. Tatnall St., and Kendal Morris, of the 900 block of Linden St., both 18, and charged them with first-degree robbery, first-degree attempted robbery and conspiracy.

Roberts also was charged with aggravated menacing and carrying a concealed dangerous instrument, Master Sgt. John O'Connor said.

The incident occurred about 7:45 a.m. Saturday in the area of 16th and West streets. According to police, the couple was walking along a footpath when they were approached by the two men, one of whom carried what appeared to be a handgun, O'Connor said.

The man shoved the barrel of the gun in the woman's stomach and said, "Give me what ya got," according to court records.

The victims told the bandits that they didn't have anything.

Then 42-year-old woman took off her gold wedding band and handed it over to the gunman, police said. The two assailants turned to her 42-year-old husband and told him to remove his ring, but he couldn't get it off. The victim said the assailants kept yanking at her husband's ring but couldn't remove it.

Then they patted down the two victims to see if they were hiding any other valuables and ran west on North Park Drive toward the Brandywine Zoo with only the woman's inscribed slender gold band valued at $50.

The victims provided officers with a description of the assailants and they searched the area and found two men matching the bandits' descriptions headed west in the 1000 block of W. 18th St., O'Connor said.

The officers stopped the duo and found Roberts with a handgun -- later identified as a pellet gun -- in the waistband of his pants under his shirt.

Police later conducted a photo line-up for the victim who identified the two men.

Both men were committed to Young Correctional Institution in lieu of bail.

Troopers Recruiting For NCCo Citizens Academy (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Delaware State Police are looking for people interested in participating in the 2009-2010 Citizens Police Academy in New Castle County.

Classes will start Dec. 22 and last for seven weeks. They will be held on Tuesday nights at Troop 2 in Glasgow.

Citizens will visit other troops, hear presentations and learn about the state police.

Anyone interested in participating can email dsp_pio@state.de.us or call Senior Cpl. Jeff Whitmarsh at 598-5188 during regular business hours.

Sussex Correctional Inmate, 36, Dies (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

A Newark man in prison for a felony died Friday at Beebe Medical Center in Lewes, prison officials reported Monday.

The Department of Correction said Gernell J. Archie, 36, who was sentenced to more than eight years for possession of a deadly weapon, robbery, and theft, was housed at the Sussex Correctional Institution.

Archie began serving his sentence on March 30, 2008.

He was pronounced dead at 5:55 p.m. His body was to be turned over to the state Medical Examiner's Office.

No foul play is suspected.

BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Police Car Ahead Of Biden Crashes (NYT)

By Anahad O'Connor

New York Times, November 18, 2009

A police car assisting Vice President Joseph R. **Biden** Jr.'s motorcade collided with another vehicle on the West Side of Manhattan on Tuesday as Mr. **Biden** was on his way to appear on a television show, the police said.

The accident took place just before 6 p.m. on the corner of West 49th Street and 10th Avenue as the police car was driving ahead of Mr. **Biden**'s motorcade to help clear the way, the authorities said. Mr. **Biden** was on his way to a taping of "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart," which is recorded at a studio on 11th Avenue near West 52nd Street.

The police car, the authorities said, was part of an "advance element" of the motorcade made up of three marked police cars that traveled about three minutes ahead of Mr. **Biden**'s vehicle to help clear the way and make sure there were no "breakdown issues" along the way.

As the marked cars traveled west on 49th Street with lights and sirens on, one of them collided with a livery cab at the intersection. Two officers and the driver of the livery cab were taken to a hospital with neck and back injuries, the police said. None of the injuries were serious.

Mr. **Biden** was informed of the crash after taping the show, and spoke with one of the injured officers from Air Force 2 on his way back to Washington, a spokeswoman said. She added that Mr. **Biden** was happy to hear that all those who were injured had been released from the hospital.

It was the second accident involving Mr. **Biden**'s motorcade this week. On Monday, a sheriff's vehicle escorting Mr. **Biden**'s motorcade in Albuquerque was hit by a car that went around two units blocking an intersection, injuring a sergeant in the vehicle.

Last week, a man in Maryland was killed when he was hit by two Secret Service cars: a limousine sometimes used by Mr. **Biden**, and a Chevrolet Suburban used in his motorcade. Mr. **Biden** was not in the limousine or the Suburban at the time of the accident.

NY Police Car In Accident Ahead Of Biden Motorcade (AP)

By Colleen Long, The Associated Press

Associated Press, November 18, 2009

NEW YORK -- A police car working ahead of Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in a minor traffic accident Tuesday evening, but it wasn't part of the procession and the vice president was unhurt.

Three unmarked police vehicles, with their lights and sirens on, were traveling 5 to 10 minutes ahead of the motorcade on Manhattan's West Side and were checking traffic before **Biden** passed en route to an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," chief police spokesman Paul Browne said.

The cars were going through an intersection when the second one collided with a livery cab around 5:40 p.m. Traffic had stopped for the police, but the livery cab driver pulled out around the line of vehicles and was trying to go through the intersection, police said.

A passenger in the livery cab refused medical attention at the scene. The cab driver and two police officers were examined at a hospital and were released.

The police vehicles had been sent out as a routine patrol ahead of **Biden**, and the motorcade was not involved, Browne said.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford said the motorcade continued on its route to the Comedy Central channel show's studio, a few blocks from the accident site.

Biden was told about the accident after taping the show. He spoke with one of the injured officers and the officers' supervisor from his plane on the way back to Washington, D.C., his spokeswoman Elizabeth Alexander said.

"He was very happy to hear reports that the injuries were not serious and that all involved have already been released from the hospital," Alexander said.

In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.

Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraiser for two New Mexico Democrats.

Associated Press writer Virginia Byrne contributed to this report.

Police Car Ahead Of Joe Biden's Motorcade Crashes On Way To Film 'Daily Show With Jon Stewart' (NYDN)

By John Lauinger, Daily News Staff Writer

New York Daily News, November 18, 2009

An NYPD squad car traveling ahead of a motorcade for Vice President Joseph **Biden** crashed into a livery cab in rush-hour traffic on the West Side on Tuesday, police said.

The motorcade for **Biden** - in town to film an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" - was not involved in the 5:40 p.m. smash-up, a police source told the Daily News.

Biden made it to the studio just fine, and the taping wrapped up shortly before 7 p.m., a spokesman for Comedy Central confirmed.

The squad car with two detectives scouting the route for the motorcade was headed west on 49th St. when it was T-boned by a cab going north on 10th Ave.

The two detectives suffered minor injuries, and a third person was also injured.

The cab was registered in Nassau County to Zahid Butt. His registration was current but was revoked several times in recent years for lack of automobile insurance, state records show.

About five minutes later, the motorcade passed by on 49th St., said a witness

Joe Biden Unscathed In West Side Crash (NYPOST)

By Murray Weiss, John Doyle And Laurie Kamens

New York Post, November 18, 2009

A car responsible for clearing a path for Vice President **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in a West Side collision that sent three people to the hospital today, sources said.

Biden, who was headed to an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," was not hurt. It was the second accident involving a **Biden** trip in two days.

The latest crash occurred at 5:40 p.m. at West 49th Street and Tenth Avenue.

Biden's motorcade, which was going to make it's way uptown to the show's 11th Avenue studio, was about ten minutes away at the time, authorities said.

Cops had stopped traffic on Tenth to clear a path for **Biden** when a livery cab tried to get around it by driving up the left lane.

Meanwhile, three unmarked police cars were headed west on 49th Street. At the intersection the middle car hit the livery cab, police and federal sources said.

"They t-boned him," said Joe Lewis, a clerk at the nearby Skyline Hotel.

The livery driver and two Intelligence Division cops in the middle car suffered neck and back injuries and were taken to Roosevelt Hospital where they were treated and released. The cab had a passenger who was treated at the scene for a minor injury and was released.

Witnesses said the passenger side door of the cab was caved in and the police car's bumper was ripped off.

But cops were able to push the crash cars aside so that **Biden** was able to continue on his way to the studio to tape the show that aired at 11 p.m.

The crash was a bizarre echo of an accident in **Biden**'s motorcade on Monday.

The vice president was in Albuquerque, N.M. to help Democratic candidates when a woman drove around two police vehicles who were blocking an intersection for the vice president's motorcade.

The woman struck the car of a sheriff's deputy, who was rushed to a hospital for evaluation.

New York Police In Crash Ahead Of Biden Motorcade (AFP)

AFP, November 18, 2009

NEW YORK - A New York police cruiser driving ahead of US Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade struck another car in mid-town Manhattan Tuesday, injuring four people, city police said.

"At 1730 hours (2230 GMT) an advance element comprised of three police cars, lights and sirens operating, was traveling west on West 49th Street when the second of the three struck a Lincoln Town Car," New York Police Department Lieutenant Mike Wysokowski told AFP.

"It was not the vice president's motorcade," the officer stressed, noting that the police were running **Biden**'s route "several minutes before the actual motorcade."

He said two officers and two occupants of the other car were hurt. He did not describe the injuries.

Wysokowski said he was not immediately aware of whether the accident affected **Biden**'s travel.

The vice president was in downtown New York for a taping of satirical news program The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, where he made no reference to the incident, though he acknowledged that having the street cleared ahead of his motorcade was a welcome vice-presidential perk.

"Hell, I've never driven in New York with no traffic before," he said.

The crash is the third in a week involving the vice president's motorcade or Secret Service detail.

On November 11, the Washington Post reported that two cars normally part of **Biden**'s detail hit and killed a pedestrian in Maryland.

On Monday, the Alberquerque Journal reported that a deputy sheriff escorting the vice-president's motorcade in New Mexico was hit and injured by a car.

Accident Involving Biden's Advance Team (WABC)

WABC, November 18, 2009

NEW YORK (WABC) -- An accident involving an advance team for the Vice President's motorcade left two police officers and two others injured.

The accident happened at 10th Avenue and West 49th Street at 5:40 p.m.

Investigators say three unmarked police vehicles, with their lights and sirens on, were traveling ahead of the motorcade on the West Side. One of those police vehicles struck a taxi that had gone around traffic stopped because of the motorcade.

A passenger in the livery cab refused medical attention at the scene. The cab driver and two police officers were examined at a hospital and were released.

The advance team drives the motorcade route several minutes before the motorcade itself. Vice President Joe **Biden** was visiting New York City for a television appearance.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford said the motorcade continued on its route to the Comedy Central channel show's studio, a few blocks from the accident site.

In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.

Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraise for two New Mexico Democrats.

Biden's Security Detail Slams Taxi In Midtown (NBCNY)

NBC New York, November 18, 2009

Vice President Joe **Biden** was in midtown today for a taping of the John Stewart show, and his security detail hit a bit of a snag while paving his way to the show.

Three advance vehicles belonging to the NYPD were moving down 49th Street near 10th Avenue when they slammed into the back of a livery cab, officials said. The cars apparently had lights and sirens on at the time, officials said.

Four people -- two NYPD officers and two civilians -- were injured, NYPD spokeswoman Barbara Chen said.

Mr. **Biden** wasn't in the trail of cars at the time. His official motorcade was not affected and continued on as planned, the NYPD said.

Last week, two of the Vice President's official vehicles were involved in a tragedy outside of Washington.

According to The Hill.com, two Secret Service employees struck and killed a man last Wednesday in the cars the agency uses to transport **Biden**.

The vehicles had just been flown back to the D.C.-area from Fort Lewis, Wash., where they had driven the vice president before and after he spoke to a crowd of troops for Veterans Day.

Two NYPD Officers Injured In VP Motorcade Crash (NY1)

NY1, November 18, 2009

Two city police officers suffered minor injuries Tuesday during an accident involving the Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade in Manhattan.

It happened at 49th Street and 10th Avenue in Hell's Kitchen.

Officials say members of the Vice President's advance team collided with a livery cab.

The Vice President was not involved in the accident.

The police officers and the driver of the livery cab suffered minor injuries.

One witness says they saw the police escort but had no idea there was an accident.

"We got to the corner and we saw a bunch of bright lights. And next thing you know I see this. And then they pulling out the guy in this car that car and I'm like what happened?" said one witness.

Vice President **Biden** was on his way to tape an episode of "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

Biden's Police Advance Car Involved In Midtown Crash (WINS)

WINS-AM New York, November 18, 2009

WASHINGTON (AP /1010 WINS) -- The Secret Service says a police advance car working ahead of Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in a traffic accident Tuesday evening in New York.

The car wasn't part of the motorcade and the vice president was unhurt. New York City police say two police officers and a livery cab driver were hospitalized with minor injuries.

The accident happened around 5:40 p.m. at West 49th Street and 10th Avenue.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford says the motorcade continued on its route.

Biden was headed to appear on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.

Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraise for two New Mexico Democrats.

Previously, on Nov. 11 in Washington D.C., a pedestrian was killed after a crash involving the vice president's motorcade.

VP Biden Makes 6th "Daily Show" Appearance (WDEL)

By Frank Gerace

WDEL 1150AM, November 18, 2009

Vice President **Biden** defends the Obama administration's economic policies on a late-night comedy show.

On Comedy Central's "The Daily Show", **Biden** told host Jon Stewart new job figures on the government's economic stimulus website, recovery-dot-gov, aren't wildly exaggerated.

Biden said the economy's turning around, thanks to the stimulus package, but job recovery will lag behind by about 12 to 18 months.

Biden's appearance on the show was his 6th, the previous one in August 2007, when he was competing with his current boss for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

Biden Bows (HARTC)

By Roger Catlin

Hartford Courant, November 18, 2009

It was a weird coincidence that the two vice presidential candidates in last year's election were both being featured on TV interview shows. Sarah Palin, of course, was all over the airwaves, first on Oprah, and then with Barbara Walters and by the end of the week probably with your local meteorology team.

Then tonight, the elected vice president Joe **Biden** showed up on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart." **Biden** had appeared on the show before during the campaign (including the day he announced his candidacy for president) but he's never been on as sitting veep.

His role was mostly to defend the administration, with talking points about jobs coming around the corner, inheriting a big mess from the last administration, and how the stimulus money has been used. Just about the best moment was the beginning, when after a day of cable distress about the President bowing in China, **Biden** and Stewart both met each other with similarly deep bows.

Accounting For Stimulus Jobs: Be Careful What You Wish For (WP)

Congress demands elusive figures, then expresses outrage over errors

By Alec Macgillis

Washington Post, November 18, 2009

Another day, another flurry of outrage over the jobs numbers claimed by the government for the administration's $787 billion economic stimulus program.

House Appropriations Committee Chairman David R. Obey (D-Wis.) released a blistering statement Tuesday, taking to task flawed data in the federal figures that show $160 billion in spending had created or saved at least 640,000 jobs.

His criticism came in response to two ABC News stories. The first reported that the administration deleted 60,000 jobs from its list after it became clear that the figures were overstated. Then, on Monday, the network reported that the government had claimed $761,420 in spending and 30 jobs created in Arizona's 15th Congressional District -- a district that does not exist.

"The inaccuracies . . . are outrageous, and the administration owes itself, the Congress and every American a commitment to work night and day to correct the ludicrous mistakes," Obey said. "We designed the Recovery Act to be open and transparent. . . . Whether the numbers are good news or bad news, I want the honest numbers and I want them now."

But it is worth asking whether the administration's problem stems primarily from its decision to provide the numbers in the first place.

From the start, the Obama administration framed the stimulus act as a job-creating initiative, saying that it would create or save 3.5 million jobs over the next two years. Skeptics noted that this would be a very hard number to verify -- after all, how can one know for sure whether a job has been "saved"? But the administration and congressional Democrats not only stuck with that number, they also promised an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability, saying they would require recipients of the money to report how it had been spent and how many jobs they created or saved with it.

More and more, it is looking like this approach may have been a strategic mistake.

It is exceedingly difficult for even the most conscientious government agency or contractor to calculate the jobs impact of a stimulus grant or contract. How can one know for sure whether a job would have been lost in the absence of stimulus money? If money helped cover someone's paycheck for only a few weeks or months, how should that be counted? If money has been allocated but will not be spent for several months, should its jobs impact be tallied now or later?

A close examination of the stimulus reports suggests plenty of instances in which the number of created jobs is being understated, as some recipients of multiple millions of dollars report that they have yet to save or create a single job.

Even advocates for government transparency wonder whether the Obama administration would have been better off not trying to provide actual job tallies, instead simply requiring clear reports on how the money was spent -- information that is more useful and reliable.

"I would not have framed it as a jobs bill or a jobs law, as they have done," Gary Bass, the director of the government watchdog group OMB Watch, said in a recent interview.

As it is, the administration has left itself open to near-daily assaults on the credibility of the jobs numbers. Finding flaws in the data is as easy as shooting fish in a barrel, and reporters have been all too happy to fire away -- first reporting the numbers with fanfare when they are announced, despite all their obvious shortcomings, and then, days or weeks later, reporting that they are not entirely sound.

The constant barrage of such stories may be taking a toll. In the new Washington Post-ABC News poll, 23 percent of respondents say they think the stimulus act has hurt the economy, and 39 percent say that it has made no difference.

The White House pushed back against Obey's statement Tuesday with a lengthy retort from Ed DeSeve, the adviser to Vice President **Biden** who is in charge of implementing the stimulus. DeSeve argued that it was unfair to slight the administration for culling the 60,000 questionable jobs at the same

time as it was being blamed for letting other questionable jobs slip through. The mistakes in the data have represented a sliver of the whole and often are clerical flubs that don't really touch on the heart of the reporting, he argued. "Transparency is going to be messy -- but it is better than the alternative," he wrote.

"It would be great if every report filed was correct the first time, on time, and contained no errors. But that's not realistic when 130,000 reports are being filed in a 10-day period," he said.

Chances are, there will be plenty more outrage-filled reports of faulty figures in the weeks and months to come. Republicans have asked the head of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, Earl Devaney, to appear Thursday before the House oversight committee. His task: to answer for the validity of jobs numbers that Congress demanded, only to now be surprised to find that they are less than perfect.

Push To Curb Credit-card Rates Fades (BOS)

Democrats resist consumer outcry

By Michael Kranish, Globe Staff

Boston Globe, November 18, 2009

WASHINGTON - Efforts in Congress to cap credit-card interest rates are faltering because of opposition from Democrats and a lack of specific support from the White House, despite growing consumer outrage over a rush by banks to impose rates as high as 30 percent.

During the 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama vowed to back a strict limit on credit-card interest rates. But the White House is not yet behind any particular plan this year. While Obama has chastised credit-card companies, his spokeswoman declined to say this week how he planned to follow through on his campaign pledge.

Obama finds the behavior of credit-card lenders "outrageous" and "looks forward to reviewing additional legislation that caps interest rates," but he has not taken a specific position, spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Vice President Joe **Biden**, whose home state of Delaware is headquarters to many credit-card companies, did not respond to requests for comment.

The Senate soundly defeated legislation in May that was introduced by Senator Bernard Sanders, the Vermont Independent, to cap most credit-card interest rates at 15 percent. Nearly half of the Democratic senators joined Republicans in defeating the measure, 60 to 33.

Consumer groups say the problem of skyrocketing interest rates has only worsened since that vote, as banks scramble to boost rates in advance of a new rule scheduled to take effect in February, requiring banks to give consumers a 45-day advance notice of rate increases.

Sanders said many of the credit cards in the hands of American consumers are issued by four banks that received taxpayer bailout money after last year's economic meltdown: Citigroup, Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Wells Fargo.

"People are disgusted. We bailed these [companies] out and they then had the gumption to raise interest rates on the American people," Sanders said in an interview.

Sanders said he plans to reintroduce his proposal to cap rates at 15 percent; he predicted it will have more support this time. (Representing Massachusetts, Senator John F. Kerry supported the cap in May; the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who was fighting brain cancer, did not vote. Senator Paul Kirk, who took Kennedy's seat, has not declared a position on the issue, his spokesman said.)

But Sanders faces strong opposition from many Democrats, particularly those who have major credit-card business in their states. One prominent opponent, Senator Thomas R. Carper of Delaware, said in an interview that he understands the anger among consumers who have received letters from credit-card issuers informing them of big rate hikes. But Carper said he opposes any effort to cap the rates because it would hurt the ability of banks to charge higher rates to customers who have a greater risk of default.

"The question is, should banks be able to price for risk?" Carper said. "In a free market economy, I think they should."

Carper said that if consumers don't like the credit-card rates, they can pay off their balances and shop for a better rate from another company.

Senator Tim Johnson, a Democrat from South Dakota, another home to credit card companies, explained his vote against credit-card legislation in a May press release. The measure, he said, "could hurt South Dakota jobs and consumers."

The threat of another vote on Sanders's proposal is prompting companies to make a renewed push against caps. Bill Himpler, executive vice president of the American Financial Services Association, an industry trade group, said it is easy "from a populist standpoint" to embrace a cap on interest rates. But he said many firms could continue to offer credit if the rate was capped at 15 to 18 percent, as some have suggested.

"You lose money at 18 percent because it is a very labor-intensive business line to offer consumer credit," he said. "Where you cap rates you end up having credit tightened and the cost of credit being greater for the consumer."

The Consumer Federation of America, which worked to pass the 45-day advance notice requirement on rate hikes that takes effect in February, said it has not taken a position on the Sanders proposal.

"We want to give the law a little time to work," legislative director Travis Plunkett said yesterday. He warned that the federation would closely monitor to see if credit-card companies stop "the most abusive practices."

Senate Finance Committee chairman Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, who supported the 15 percent cap, has proposed legislation that would temporarily freeze certain interest rates, but only until February when the notification law takes effect.

For decades, many states had usury laws capping credit-card interest rates as low as 6 percent. But those rules were upended in 1978 by a Supreme Court ruling that a national lending company based in a state without a rate cap could charge any rate to customers who lived in a state with a cap. As a result, many credit card companies moved to states with lenient rules such as Delaware and South Dakota.

Biden, who served as Delaware's US senator from 1973 until last January, has long been noted for his ties to the credit-card business. **Biden**'s top contributor has been MBNA Corp., a company based in Delaware that was a major credit-card issuer and was bought by Bank of America in 2005.

Biden received $214,000 during his Senate career from MBNA-related donors, according to the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

NORM: Biden Finds Rank Has Its Privileges (LVSRJ)

By Norm Clarke

Las Vegas Review-Journal, November 18, 2009

Sometimes you make exceptions at a members-only golf club.

Especially if someone from the office of Vice President Joe **Biden** is on the telephone, calling back a second time with a more pointed request.

It happened Sunday morning at The Golf Club at South Shore, at Lake Las Vegas.

When the first call came in at 7 a.m., asking whether **Biden** could play the course, the PGA professional running the pro shop declined, citing the club's members-only policy.

A few minutes later, another call: a **Biden** staffer telling the club pro "you know the vice president would really like to play" and asked whether he could talk to a manager.

The club reversed its stand, and **Biden** arrived about 11 a.m. with a half-dozen Secret Service personnel.

"We came to our senses, out of courtesy of the position," said Mark Barrett, with a chuckle. He's the club's membership sales director.

Biden's visit "really created a buzz," said Barrett, a welcome boost after recent tough times at Lake Las Vegas.

Biden played 17 holes before heading to a fundraiser for Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev.

KIMMEL JOINS REGIS AND KELLY

Las Vegan Jimmy Kimmel returns home to join "Live! With Regis and Kelly" for a taping here. Kimmel attended Clark High School and attended UNLV before embarking on a career path that led to his late-night talk-show with ABC.

Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa tape four shows in two days, starting Sunday, at Encore Theater at Wynn Las Vegas.

The first airing on Monday will include Mark Harmon of CBS' "NCIS," Kelly performing with the cast of "Le Reve, the new "Project Runway" winner and "America Idol" winner David Cook.

Tuesday features Kimmel plus a segment in which Kelly revisits the chapel where she and Mark Conseulo got married May 1, 1996, after eloping.

On Wednesday, Kelly visits the cast of "Love" at The Mirage.

After taking Thursday off for Thanksgiving, Regis and wife Joy on Friday debut their new album "Regis & Joy: Just You -- Just Me." They celebrate their 40th anniversary in March. Also on Friday: Regis takes a helicopter trip along the Strip on his way to the Grand Canyon, several chefs engage in a cook-off with turkey leftovers and Uncle Kracker performs.

MEDIA UPDATE

Former KVBC-TV, Channel 3, weatherman John Fredericks has told friends he's moving to North Carolina. Fredericks recently came under police scrutiny, according to KLAS-TV, Channel 8, and was told by police to stop making calls to a woman he met through an Internet dating service. ...

UFC fan favorite Stephan Bonnar and Andrea Brown, public relations director at MGM Mirage, were married Oct. 30 at a villa in Tuscany, near Siena, Italy. They met nine years ago in Chicago when he became a personal trainer and she was his first client. Bonnar became part of UFC lore on April 9, 2005, when he and Forrest Griffin staged what has been voted the greatest fight in UFC history. ...

Karin Firmani, orphaned at age 4 in Yugoslavia and adopted by an Italian family from Kenosha, Wis., won the meatball/pizza cook-off Tuesday at Ciao Ciao Apizza Angelato, 4460 S. Durango Drive. Judges included comedian Marty Allen, Anthony Crivello of "Phantom: The Las Vegas Spectacular," KVBC-TV, Channel 3, morning show host Kim Wagner and yours truly.

THE SCENE AND HEARD

"Peepshow" star Holly Madison and a Lucille Ball impersonator will take turns stomping grapes about 3 p.m. today at the annual Paris Las Vegas Beaujolais Nouveau celebration. They will play out a

scene reminiscent of an iconic "Lucy" scene. The event coincides with the start of the traditional uncorking of Beaujolais in France. ...

Deal of the Day: Happy hour at SeaBlue, a Michael Mina restaurant at MGM Grand. Sunday-Friday, 5:30-7 p.m., half-price lobster corndogs, half-price calamari, $1 oysters, $1 gulf prawns, $2 draft beers (Stella Artois and Fat Tire).

THE PUNCH LINE

"Nearly had to pull out of campaign after spraining her winking muscle." -- From David Letterman's Top Ten Surprises in the Sarah Palin book

Biden Touts Stimulus Benefits In Vegas (POL)

By Alexander Burns

Politico, November 18, 2009

Vice President Joe **Biden**, speaking at the Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, said the federal stimulus had provided 190,000 Nevadans with unemployment insurance, pumping $500 million into people's pockets through tax cuts and saving the jobs of about 4,000 educators in the state, according to a pool report of the event.

"In American history, in world history, there's only a handful of inflection points. We are at an inflection point in world history," **Biden** said at a fundraiser for Nevada Rep. Dina Titus, encouraging attendees to get involved in politics to "bend the arc of history - literally, bend it."

"In the next four to six years, our future will be determined for the next 40 years," **Biden** said. "This is a great chance, and this is going to be a tough slog. Next year, this is going to be the place where the decision will be made. Rome wasn't built in a day, but we've come a long way."

The vice president also was scheduled to participate in a roundtable at the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport - which has received $11.7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding to improve air travel - to boost the impact of stimulus spending on small-business lending, clean-technology investment, infrastructure projects and teaching jobs.

Titus, introducing **Biden** at the Atomic Testing Museum, praised Cash for Clunkers, the stimulus package and the first-time homebuyer tax credit.

"Even the old-timers are impressed so much is going on," she said. "It's not a time for the fainthearted."

In addition to the federal stimulus, **Biden** was giving a dose of vice presidential fundraising stimulus to several vulnerable Democratic House members. In Phoenix, he was scheduled to attend a fundraiser for Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick and Harry Mitchell, and he was planning stops in Albuquerque, N.M., to boost freshman Reps. Harry Teague and Martin Heinrich.

Biden Stops By Albuquerque For A Fundraiser (NMI)

By Matthew Reichbach

The New Mexico Independent, November 18, 2009

Vice President Joe **Biden** appeared in Albuquerque for a fundraiser for potentially vulnerable Democratic Congressmen Martin Heinrich and Harry Teague on Monday. Congressman Ben Ray Lujan was in attendance but was not a focus of the fundraising.

Biden spoke for a little more than half an hour at the Hotel Albuquerque, according to a pool report by Albuquerque Journal writer Dan Boyd. The "about 100? attendees paid $1,000 to attend the event.

"They're good Democrats, but they also have heads of their own and minds of their own and it seems to me that's what you guys produce out here," **Biden** said, speaking of Heinrich and Teague.

The two Democrats are a part of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's Frontline Program, a program designed to help vulnerable Democratic candidates win re-election.

The state Republican party issued a statement saying that the fundraising event showed that Teague was "desperate" because Republican candidate Steve Pearce outraised Teague in the 3rd quarter of 2009. Teague still has more cash on hand.

"To the detriment of New Mexico families, Representative Teague has delivered votes that further the left-wing agenda of Nancy Pelosi and the Obama administration," Republican Party of New Mexico executive director Ryan Cangiolosi. "Today, Vice President **Biden** is returning the favor by helping Mr. Teague fill his campaign coffers safely outside Teague's district where many of these policies are unpopular."

In a separate statement, the party noted that Heinrich had attacked his Republican opponent for not reimbursing the county for $5,000 incurred for security for a fundraising event headlined by then-President George W. Bush.

More from the pool:

Biden said both representatives are fighting to better the lives of middle-class families, and contrasted that with Republican members of Congress who he described as believers in Wall Street.

"I know what the Republicans are against," he said. "I haven't figured out what they're for."

"Change really has come to Washington," Teague said. "But we still have a lot of work ahead of us."

"It is incredible to have someone there who not only knows the last names of heads of state, but actually knows them," Heinrich said of **Biden**. **Biden** served as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee while a member of the Senate.

Biden also addressed the financial crisis that has been a source of concern for many Americans.

"We inherited a black hole this country had fallen into," he said. "I don't think anybody knew how deep this recession was at the time."

Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, House Speaker Ben Lujan, D-Santa Fe, former Oklahoma senator Fred Harris, New Mexico Democratic Party Chairman Javier Gonzales and former U.S. ambassador to Spain Ed Romero were all also in attendance according to the pool report.

This wasn't the first fundraiser for **Biden**, who has attended 26 fundraisers for Democratic House members so far this year according to Hotline. Tomorrow, **Biden** will be at a more public event - the Vice President will be on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart. It will be the first time a sitting Vice President has appeared on the show, though it will be **Biden**'s sixth appearance overall.

Biden appeared in Mesilla, New Mexico last year during the Presidential campaign.

Part of **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in an accident, according to the Albuquerque Journal.

"Police say a woman drove around two police units blocking the intersection and hit a car driven by a sergeant with BCSO," the paper reported on their blog.

In 2006, a Rio Rancho police motorcycle officer that was part of a George W. Bush motorcade was involved in a fatal crash in Albuquerque. Print

Biden Returns To State To Give Dodd Campaign Maximum Attention (NHR)

By Mary E. O'Leary

New Haven Register, November 17, 2009

For the third time this fall, U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., is getting personal attention from the top echelon of the Obama administration as he faces his toughest re-election in 30 years.

Vice President Joseph **Biden** will come to Hartford Dec. 11 to stump for Dodd at a $500 a plate luncheon fundraiser at the Connecticut Science Center.

This comes two months after **Biden** shared a platform at the Fairfield Park and Ride with the senator, where the vice president drew attention to the use of federal stimulus money for a nearby Merritt Parkway project.

President Barack Obama then headlined a $1,000 a plate fundraiser for Dodd in Stamford on Oct. 23. The event raised $1 million for the Democratic Party, Dodd's re-election and for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

"The vice president and Senator Dodd worked hand-in-hand on so many issues throughout the years, and he knows first-hand how hard Chris has worked for the people back home in Connecticut.

"We expect this event to be an entertaining one, with a lot of good-natured ribbing, as well as some serious talk about the work Chris is doing for the people of Connecticut and the country, while partnering with President Obama and Vice President **Biden**," said Jay Howser, Dodd's campaign manager.

The latest Quinnipiac University Poll said voters disapproved 54 percent to 40 percent of the job Dodd is doing.

In a head-to-head match-up with Rob Simmons, Dodd would lose 49 percent to 38 percent, while also losing to newcomer Linda McMahon, 43 percent to 41 percent.

A total of five Republicans are vying for the GOP nomination to run against Dodd, and Dodd either loses or ties in theoretical match-ups with all of them, although 49 percent to 88 percent of the voters say they don't know enough to offer a favorable or unfavorable opinion about them.

The senator, as chairman of the Banking Committee, is advancing financial regulation and credit card reforms, while also leading the fight on health care - all of which are top priorities for the Obama administration.

The poll found 56 percent of the voters support giving people the option of being covered by a government health insurance plan, which Dodd has been championing, but for those whose major concern is the economy, the poll found they favor a Republican candidate.

The poll has been criticized by Dodd supporters as over-representative of registered Republicans and unaffiliated voters and for not tapping likely voters who are more likely to cast a ballot in 2010.

At this point in the race, they are not as concerned with the head-to-head outcomes, but there is expected to be an increased effort among women and unaffiliated.

The high profile fundraisers are good for bringing in money, but don't necessarily translate into voter support.

The Quinnipiac University Poll found 75 percent of the voters said Obama's visit doesn't make a difference on how they will vote on Dodd.

As Karzai Starts New Term, Doubts Grow That He'll Finish (MCT)

By Dion Nissenbaum

McClatchy, November 18, 2009

KABUL, Afghanistan - On the eve of Afghan President Hamid Karzai's swearing-in for a second term, speculation is growing that he could be forced to step aside before he finishes his next five years in office.

The challenge before him is monumental: Regain the trust of voters disenchanted by the fraud-tainted election that returned him to power, assure frustrated world leaders that the billions of dollars spent trying to stabilize Afghanistan haven't been wasted or stolen and, with the help of U.S. and NATO forces, recover control of large parts of the country from Taliban fighters.

The 51-year-old president has to please contradictory forces to survive: the discredited Afghan political allies who helped him win re-election, and the international community, which is demanding an end to cronyism and to pervasive government corruption.

Karzai has to assure President Barack Obama quickly that he has a credible partner if Obama decides to send as many as 40,000 more American soldiers to the fight in Afghanistan.

Karzai will have to help build a competent Afghan military capable of battling emboldened insurgents who now are operating in much of his country. He also has to contain a thriving opium industry that's the source of 90 percent of the world's heroin supply, often with the complicity of corrupt officials and police officers.

"It would take a miracle," said Abdullah Abdullah, the one-time foreign minister who abandoned a planned runoff against Karzai earlier this month because of concerns that the second round of voting could be as tainted as the first round was. "And, as Muslims, we don't believe miracles are possible now."

"The leadership in Afghanistan is getting more and more oblivious to the situation on the ground," Abdullah told McClatchy. "It's becoming obsessed with its own ideas, which are out of touch with reality."

The mood at the inauguration Thursday at the presidential palace is likely to be decidedly more somber than it was five years ago, when then-Vice President Dick Cheney led a high-profile delegation to Kabul as Karzai became Afghanistan's first democratically elected president.

Vice President Joe **Biden**, who has a strained relationship with Karzai, won't attend. Few world leaders are planning to fly to Kabul for an inauguration that will take place under heavy security, bracing for potential Taliban attacks.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the highest-profile American leader who's expected to take part in the inauguration, warned Karzai last weekend that the United States might suspend civilian aid to Afghanistan unless he takes new steps to prevent the money from being squandered or stolen.

With Karzai chafing at the international pressure, Obama's advisers are divided over how much support to offer the Afghan president.

Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal, America's top military commander in Afghanistan, has warned Obama that the United States could lose the war against the Taliban unless he agrees to send as many as 40,000 more soldiers over the next year.

However, some administration officials are reluctant to pursue an Iraq-style "military surge" until they're convinced that Karzai will match it with a "political surge" capable of restoring a measure of confidence in the Afghan government.

Chief among the skeptics is U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, a retired Army general, who's raised reservations about a major infusion of troops without a commitment from Karzai to fight corruption.

Eikenberry outlined his concerns Monday when he joined top Karzai ministers in unveiling a new anti-corruption task force in Kabul.

"Ordinary Afghans must be convinced that the powerful can no longer exploit their positions to make themselves wealthy while the less fortunate struggle to find work and to feed their families," Eikenberry said.

"The appearance of luxurious mansions around Kabul with many expensive cars ... surrounded by private armed guards, is a worrisome sign that some Afghans are cheating their people while claiming to be in their service."

Eikenberry and American officials in Kabul have been working quietly with Karzai to ensure that discredited Afghan leaders don't dominate his next Cabinet.

American and Afghan officials told McClatchy that the U.S. had given Karzai a list of 40 people whom it considered clean enough to be part of the new Cabinet. However, Karzai also faces pressure to reward shady political allies who helped him win re-election. Should he fall short of U.S. demands, some expect the Obama administration to push the Afghan president from power long before his term ends.

Sarwar Mohammed Roshan, who served as Karzai's campaign manager when he ran for president the first time, said the U.S. might have to support a caretaker government eventually to replace Karzai.

"If we don't do something drastic, believe me, we will be sorry," said Roshan, who suggested that adding more troops now would be counterproductive. "Bringing in more troops and keeping the status quo would create the impression that the Americans are making Afghans kneel before this (Karzai) gang."

Ashraf Ghani, the former finance minister who challenged Karzai for the presidency this year, echoed those concerns.

"Hamid Karzai assumes his second term as president without a honeymoon," Ghani wrote in a recent opinion piece for The Guardian newspaper in London.

"He faces a crisis of both domestic and international confidence," Ghani wrote, "and has the option to become either a statesman or an outcast."

MORE FROM MCCLATCHY

Taliban on motorcycles prove no match for U.S. helicopters

Another Afghan war: Media leaks spark administration fight

Taliban gain foothold in once-stable Afghan north

Check out McClatchy's politics blog: Planet Washington

ABC's Nightline Admits They're In Town For Joe Arpaio's Sweep, Denies Coordination; And Graffiti On Joe's Jai (PNT)

By Stephen Lemons

Phoenix New Times, November 18, 2009

Joe claims ABC just happened to be in town when the sweep started in this Channel 3 piece

Following up on my blog post of yesterday, wherein I quoted sources telling me that Arpaio's latest anti-immigration sweep was done with an out-of-town film crew in mind, specifically one from ABC national news, I finally got a rep from ABC on the horn. She confirmed that a crew from ABC Nightline was in Phoenix for the sweep, but denied that the dragnet had been staged for ABC's purposes.

"No, not at all," replied Nightline spokeswoman Alison Bridgman of the allegation. "We were already there. We've done profiles of Sheriff Joe in the past. This was already arranged."

Bridgman explained that an interview with Arpaio had been scheduled for Monday, and that the news show learned of the sweep while on the ground in Phoenix. She said Nightline correspondent Martin Bashir did the interview with our corrupt top constable. So far, there's no air date for the piece, according to Bridgman.

During his press conference yesterday, Arpaio copped the same line when someone asked him about ABC being along for the ride.

from Joe's Twitter

Well, it's only saying what everyone thinks...

"Oh, so I arranged this because ABC is here?" asked Joe, rhetorically. "The answer is no, we happened to be here. And they're smart enough to know that they may want to film the sheriff."

Thing is, ABC could be on the level, and Arpaio, not. Would it surprise anyone that Arpaio's PR hacks made sure the ABC interview was planned for a day a sweep was to begin? Or orchestrated one just because a big media outlet was swingin' by?

See, I know Arpaio tipped off others that there would be a sweep, and that ABC was flying in. Everything was set in stone as of last week. If that ain't a fix, I don't know what is.

Arpaio's credibility sunk to an all-time new low after he claimed on his Twitter account yesterday that he'd had a meeting with Vice President Joe **Biden**, who'd flown in to Phoenix to pimp the effect of the stimulus on job creation. According to **Biden**'s deputy press secretary Annie Tomasini, Arpaio showed up uninvited to a meeting **Biden** had with local Democrats at the Wyndham Hotel. All he got was a handshake in the hallway as **Biden** was leaving.

Which makes me wonder about this new Joe Tweet where he claims that one of his buildings has been tagged with an obscenity. (Specifically, the Sheriff's office property building, part of his vast incarceration complex.) Arpaio maliciously suggests that activists protesting his news conference may have done it.

Puente leader Salvador Reza scoffed at this latest piece of Joe baloney, denying responsibility on behalf of his movement.

How do we know this isn't another fake story our two-faced sheriff's shilling? (Joe does have a pic on his Twitter page, which I've reproduced above.) I'll have to drive down to Durango to check it out, and, hopefully, compliment the artist.

Makes me wonder: How secure can Joe's jails be if you can walk right up to one of his secure buildings and spraypaint humongo letters on the side? What's to keep someone from sticking a ladder up there? Sheesh.

Arpaio Launches New Immigration Sweep (YWV)

By Mike Sakal And Bill Bertolino

YourWestValley.com, November 18, 2009

Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio launched a two-day crime-suppression and illegal-immigration sweep on Monday, as dozens of protesters lined a south Phoenix street close to where the sheriff outlined the plans at a crowded press conference.

It is the second such operation since the federal government stripped Arpaio of street-level immigration patrols under the direction of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Arpaio contends he still can seek to identify illegal immigrants during street patrols using state laws against human smuggling and sanctions for employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants.

The sheriff said his office plans to target semi-trailers and other load vehicles along alternative routes Valleywide, where human smugglers could be attempting to avoid checkpoints, such as those along Interstate 10 and Interstate 17, en route to drop houses.

"We are also noticing a significant change in travel routes," Arpaio said. "State highways still remain the main travel paths for smugglers and their co-conspirators, but more and more vehicles are being apprehended at alternative, out-of-the-way routes."

Arpaio said anyone who films the stops along the interstate, including what he described as "open-borders groups," would be arrested, saying it is illegal to stop and stand unless it's an emergency.

"These open-borders activists will be warned only once," he said.

Dozens of protesters along Lower Buckeye Road stood with signs carrying statements, such as "We are human" and "I will not be bullied."

During the press conference, Arpaio downplayed questions about whether he was grandstanding while Vice President Joe **Biden** and the national media were in town. **Biden** spoke in Phoenix Monday morning about the national economy.

"This is just another example of Arpaio's lack of respect for the Obama Administration and he continues to thumb his nose at the administration," said protestor Lydia Guzman, president of SOMOS America. Guzman was among a group of protestors across the street from the entrance of the MCSO training building.

"Arpaio's sweep was nothing but political posturing," she said.

Mercedes Mercado-Ochoa, a member of the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens, said she believes Arpaio is doing the sweeps just to impress the national media in town.

"He's spending so much taxpayer money on these crime sweeps that it's not funny anymore," she said. "He should be held accountable to the taxpayers for the amount he is spending on these sweeps."

The sweep will entail 200 members of Arpaio's volunteer posse and reserves, as well as sheriff's office deputies. Helicopters will also assist in the operation, which Arpaio said will have a "substantial focus" on the crime of human smuggling.

This is Arpaio's 13th crime sweep. Since March 2006, the sheriff's office reports it has arrested a total of 3,532 human-smuggling suspects or illegal immigrants.

The sheriff's sweeps have drawn criticism that Arpaio's deputies racially profile people. The U.S. Department of Justice is investigating Arpaio's office over allegations of discrimination and unconstitutional searches and seizures.

AP Turns Heads For Devoting 11 Reporters To Palin Book 'Fact Check' (FOX)

By Robert Shaffer

FOX News, November 18, 2009

Reviewing books and holding public figures accountable is at the core of good journalism, but the Associated Press' treatment of Palin's book seems an unprecedented move at the wire service

Sarah Palin is no normal politician, and at the Associated Press, apparently "Going Rogue" is no normal book.

When the former Republican vice presidential candidate and former Alaska governor wrote her autobiography, the AP found a copy before its release date and assigned 11 people to fact check all 432 pages.

The AP claims Palin misstated her record with regard to travel expenses and taxpayer-funded bailouts, using statements widely reported elsewhere. But it also speculated into Palin's motives for writing "Going Rogue: An American Life," stating as fact that the book "has all the characteristics of a pre-campaign manifesto."

Palin quickly hit back on a Facebook post titled "Really? Still Making Things Up?"

"Imagine that," the post read. "11 AP reporters dedicating time and resources to tearing up the book, instead of using the time and resources to 'fact check' what's going on with Sheik Mohammed's trial, Pelosi's health care takeover costs, Hasan's associations, etc. Amazing."

The AP, an organization with over 4,000 employees and 49 Pulitzer Prizes earned for asking the hard questions, wouldn't comment on their own reporting for this story.

Reviewing books and holding public figures accountable is at the core of good journalism, but the treatment Palin's book received appears to be something new for the AP. The organization did not review for accuracy recent books by the late Sen. Ted Kennedy, then-Sen. Joe **Biden**, either book by Barack Obama released before he was president or autobiographies by Bill or Hillary Clinton. The AP did more traditional news stories on those books.

The attraction to Palin doesn't appear to be partisan, since AP didn't fact-check recent political tomes by Republicans Rudy Giuliani or Newt Gingrich.

The AP, however, regularly writes "fact checks" for major political speeches, such as a September health care speech by President Obama.

Doug Underwood, a University of Washington journalism professor who covered Washington politics in the late 1970s for Gannett, said Palin brings some negative attention on herself with a history of bad interviews and misstatements. In addition, the press cannot ever be perfectly consistent or fair, he said.

Still, the media treated **Biden** and Palin differently, he said.

Biden's book "Promises to Keep" became an instant best-seller when he was chosen to be Obama's running mate, but was not fact-checked by the AP and only received passing interest. In a story last year on **Biden**'s Vietnam War draft deferments due to asthma, the reporter notes **Biden** didn't mention the malady in his book.

Palin is not the standard presidential possibility for 2012, Underwood said.

"She's a figure who's a politician, but also a part of popular culture," he said.

Palin supporters believe 11 reporters poring over every word of her book is excessive- and further proof of the media's obsession and maltreatment of the hockey mom from Wasilla.

"They're obsessed with trying to discredit her," said Adrienne Ross, New York state organizer for the 2012 Draft Sarah Committee. "Because she's a conservative woman, they make fun of her accent, comment about her looks. She doesn't come in the package they want her to come in."

WHAT TO WATCH (WP)

By Garance Franke-Ruta

Washington Post, November 18, 2009

-- President Obama started his Wednesday in Beijing, on what was Tuesday night in Washington, by sitting down with reporters from CBS, CNN, Fox and NBC. He also met with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. In the evening, he departs for Seoul.

-- Back in the Eastern time zone, first lady Michelle Obama takes her nutrition and health messages to Hollin Meadows Elementary School in Alexandria in the morning, highlighting the Agriculture Department's Healthier U.S. School Challenge.

-- It's also a day for the first and second ladies to focus on the White House's military families project. Jill **Biden** stuffs packages and speaks at the first "USO Care Package for Women" party, at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill in the morning. In the afternoon, she and the first lady will host a gathering at the White House celebrating women in the military. Veterans and current servicewomen will be joined there by Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. James Cartwright, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their wives, and other military and administration officials.

-- The Labor Department releases the consumer price index for October, and the Commerce Department releases the October housing-starts report.

-- The Senate Judiciary Committee at 9:30 a.m. holds an oversight hearing on the Justice Department. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. testifies.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL NEWS CLIPS

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WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Biden Leads In New Senate-race Poll (WILNJ)

By Cris Barrish, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

For the first time, an independent poll shows Attorney General Beau **Biden** leading U.S. Rep. Mike Castle in a hypothetical matchup for the Senate seat long held by **Biden**'s father.

At least four previous polls made public since March had shown Republican Castle, who has declared his candidacy, leading Democrat **Biden** by 1 to 21 percentage points. **Biden** has not announced his candidacy, but has said he is seriously considering running.

But the poll released this week by Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc. of Harrisburg, shows **Biden** leading 45 percent to 40 percent, with 6 percent choosing another candidate and eight percent undecided.

The latest results were based on a single question about a race pitting Castle, the former two-term governor and nine-term congressman, against **Biden**, a first-term attorney general. Vice President Joe **Biden** held the seat from 1973 through January, when he resigned to be Barack Obama's running mate. Then-Gov. Ruth Ann Minner appointed Joe **Biden**'s longtime aide, Ted Kaufman, to the post. Kaufman will not seek the seat.

The poll was taken Nov. 10-15 with 850 registered Delaware voters who voted in the 2006 or 2008 general election. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.36 percentage points. It's one of dozens, perhaps hundreds that would be conducted over the next 12 months if **Biden** faces Castle in a race that would be closely followed across the nation and hotly contested by both parties.

James Lee, Susquehanna's president, said that while participants were not asked reasons for their preference, it could stem from news coverage about Beau **Biden**'s recent return from Iraq, where he spent a year as a National Guard lawyer. Lee also said Castle's recent "no" vote on the House health reform bill -- cast the weekend before polling -- might have cost him support.

"Castle's vote against the health care plan may have solidified some of the Democratic vote for Beau **Biden**," Lee said. Noting that polls in October showed Castle's lead eroding, Lee said the new one shows that "ultimately this race would tighten as Democrats start to come home."

Neither Beau **Biden** nor Castle would comment on the newest poll results.

Castle also could face a GOP primary against Christine O'Donnell, who ran unsuccessfully for the Senate in 2006 and 2008 and has said she plans to run again.

In the current poll, both candidates are widely favored by their own parties. Republicans favored Castle 72 percent to 17 percent, and Democrats liked **Biden** 65 percent to 21 percent. **Biden**'s support among Democrats increased since Susquehanna's April poll, when it was only 52 percent for him, versus 36 percent against.

Democrats hold a substantial lead in voter registration over Republicans in Delaware, 286,282 to 180,039, according to the state Department of Elections.

Castle also dropped among voters who classified themselves as independent, a number that totals 142,315 in Delaware. He led almost 2 to 1 in Susquehanna's April survey, but only held a 5-point margin in the new poll.

Eric Schultz, spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, said he never "puts too much stock into polls 12 months from the election, but the new polls shows it's going to be a big battle with both sides all in. This poll shows that Castle is vulnerable."

Castle, who first ran for public office in 1966, has never lost in 15 Delaware elections -- for state House, state Senate, lieutenant governor, governor and since 1992, the U.S. House. Additional Facts

LATEST POLL

The poll, taken Nov. 10 to 15, surveyed 850 registered Delaware voters who voted in the 2006 or 2008 general election.

Attorney General Beau **Biden**: 45%

U.S. Rep. Mike Castle: 40%
6 percent chose another candidate; 8 percent were undecided
Margin of error: +/- 3.36 percentage points
Source: Susquehanna Polling and Research Inc. of Harrisburg

Casino Developers Roll Dice (WILNJ)

By Maureen Milford, The News Journal
Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

As Delaware considers whether to expand casino gambling in the state, the developers who put together the deal that became the $429 million Harrah's Chester Casino & Racetrack in nearby Chester, Pa., are buying waterfront land in Wilmington for a casino project.

Kevin Flynn, a real estate developer in Philadelphia and George Miller, a lawyer-entrepreneur in Atlantic City who worked with Donald Trump, have signed a sales contract on 20 acres overlooking the Christina River on the Seventh Street peninsula, Flynn said. He declined to give the price but said the sale is contingent on the passage of state legislation to allow additional venues, approval from the city and the resolution of issues related to access from I-495.

"We've looked all over Wilmington and this was the best site," said Flynn, a principle with F&M Peninsula Properties.

Earlier this decade, Flynn and Miller were among a trio that bought the land in Chester, got zoning approvals, secured a harness racing license, worked for gaming legislation in Pennsylvania and brought in the Las Vegas casino giant, Harrah's Entertainment Inc. They still own a portion of that project, which opened nearly three years ago.

For Delaware developers, F&M ups the ante in any potential horse race for a casino in Wilmington.

"These guys are not just local guys. They're the real deal," said Larry Tarabicos, attorney for F&M. "Kevin and George have done this before -- there's nothing that needs to be done in Wilmington that they haven't done before in the city of Chester. No one else to date that surfaced can say the same thing. These guys are not speculators."

A handful of other real estate developers have been working behind the scenes to position their Wilmington sites for consideration should the state decide to move beyond its three existing racinos. What all the sites share in common is proximity to one of the city's rivers.

Gambling in Delaware is currently limited to the horse racing tracks in Dover, Harrington and Stanton. Until this summer, gambling was limited to slot machines at those venues. The General Assembly legalized sports betting and table games and is studying whether to allow them at other sites.

Some legislators have said they want to expand gambling to sites in Sussex County and Wilmington.

Wilmington landowners, including Flynn, said they are waiting for the findings of the Sports and Video Lottery Commission. The panel, created by the same law that permits sports betting and legalized table games, is charged with studying the impact of additional casino venues in Delaware.

"We're hoping the involvement of a legitimate casino developer might have some impact on the outcome," Tarabicos said.

The commission will not give thumbs up or down to additional casinos, but will lay out the economic impact of more venues, said Joe Rogalsky, spokesman for Gov. Jack Markell. The report to lawmakers is not expected to be completed until the beginning of January, Rogalsky said.

If the report finds a positive impact of the casinos, Markell and lawmakers would have to talk about "how to get there with legislation," Rogalsky said.

For existing landowners it could mean hitting the jackpot.

"There's no question a casino would be a desirable use for anybody," said Frank Acierno, a real estate investor who has roughly 17 acres off Governor Printz Boulevard near the Delaware River.

While Acierno said at this point he's not actively pushing his site, located across the highway from the vacant Merchants Square shopping center, he said there have been discussions with the city. Insiders said the project would need to be annexed into the city.

Acierno said he's also talked to officials at the Las Vegas casino organization controlled by gaming impresario Steve Wynn.

"It's not my business," Acierno said of gaming.

Greg Pettinaro of Pettinaro Enterprises in Newport, who owns a roughly 22-acre parcel on A Street in Southbridge, said his property could make a good casino site. His has no definite plan, at this point, but is waiting for the commission report and legislation, he said.

"It's definitely something we'd consider. When we know the criteria, we'll evaluate it and see if it's worth taking a run at," Pettinaro said.

Pettinaro said he might partner with a gaming company.

Another potential casino site, on A Street, is one first unveiled in 2003. A six-acre parcel on the south side of the Christina River just east of the Walnut Street Bridge, was part of a proposed hotel and slot-machine casino called Riverfest Slots.

Since then, some of the players in the development have changed, but landowners South Bank Associates, which includes Wilmington investors Hunter Lott and Denis O'Sullivan, would like their site to be considered if legislation is passed, Lott said. South Bank bought the former six-building Krapfcandoit property on A Street in 2001.

"We'll probably engage somebody to do economic analysis for us," Lott said. "We want to be able to be considered at the same time as everybody else."

Another site being discussed is the former NVF property on Maryland Avenue and Beech Street. Jerome Heisler Jr., one of the owners, declined to comment. But city officials said Heisler has met with Mayor James M. Baker.

The Seventh Street property secured by Flynn and Miller encompasses land that had previously been proposed for a gaming entertainment playground in 2005. Known as Diamond Point, it called for a hotel, slots casino, dinner theater, restaurants, shops and a public marina.

Now, Peninsula Ventures VIII LLC, which includes lawyer Andrew Aerenson, is selling a portion of its property to Flynn and Miller, Aerenson said. He said Peninsula Ventures would still retain an interest of the Flynn-Miller project.

"I think [Flynn and Miller] are probably going to look at something different now," Tarabicos said.

Flynn said he has not finalized any plans, but "has a lot of ideas."

"I think everybody's interested in having their site selected. I know we'll be ready," Aerenson said.

After Nearly 25 Years, NCCo Superior Court Judge Stepping Down (WILNJ)

By Sean O'Sullivan, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

WILMINGTON -- There will be a vacancy on New Castle County Superior Court at the end of this month while, at the same time, U.S. District Court in Wilmington will be marking its third year short a judge.

Superior Court Judge John E. Babiarz Jr. has notified Gov. Jack Markell of his intention not to seek a third term Nov. 25, when his term expires.

Babiarz, 68, currently the state's longest-serving Superior Court judge, was appointed to the bench in 1985 and re-appointed, in 1997.

It will now be up to Markell to select a successor - who will be a member of the Democratic Party to maintain the political balance on the Delaware bench -- and submit that name to the state Senate for approval.

"I am proud and gratified to have been a part of this court and to have participated in every aspect of its work. I hope that I have made a contribution," wrote Babiarz in his letter to Markell.

Babiarz told Markell that Superior Court is "the most challenging jurisdiction in the court system," noting its important role in civil and criminal law - including death penalty cases -- and its role as an appellate court for state administrative agencies and local government.

Babiarz did not indicate his future plans in the letter and could not be reached for comment Tuesday, but Markell spokesman Joe Rogalsky said the judge has agreed to stay on until his replacement is seated.

The search process already is under way and today is the final day for applicants to submit their names to the state's Judicial Nominating Commission. Rogalsky said the governor hopes to have a name for the Senate to consider by January.

Before joining the bench, Babiarz was a private practice attorney who was a partner at Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnel and served as the president of the Delaware Trial Lawyers Association.

Meanwhile, a block up the street from New Castle County Superior Court, the federal court in Delaware still is waiting for someone to be named to fill the vacancy created by the departure of Judge Kent A. Jordan in December 2006 to the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals.

Politics and inaction by Democrats and Republicans in Washington have kept the seat empty for three years and there seems to be little urgency in the Capitol to make the Delaware court whole again.

Former U.S. Attorney Colm F. Connolly, a Republican, had been named as Jordan's replacement by President George W. Bush, but that nomination was never acted on by the U.S. Senate and expired at the end of Bush's term in 2008.

Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., submitted three names of Democrats to the White House in May, but the Obama administration has yet to send a nominee forward to the U.S. Senate for confirmation. There also have been no reports of the White House starting a background check for a nominee -- as is reportedly happening to fill the position of U.S. Attorney for Delaware.

The three people who are believed to be up for consideration are federal Magistrate Judge Leonard Stark, attorney Andre Bouchard and attorney Mary B. Graham.

There are only four district judges in Delaware so the absence of one has a significant impact.

Many civil cases have been delayed and despite assistance from surrounding federal courts, which have taken on some of Delaware's civil cases to ease the load, federal court calendars in Delaware are packed with proceedings sometimes starting as early as 6:30 a.m. and often ending well past 5 p.m.

At least one judge's civil calendar for 2010 already is full.

While the Delaware federal judges are receiving some help on the civil side, they are not for criminal matters where three -- Chief Judge Gregory M. Sleet and District Judges Joseph J. Farnan and Sue L. Robinson -- continue to handle the work of four.

And looming as an additional burden for the court is that one of the three, Farnan, is eligible for retirement in June.

Neither Carper's office nor the White House offered an explanation on why it is taking so long to fill the vacant position on the federal bench in Delaware. According to the administrative offices of the U.S. Courts, there are 98 federal judicial vacancies across the country, including the one in Delaware, with nominations for 19 of those vacancies, including the one in Delaware, pending from the Obama administration in the U.S. Senate.

Carper's office issued a brief statement indicating that the senator has made it clear to the White House the importance of getting a nominee to the Senate to fill the vacancy soon.

Plugging In To Sun's Power (WILNJ)

By Jeff Montgomery, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

In a new sign of solar energy's burgeoning clout, a study has concluded that Newark and the University of Delaware could affordably tap rooftop sunlight for more than three-quarters of daytime power needs using readily available equipment and financing.

The finding appeared in a study dubbed "Creating a Solar City," led by the university's Center for Energy and Environmental Policy (CEEP).

Using maps and aerial photos, researchers found thousands of Newark-area rooftop surfaces suitable for solar panel grids. By conservative standards, the combined areas could generate as much 96.4 megawatts, displacing up to 76.3 percent of city and university daytime consumption, and 32 percent of 24-hour average needs.

"We made it clear in the report that the potential is there," said John Byrne, CEEP director. "The project is financeable. It's cost-effective to do in Newark. Whether you can do it on the scale of the United States is another question." The study's authors recommended small steps initially, although the overall venture was described as "well within the ability" of residents, businesses and the university. Installation of 10 megawatts over the next five years, about 10 percent of the potential envisioned in the study, would meet Newark's share of Delaware's current minimum solar energy target for the year 2019.

"If people went to even modest energy conservation, plus solar, what the study points out is that it's well within the grasp of most cities to be self-sustaining," said Ken Becker, a financial expert and solar company founder who reviewed the report. Use of a third-party installer or utility would shield residents and businesses from up-front financing costs, he added.

The center study was the latest in a series of looks at renewable energy options, an effort sponsored by the Public Service Commission and state public advocate. Past studies have looked at everything from solar power for poultry houses to more-aggressive use of energy conservation contracts for government buildings.

Delaware -- ranked eighth nationwide last year based on per-capita installations of solar photovoltaic systems -- has seen a recent surge in solar projects and proposals. The rush led to cutbacks in utility rebate programs, prompted by worries that a years-long backlog for payments would only worsen as solar demand grows.

High public rebates and tax credits, supportive state policies and spillover from New Jersey's huge solar electricity installation market all have contributed to Delaware's standing, officials said. The state's small size also distorts its ranking, however, with a 10 megawatt project noticeably increasing Delaware's per-capita use.

Recent major installation proposals include a planned 10 megawatt solar farm in east Dover that would supply 2.3 percent of the capital city's needs, with a possibility of additional output from adjacent industrial rooftops. The University of Delaware earlier this year announced a 6 megawatt minimum solar goal under its plan to to reduce the greenhouse gas toll of its energy consumption.

Across the country, solar projects made up 13 percent of all utility company generating proposals this year, up from 6 percent in 2008, according to the Edison Electric Institute, an industry group.

"It's real. It works. The technology is out there. It's off-the-shelf," said Monique Hanis, spokeswoman for the Solar Energy Industries Association. "In the Mid-Atlantic states, it's very plausible."

Newark Electric Department director Sam Sneeringer was less bullish.

"It will be a long time before you could get everyone on. I don't know how it would work when it gets to the point where everyone has a system," Sneeringer said.

Newark Councilman Stu Markham, who had an energy-saving geothermal heating and cooling system installed in his home last year, said he wanted to know more about the findings. A city-sponsored rebate program to support solar and other clean energy investments, he said, already has a several year backlog.

"Certainly we're interested in solar and other alternative energy sources," Markham said, adding that he was speaking only as one council member. "But we don't have the money to invest right now. We have a severely tight budget."

Patricia J. Brill, a retired nurse and longtime resident of Nottingham Manor, said she supports pursuit of clean energy, but wants more questions asked.

"I'm all for anything that can save energy, but I live in a very densely shaded neighborhood, and people like trees here," Brill said. "I'd love to see it, and if we can make it work, I'm totally for it, but I'd want to know more about how practical it is in Delaware."

The CEEP report noted that its calculations were based only on rooftops and surfaces with the best exposures to sunlight. Potential electricity yields could prove even higher if solar panels are installed in other workable but less than perfect areas.

A full-on solar rooftop campaign, the report cautioned, could swamp current subsidy programs, driving down the value of renewable energy credits. Those credits are bought and sold by utilities, helping to hold down the final price of solar installations.

At current rates, typical solar rigs for individual homes could cost from $10,890 to $17,626, with paybacks ranging from 7.5 to 12.5 years, depending on subsidy rates. A large-scale, 250 kilowatt commercial system could cost as much as $516,000, but would pay for itself in 5.5 to 8 years.

Brian C. Yerger, a consultant and analyst with AERCA Advisors in Wilmington who evaluated the CEEP report, said the fact that the financing worked out means the Newark project is feasible.

"It was financeable. That obviously goes a long way to making it practical and realistic," he said.

Rep. John Kowalko, D-Newark, said the idea should be explored.

"If we can get the investment money for the initial solar installation, it would have two benefits -- it would save money in the long run and it would provide another way to separate us from dependency on fossil fuels," Kowalko said.

State law currently obliges utilities to gradually increase use of solar, with a goal of covering 2 percent of needs through sunlight by 2019 -- or about 175 megawatts for all suppliers combined across the state.

Newark's share of the 2019 solar renewable goal would be about 10 megawatts, based on the city's portion of Delaware's population, the study noted. Local officials could start out with 10 megawatts, half the size of Dover's announced project, and gradually expand.

"If city planning embraced such goals for its own building stock, a 10 megawatt distributed solar power plant would serve nearly 10 percent of the community's daylight hours electricity needs," the report noted.

The state's new Sustainable Energy Utility, Byrne said, is seeking proposals for "sustainable community" renewable energy ventures that bundle individual proposals.

The bundling approach could make it easier for owners of a large block of large commercial buildings or farming groups to jointly invest in rooftop solar, wind or geothermal energy projects and qualify for subsidies.

State farm organizations already have shown interest in bundled or cooperative efforts to put wind and solar rigs around cropland or other idle property.

Scott Johnson, co-founder of Wilmington-based SolarDock, said that renewable energy and solar prospects are changing fast.

The Department of Energy has estimated that solar now accounts for less than 1 percent of the state's overall production, and will remain too costly for large, utility scale use.

Byrne said that the race to develop plug-in hybrid electric vehicles like those envisioned for Fisker Automotive's Boxwood Road plant could mean more markets for solar.

Carport-type charging stations equipped with rooftop panels could be deployed to give a daytime shot of juice to car users who otherwise would have to find a plug-in station or wait for overnight charge-ups.

Yerger, the financial adviser, said that hitching Newark to sunlight on a large scale could prove tricky.

"You'd have to have a lot of people on board," Yerger said. "But these projects are eminently more viable on a smaller scale."

SEU Discusses Buying Dover Solar Credits (WILNJ)

By Aaron Nathans, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

NEWARK -- The Sustainable Energy Utility is expected to spend millions to buy renewable energy credits from a large Dover solar installation.

The SEU, the state-created, nonprofit energy efficiency organization, is negotiating a contract under which Delmarva Power would assume the purchase of the credits from a Dover solar park operator at the same price in about six years. Delmarva would also buy out the credits already purchased by the SEU.

The SEU Oversight Board met Tuesday at the University of Delaware, discussing the Dover Sun Park, which has been described as the first utility-scale solar power plant on the East Coast north of Florida. The plant will be built on 90 acres of the Garrison Oak Technology Park, owned by the city of Dover.

Dover is expected to buy all of the electricity generated by the installation, which is expected to deliver between 14,000 and 19,000 megawatt hours per year, when it turns on late next year or in 2011.

Solar power is generally more expensive to produce than power generated from a fossil fuel burning plant. So to make solar more cost-effective, for each unit of electricity created by a solar installation, the owner also gets a credit to sell on the open market.

Utilities can buy the credits to fulfill their state-mandated renewable energy power purchase requirements.

LS Power of East Brunswick, N.J., is building the solar project, and is negotiating with Delmarva Power, Delaware's municipal utilities and the SEU to buy the renewable energy credits generated by the project.

"We're thrilled to be a significant partner in the development of this solar power plant here in Delaware," said Bridget Shelton, Delmarva spokeswoman. She said negotiations between LS and Delmarva are close to concluding.

Delmarva is required by state law to buy about one-hundredth of one percent of its electricity load from solar sources this year. That percentage increases steadily each year, and goes up sharply in 2016. By 2019, Delmarva will need to buy 2 percent of its load from solar sources.

One of the SEU's chairmen, John Byrne, said the idea behind the SEU's purchase of the credits is to make sure Delmarva still needs to buy more solar credits from other sources between now and 2016.

That will help make it possible for Delaware homeowners and small business owners to put up solar installations, he said.

The SEU is still negotiating the purchase price for the credits, Byrne said. A typical price for credits from a large project would be $250 to $275 per megawatt hour, he said.

The SEU will buy 20 percent of the solar park's credits, meaning the annual value of the SEU's purchase in the early years could be $700,000 to $1 million, declining as the solar panels become less effective with time.

Residents Eager To See Plans For Columbus Inn (WILNJ)

By Adam Taylor, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

WILMINGTON -- Louis Capano III, who bought the Columbus Inn earlier this year, recently brought the chef for the restaurant he plans to re-open soon to a community meeting.

Capano said he was surprised to learn that residents eager to learn about his plans for the property would have been happier if he had brought a land-use planner instead.

The landmark Pennsylvania Avenue restaurant dates to 1789 but has been closed for two years. Capano figured his plan to re-open the popular eatery in a few months would be welcomed with open arms, then he would figure out what he would do with the rest of the parcel in a few years.

But now, thanks to a change in the city's land-use plan last year, Capano has an immediate battle on his hands with City Council and some of the property's neighbors.

"I don't even want to fight," he said. "All I'm asking for is a little time, and I'd like to preserve my property rights while the rest of the property sits."

That's not how things will take place.

City officials and residents, still smarting from a plan by a different developer two years ago that almost saw a 10-story condominium tower rise on the property, want to know right away what his plans are for the rest of the property. And they want to link approval for a re-opening of the restaurant to a plan that would prohibit such a large building.

When Councilmen Paul Ignudo and Steve Martelli left the Nov. 9 meeting with Capano and the chef dissatisfied, they sent an e-mail to residents asking them to attend Tuesday night's Wilmington Planning Commission meeting to support a zoning change for the non-restaurant portion of the property that would limit the use to single homes.

The e-mail also suggested that residents oppose the zoning variances Capano needs to re-open the restaurant, which will be decided separately by the city's zoning board.

"We should seriously consider, as a community, whether or not we should support a use-variance for a property owner that is already not willing to work with the neighborhood," Ignudo's and Martelli's e-mail said.

The reason a variance is needed for the restaurant is that the old Columbus Inn restaurant was always a nonconforming use in a residential neighborhood. City law requires that the nonconforming use status be renewed if a business is vacant for more than a year.

The issues surrounding the property pre-date Capano's purchase, beginning in 2007 when the property's then-owner Davis Cezna reached a sales agreement with Ocean Atlantic Associates. At that time, Ocean Atlantic announced plans to demolish part of the restaurant and put up the condo tower. The plan outraged many neighbors who said the building would be out of character with the neighborhood.

In response to that plan and other large projects in the Delaware Avenue, Trolley Square, 40 acres and Highlands neighborhoods, city officials scampered to rezone the entire area to prevent more big development proposals. The rezoning package was passed last year. The new zoning designations essentially call for smaller, less-dense uses of properties in the area.

But because the plans for the condo tower at the Columbus Inn property were filed before the changes were approved, the plan was allowed to proceed. City officials did include language in the rezoning specific to the Columbus Inn property stating that if the Ocean Atlantic deal fell through, the property's zoning allowing for large apartment buildings would be changed to prohibit them.

When Ignudo learned in August that Ocean Atlantic had backed out of the deal with Cezna, he introduced an ordinance that would change the zoning to allow for nothing larger than single or twin homes on the site. Ignudo said the purpose of the new zoning is to prevent a plan for another 10-story condo tower, now or in the future.

"This has nothing to do with Mr. Capano's proposal," Ignudo said. "It's about preserving the property in a way that is consistent with the rest of the neighborhood."

The planning commission, while reviewing Ignudo's ordinance last month, gave Capano 30 days to meet with the community. The hope was for a successful negotiation that would allow Capano to re-open the restaurant and build something on the rest of the site that all parties could agree on.

Since that effort failed, the commission Tuesday night attempted a compromise, voting to recommend that Council approve a zoning designation that would allow for an apartment building of up to five stories. Council could vote on that as early as next month.

Residents Susan Collins and Harry Haon object to that, saying that only single or twin homes are appropriate.

Capano isn't prepared to make a choice now and wants to keep the current zoning status intact to preserve his options.

"The community has been dealing with this for years, but I've only been dealing with it for days," he said. "In time I think I will come up with a plan that the community will be comfortable with. But I'm not building in the near future, and I just don't know what that plan is yet."

High-density Development Gets Closer To Reality (WILNJ)

By Angie Basiouny, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Residents battling a high-density development proposed off U.S. 202 in Talleyville were dealt a blow Tuesday when New Castle County gave two recommendations for the project to move ahead.

The county Department of Land Use and the Planning Board agreed the 15-acre site, to be named Columbia Place at Garden of Eden Road, should be rezoned to accommodate a greater number of dwellings.

County Council still must give the ultimate approval, but the nods from the department and the board bolster developer Jerome Heisler's plan to buy the land from the Pilot School and convert it into an age-restricted community with a mix of 149 single-family homes, two-story town houses and condominiums.

Residents in adjacent Tavistock and Edenridge III are worried about how the proposed density of 10 units per acre -- higher than any of the surrounding neighborhoods -- will affect the character of the community and the quality of life.

Nearly a dozen residents voiced their concerns in a public hearing earlier this month that lasted more than two hours. The nine appointed members of the Planning Board followed up Tuesday with more than an hour of debate over whether they should follow the positive recommendation offered by Land Use. They voted 4-3, with one member abstaining.

"I'm torn," said Planning Board member Victor Udo, explaining why he did not vote. "On one side, I think it's a good project, but on the other side I think the density is too much."

Residents said their fight isn't over yet.

They will continue working to persuade the 13 council members to oppose the rezoning when it comes before them for a vote, likely in January. Without a rezoning from "suburban" to "suburban transition," Heisler will be limited to a density of about 1.25 dwellings per acre.

"We're disappointed with the outcome," said Jim Higgins, who lives in Edenridge III. "We really believe ... this is dropping urban development in a suburban area."

At least one councilman, Robert Weiner, whose district includes the site, has said he will vote against the rezoning in support of his constituents.

Heisler declined to comment Tuesday.

He said previously that he believes Columbia Place is a good fit for the area already marked by heavy retail and residential. Land Use and Planning Board members agreed Tuesday, saying the project follows the county's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, which calls for infill development along nearly built-out corridors such as U.S. 202.

"In general, I feel like if we can't do this type of development here in this area, where can we do it?" longtime board member Mark Weinberg said.

Weinberg voted in favor of the rezoning but said it was "one of the most difficult" decisions he's ever made, partly because of the well-articulated arguments made by the residents.

The Pilot School wants to relocate about a mile north and needs to sell the land to do so. Heisler did not disclose the amount of money the school is seeking, but he told county officials he needs the density to make the deal work.

Officials said the financial issues between Heisler and the school were irrelevant in researching whether the project should be granted greater density.

Higgins said hearing the lengthy debate was an eye-opener for the residents. The project is considered a redevelopment, which means Heisler is entitled to density bonuses offered under a county law devised several years ago to encourage developers to stay away from building on pristine land.

Higgins said residents need to be more involved with elected leaders in the crafting of land-use legislation.

"One of the big lessons of all of this that I'm learning is that we in the civic community all fall down on the job by not being on top of this stuff as the rules are written," he said.

Unemployment Benefits Extended For 14 Weeks (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Out of work Delawareans will be eligible for an additional 14 weeks of unemployment benefits after the state implemented an extension approved by the federal government last week.

"These benefits will help Delawareans who have been hit hard by the national economic recession get back on their feet," Gov. Jack Markell said in a statement Tuesday.

The extension allows residents to collect benefits for a maximum of 93 weeks, an extension from the previous 79-week maximum. Anyone whose unemployment benefits had run out can qualify for the extended benefits. The extension will be federally funded.

Information regarding eligibility is available at www.delawareworks.com or by calling the Unemployment Insurance Information Hotline at 761-6576 for New Castle County residents and (800) 794-3032 for Kent and Sussex county residents.

Working Together For Young Ones (WILNJ)

By Edward L. Kenney, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

With three early childhood centers -- and another on the way if the upcoming referendum passes -- the Appoquinimink School District has buttressed with action the belief that children should start learning well before grade school.

But it has not stopped there. Rather than wait for children ages 3 to 5 to enroll in the centers, district leaders have developed an outreach program that trains Middletown-area day care providers to give the children an even earlier head start.

"In the past, the school district and the community providers sort of passed [like ships] in the night, so to speak, yet we're all sharing the same kids," said Sandra Cohee, principal at the Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center. "We give them a more in-depth view of what we do at school. This has opened up a conduit of information."

Cohee, the leaders of the other two early childhood centers and an educational diagnostician make up the leadership in a newly formed Preschool Coalition Committee that plans training for the day care providers.

The district has worked with the providers informally for the past 10 years, beginning when the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center opened its doors as the first such center in the district, she said.

But this year marks an effort to give the initiative better structure, a move necessitated both because of district growth and the growing number of day care centers in the Middletown area, now about 15.

"There are other districts that are doing similar things, but not as formalized as we are doing it," Cohee said. "It's a great idea. And it really has opened up communication, so we are on the same page as the providers."

"Developing this liaison helps to build a bridge," added committee member Lucia Weathers, assistant principal at the Townsend Early Childhood Center.

Licensed day care providers are required by state law to receive 18 hours of training a year in subjects such as classroom management, parental involvement, developing fine and gross motor skills, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Providers usually have to pay for that training, but the district offers it free, holding sessions as part of evening dinner meetings that have drawn as many as 75 day care people.

Meetings are held every two to three months and are assigned a training theme, Cohee said. One scheduled for January will be about discipline.

Rene Nolen, the principal at the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center and a member of the Preschool Coalition Committee, said the district also can teach things that will help the children with social skills such as sharing and teamwork, paving the way for the more academic lessons to come.

"Then when they get here, they're ready for reading and words and counting," she said.

"The kindergarten year is so critical," added fellow committee member Kathy Gertley, a district educational diagnostician who used to go out on her own to the day care centers before things got better organized. "It just sets them up for success in their educational career.

"We want them to instill in them the love of learning," she said of the day care providers.

As an owner of the Kiddie Academy childcare center in Middletown, Susan Tudor appreciates the training the district is giving her 20 teachers.

"It's a good opportunity to get those hours and not have to pay for it," she said. "In early childcare, it's definitely not a career you go into to make money. As a business owner, I wish I could say I will pay for all your training, but I can't afford it."

Tudor also likes what the teachers are taking away from the training, which cannot help but benefit the 115 children at her day care center.

"I think it helps educate my teachers, giving them different ideas," she said. "They can kind of feed off each other. I think it gives them a chance to grow together. It keeps my teachers fresh and aware of what's going on out there."

Said Weathers, "Those centers know that we value what they do, and just knowing that helps them to keep coming back."

Back To School, But In A Different Dress (WILNJ/AP)

By Alan Clendenning, Associated Press

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

SAO PAULO -- Brushing back freshly dyed blond hair as she posed for pictures, the Brazilian woman whose short pink dress got her kicked out of college said Tuesday she's enjoying her newfound fame, but wants go back to school -- with a security guard.

Just the day before, 20-year-old Geisy Arruda took her first trip on an airplane so she could relive her experience in a comedy skit on one of Brazil's most popular television shows.

Star-struck business executives on the flight to Rio de Janeiro asked if she really was Geisy, then used their cell phones to snap pictures of themselves with her.

It was heady stuff for a 20-year-old freshman from a blue-collar industrial suburb who says she just wants to get a tourism degree so she can fulfill dreams of working for a resort or a cruise line someday.

She'd already appeared on two of Brazil's top interview programs, recounting how she was hounded from the campus of Bandeirantes University in October by male students yelling "Whore! Whore!" and was then expelled by school officials.

The private university, which doesn't have a conservative reputation, backtracked amid a national uproar and said last week she was welcome to return for her regular routine of night classes.

But Arruda's lawyer says she won't go back until she's promised a well-trained security guard to accompany her on campus.

Wearing a black halter top with dressy eggplant-colored satin shorts for an interview with the Associated Press, the daughter of a cleaning company supervisor and a housewife beamed after finding out the AP is an American news agency.

"How cool!" she gushed just before the start of the interview in her lawyer's office.

Then to the photographer as she adjusted her lengthy tresses and took a last look at her brightly painted red nails: "Hey guy, do I look pretty?"

She said she's still stumped that an outfit, no matter how short, would cause such an uproar in a tropical nation where skimpy clothing and tiny bikinis barely raise an eyebrow.

And she again denied the university's claim that she paraded provocatively and raised the dress, resulting in the expulsion.

Arruda said one young man said he liked her looks, then more joined in. Soon other students loudly proclaimed they wanted to have sex with her, snapping pictures with their cell phones. Hundreds were drawn to the scene, creating a sort of mob mentality, Arruda said. Chants of "Whore! Whore!" erupted from the mob as she was escorted from the university in a borrowed white lab coat.

"It was total terror," Arruda recalled. "And the worst thing was that I had no idea why it was happening."

"I think they just didn't want to study and this was fun for them, the big happening at school for the year, and I was just the joke of the year," Arruda said.

Arruda said she had worn the dress to classes once before, in March, with no reaction. Arruda said she chose the dress because she was heading to a birthday party with friends after class.

After fleeing the campus in tears, she hasn't returned. A spokeswoman for the university said Tuesday that students who scared and ridiculed her in the near riot won't be expelled.

Arruda is convinced her future is in tourism, and now she might get a job more easily, whether she eventually graduates from Bandeirantes University or not.

Above all, she said, she wants to make more money to help her parents move from the roughly built concrete block home they expanded bit by bit over the years to accommodate a growing family after moving to Sao Paulo from Brazil's impoverished northeast about 30 years ago.

Arruda thinks it's a funny twist of fate that she became famous in Brazil and across the planet after her story went wild on the Internet.

"I still can't believe it," she said. "It's like a real strange, stupid movie."

Even Santas Starting To Guard Against Swine Flu (WILNJ/AP)

By Holly Ramer, Associated Press

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

CONCORD, N.H. -- Forget cookies and milk. Santa wants the swine flu vaccine.

Many of the nation's Santas want to be given priority for the vaccine, and not just because of those runny-nosed kids. There's also the not-so-little matter of that round belly. Research has suggested obesity could be a risk factor.

Swine flu has become such a concern that the Amalgamated Order of Real Bearded Santas featured a seminar on the illness at a recent conference in Philadelphia. The group also urged its members to use hand sanitizer and take vitamins to boost their immune systems.

The president of the organization said he also hopes parents will keep sick kids away.

"We don't want any child to go without seeing Santa, but it's not worth bringing your child to the mall, infecting the Santa and infecting the other children," Nicholas Trolli said.

He recalled a boy who informed him last year that he had a fever and had stayed home from school. But, the child said, his mother thought it was a good day to visit Santa.

Ernest Berger, president of another group called Santa America, asked an Alabama congressman last week to designate Santas a priority group for the swine flu vaccine, like health care workers or infant caregivers.

A spokesman for Republican Rep. Jo Bonner confirmed Berger's request and said staff members were looking into it.

Berger hopes Santas will use hand sanitizer and encourage children to do the same, without turning the experience into a hygiene lecture.

"It's a delicate balance here. This is not an exercise in health care. This is visiting Santa," he said.

Berger estimates that about two-thirds of all American Santas are overweight, and about a third are morbidly obese.

That raises health concerns because some research has suggested obesity could be a risk factor for severe swine flu.

A high proportion of those who have gotten severely ill from swine flu have been obese or extremely obese. But health officials have also said that might be due to the fact that heavy people tend to have asthma and other conditions that make them more susceptible.

The 200 or so Santas who volunteer to visit sick or grieving children through Santa America will be washing their suits daily instead of weekly and will not be wearing gloves this year so they can wash their hands frequently, Berger said.

John Scheuch of Prairie Village, Kan., said he might suggest to parents that they come back another time if a child is visibly ill.

"The kids are in the strollers, sniffling and coughing and hacking. ... In the meantime, they're interacting with other kids in line."

Scheuch, executive director of Santa America, has taken some personal precautions.

"I've had my H1N1. I've had my seasonal flu shot. This is my year for my pneumonia booster," he said. "I don't know what else I can do except encapsulate myself in plastic."

In Nashua, N.H., hand-sanitizing stations have been set up around the Pheasant Lane Mall, including just outside the picket fence surrounding the Santa Claus area. But on a recent Saturday, not one of the dozen or so families who passed through used it.

Susen Mesco, owner of American Events and Promotions in Denver, Colo., said her Santas will be changing gloves every three hours and washing them in anti-bacterial soap.

Dr. Jack Turco, director of health services at Dartmouth College, said Santa might consider greeting children from a few feet away rather than holding them on his lap, or asking children with coughs to stand in a separate line.

"If we take this really seriously, and I think we should because people are dying, it wouldn't be inappropriate to say this is a year maybe we shouldn't do these mass gatherings," he said.

Abundance Of Food Drives Makes It Easy To Help Needy For Holidays (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

With a little more than a week to go before Thanksgiving, and requests for help more numerous this year, the Delaware Food Bank says it is running at about the same donation level as last year, thanks to some big food drives.

Collections by the University of Delaware, Chase, Wilmington Trust, Sallie Mae, Sodexo, DART and the Delaware Air National Guard, among others, have helped keep the shelves and freezers full for Thanksgiving baskets and dinners, said Kim Kostes, spokeswoman for the food bank.

DART's Stuff the Bus campaign saw a big increase in donations, up to 29,152 pounds of food from last year's 18,687.

The food bank, soup kitchens and other ministries that feed the hungry still need turkeys and other items for Thanksgiving dinners and baskets, with a lot of turkey and food drives set for the weekend and Monday to make the holiday deadline.

All say they are experiencing dramatic rises in need because of the continued effects of a depressed economy. At the Ministry of Caring's Emmanuel Dining Room on North Jackson Street, the number of baskets that area residents have signed up for has risen to 1,000 this year from 750 last November.

Here are the ongoing food drives The News Journal has been notified about so far, with new notifications at the top. If your organization is conducting a food drive, please send information about it, including daytime contact phone numbers for drive organizers, to features@delawareonline.com. We welcome Christmas food drive information, but will not print it until after Thanksgiving.

Ministry of Caring

WJBR's Turkeython to benefit The Ministry of Caring will be from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday Vans will be on site at the Pathmarks on Kirkwood Highway, Concord Pike and People's Plaza in Glasgow to collect birds, boxed stuffing and canned goods. Between the three sites, the group hopes to raise 1,000 turkeys. For more information, call 765-1160.

Delaware City Fire Company

The fire company's food drive will be Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will benefit the Delaware Food Bank.

Non-perishables may be dropped off at the Delaware City Fire House at 815 Fifth St., Delaware City through Sunday. For more information, call 834-9336.

Delaware Military Academy

The academy will hold a turkey drive Saturday between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and cadets will man a drive-through drop-off site at the campus, 112 Middleboro Road, near Banning Park. This is the second year the academy has collected turkeys that will be donated to Amvets Post 100 for needy military families.

In addition, the cadets have collected items and will be preparing military care packages to be sent to military troops serving abroad. For more information, call 998-0745.

UD Student Government Association

On Thursday and Friday, the Student Government Association at the University of Delaware is sponsoring a Thanksgiving food drive. Collection on Thursday will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the gallery at the Perkins Student Center. On Friday, donations can be dropped off from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Multipurpose Room C in the Trabant University Center and in the Collins Room at Perkins. All donations will go to the Food Bank of Delaware.

Bear Library

The Bear Library hosts an ongoing food collection for the Delaware Food Bank. Nonperishable food items are accepted during regular library hours, which are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday through Saturday; and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. The library is at 101 Governor's Place in Governors Square Shopping Center. For more information, call the reference desk at 838-3300.

Sunday Breakfast Mission

While Sunday Breakfast Mission leaders report strong response to a WSFS food drive and cash donations, the Wilmington charity had only three turkeys left last week. The mission distributes food boxes to needy families just prior to Thanksgiving, and leaders said they need 1,200 for their Great Thanksgiving Outreach.

Turkeys can be delivered to the mission at 110 N. Poplar St. For more information, call 652-8314.

Harvest Market Natural Food Store

Since June, the Harvest Market Natural Food Store in Hockessin has been making weekly donations of fresh and nonperishable foods to local food banks and shelters. For the month of November, the store has partnered with the Sunday Breakfast Mission to incorporate the donations with additional gifts from customers for the Thanksgiving drive.

Nonperishable donations are accepted all week, and fresh donations may be brought to the store each Wednesday. The store, at 7417 Lancaster Pike, is open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the week and from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday. It is closed Sunday.

Norman Oliver/NOR Enterprises annual turkey drive

Donations of turkeys and nonperishable food, such as stuffing mix and other side dishes, will be collected Tuesday through Tuesday, when they will be distributed to needy Wilmington residents. The drive, more than 25 years old, has a goal of 2,500 turkeys this year.

Donations can be dropped off at NOR Enterprises offices at 1213 B St. in South Wilmington. For more information, call 655-8250.

Giant Food drive

Area Giant Food stores have launched their 22nd annual Good Neighbor Food and Funds Drive.

Through Dec. 31, customers will have an opportunity to donate money or nonperishable food at the cash registers to benefit the Food Bank of Delaware.

Giant allows customers to add $1, $3 or $5 donations to their grocery bills.

The store provides collection carts for food items for the food bank.

Wilmington Jaycees turkey drive

The Wilmington Jaycees hope to provide a full Thanksgiving meal -- turkey included -- for 500 of the city's neediest families through the West End Neighborhood House.

But corporate support in these trying times has been hard to get, so they are asking anyone who gets a free turkey through grocery store points to donate the $14 they would have spent on a turkey so a needy family can have a happy Thanksgiving.

Donations can be made via Paypal at this link: http://wilmingtonjaycees.com/ Donate-A-Turkey.htm

Pump It Up Turkey Jump

Pump It Up, an indoor inflatable party facility, will hold a Turkey Jump to benefit the Food Bank of Delaware on Nov. 25.

From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. that day, anyone who brings a nonperishable food item to donate to the food bank will get $1 off the admission price of $8 for the open, non-reserved playtime.

For more information, go to www.pumpitupparty.com.

Friends of Newark Library drive for Food Bank of Delaware

The Friends of the Newark Library maintain an ongoing food drive for the Food Bank of Delaware. Collection barrels are next to the circulation desk.

They accept canned meats, peanut butter, pork and beans, canned soups and stews, fruit juice, beverages, instant breakfasts, canned vegetables, canned beans, canned fruits, rice and rice mixes, pasta and pasta mixes, powdered milk, evaporated milk, powdered creamer, pancake and waffle mix, baking mixes, cooking oils, condiments and powdered or liquid baby formula. They also accept diapers, toothpaste, mouthwash, dental floss, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, bar soap, liquid hand soap and paper products.

They will not accept baby food or homemade foods.

For more information, go to http://friendsofthenewarkfreelibrary.webs.com/fooddrive.htm

Basket Brigade of Delaware

With a goal of 2,000 turkeys, the group is sponsoring a turkey drive, with drop-off locations at all Seasons Pizza locations, and a virtual turkey drive on http://basketbrigadeofde.org.

Those who drop off a turkey at Seasons Pizza will receive a coupon for a free medium pizza. Those who donate $15 or more online will be entered in a drawing for two Eagles tickets, including sideline pregame passes, for the Dec. 27 game against Denver. The drawing will be held on basket delivery day, Nov. 23.

Police Dog Dies After Tumor Is Diagnosed (WILNJ)

By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Bandit, a New Castle County policed dog that was rushed to the University of Pennsylvania Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital after becoming ill, was euthanized Monday after being diagnosed with a inoperable brain tumor, police said Tuesday.

The 6-year-old German shepherd suddenly became ill Sunday night and immediately was hospitalized, county police Senior Cpl. Trinidad Navarro said.

Doctors discovered Bandit had an inoperable tumor on his brain stem.

Because of the dog's dire condition and the fact he was suffering, he was euthanized, Navarro said.

Bandit was surrounded by his handler Cpl. Paul Chickadel, family and friends when he died.

Navarro said the last time Bandit worked was Saturday night.

In 2008, Chickadel and Bandit were assigned to the A-Squad. The pair assisted in numerous money sniffs that resulted in $32,445 in seizures in drug investigations.

The pair handled 389 canine calls for service last year and also supported patrol in making four arrests.

In June, the team was certified in narcotics detection, tracking and patrol work by the National Police Canine Association.

Bandit served on the county police force for four years.

Navarro said arrangements have not been finalized for a memorial service.

Meanwhile, the condition of police dog Diablo, who was wounded last week in the line of duty, remains stable and unchanged, Navarro said.

Diablo developed pneumonia and is recovering from surgery in the hospital's intensive care unit.

Working Together For Young Ones (WILNJ)

By Edward L. Kenney, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

With three early childhood centers -- and another on the way if the upcoming referendum passes -- the Appoquinimink School District has buttressed with action the belief that children should start learning well before grade school.

But it has not stopped there. Rather than wait for children ages 3 to 5 to enroll in the centers, district leaders have developed an outreach program that trains Middletown-area day care providers to give the children an even earlier head start.

"In the past, the school district and the community providers sort of passed [like ships] in the night, so to speak, yet we're all sharing the same kids," said Sandra Cohee, principal at the Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center. "We give them a more in-depth view of what we do at school. This has opened up a conduit of information."

Cohee, the leaders of the other two early childhood centers and an educational diagnostician make up the leadership in a newly formed Preschool Coalition Committee that plans training for the day care providers.

The district has worked with the providers informally for the past 10 years, beginning when the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center opened its doors as the first such center in the district, she said.

But this year marks an effort to give the initiative better structure, a move necessitated both because of district growth and the growing number of day care centers in the Middletown area, now about 15.

"There are other districts that are doing similar things, but not as formalized as we are doing it," Cohee said. "It's a great idea. And it really has opened up communication, so we are on the same page as the providers."

"Developing this liaison helps to build a bridge," added committee member Lucia Weathers, assistant principal at the Townsend Early Childhood Center.

Licensed day care providers are required by state law to receive 18 hours of training a year in subjects such as classroom management, parental involvement, developing fine and gross motor skills, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Providers usually have to pay for that training, but the district offers it free, holding sessions as part of evening dinner meetings that have drawn as many as 75 day care people.

Meetings are held every two to three months and are assigned a training theme, Cohee said. One scheduled for January will be about discipline.

Rene Nolen, the principal at the Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center and a member of the Preschool Coalition Committee, said the district also can teach things that will help the children with social skills such as sharing and teamwork, paving the way for the more academic lessons to come.

"Then when they get here, they're ready for reading and words and counting," she said.

"The kindergarten year is so critical," added fellow committee member Kathy Gertley, a district educational diagnostician who used to go out on her own to the day care centers before things got better organized. "It just sets them up for success in their educational career.

"We want them to instill in them the love of learning," she said of the day care providers.

As an owner of the Kiddie Academy childcare center in Middletown, Susan Tudor appreciates the training the district is giving her 20 teachers.

"It's a good opportunity to get those hours and not have to pay for it," she said. "In early childcare, it's definitely not a career you go into to make money. As a business owner, I wish I could say I will pay for all your training, but I can't afford it."

Tudor also likes what the teachers are taking away from the training, which cannot help but benefit the 115 children at her day care center.

"I think it helps educate my teachers, giving them different ideas," she said. "They can kind of feed off each other. I think it gives them a chance to grow together. It keeps my teachers fresh and aware of what's going on out there."

Said Weathers, "Those centers know that we value what they do, and just knowing that helps them to keep coming back."

Police: Liquor Store Clerk Fatally Shoots Would-be Robber (WILNJ)

By Ira Porter, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

One of two men trying to rob a Wilmington liquor store Tuesday night was shot and killed by a store clerk who exchanged fire with the bandits in the store.

Police Master Sgt. Steven Barnes said the man killed in the 9:30 p.m. gunfire at Favor's Liquor Store, 1020 N. Walnut St., was able to exit the store and stagger 30 feet along a sidewalk before collapsing. Paramedics treated him, and he was rushed to Christiana Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 10:15 p.m.

The second holdup man fled on foot and police were using a dog to try and track him in the area near the store along 10th and 11th streets.

The clerk, said to be in his late 50s or early 60s, was being interviewed at police headquarters. Police said they found a .22-caliber handgun in the store that they think was left behind by one of the men attempting the robbery.

Two women were in the back of the store at the time of the robbery, but police do not know if they witnessed the crime.

Police said two men wearing masks entered the store brandishing handguns and ordered the clerk to hand over money from the register. They then rounded the counter in an attempt to get at the register and grab the cash themselves.

But the clerk also had a gun and opened fire, striking one of the masked men and forcing both to flee. Police do not know if the other gunman was hit during the exchange and were checking to see if any other gunshot victims show up at local hospitals.

Passers-by asked police about what happened as traffic was blocked off between 10th and 11th on Walnut.

A woman, who did not want to give her name, said she frequents the store, and the clerk is a "nice man."

"He usually has good deals on his cigarettes and beer," she said. "If someone tried to rob his store what was he supposed to do? He had to protect himself."

Police did not release the identities of the clerk or the man who died in the incident.

Middletown Chase Ends In Man's Arrest (WILNJ)

By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

A 19-year-old Townsend man was arrested Monday night after he allegedly stole a car outside a Townsend convenience store and led police on a pursuit through Middletown.

State police charged Vincenzo A. Tollis, 19, of Walnut Street, with felony reckless endangering, motor vehicle theft, disregarding a police officer's signal, resisting arrest, reckless driving, driving while suspended, habitual offender and nine other traffic offenses.

The incident unfolded about 6:38 p.m. outside Townsend Valero Shore Stop at 4235 Dupont Parkway. The car's owner left her 1996 Pontiac Bonneville running in the parking lot while she ran into the store to buy a pack of cigarettes, said state police spokesman Senior Cpl. Jeff Whitmarsh.

Tollis allegedly jumped into her running car and took off.

Police issued a general broadcast to be on the lookout for the car, which was spotted a short time later by some probation and parole officers who were in the Arby's parking lot on U.S. 301 in Middletown.

The probation and parole officers started following the car, which turned into Middletown Village and down Liborio Drive, a dead end street, Whitmarsh said.

At that point, Tollis stopped the car as the officers got out of their vehicle and approached him on foot. As they did, Tollis put the car in reverse and accelerated in the direction of the officers, who had to jump out of the way, Whitmarsh said.

Tollis drove east out of the neighborhood as additional officers converged on the area trying to find the car, he said.

Officers located the car on Cedar Lane Road and said Tollis drove into the community of Dove Run, speeding up and driving recklessly until officers discontinued the pursuit.

Whitmarsh said Tollis then took a fast turn into a curb on Remington Drive, leaving the Pontiac inoperable.

He ran off on foot and was found in a wooded area near Middletown High School by a state police K-9 team.

He is being held in the Young Correctional Institution in lieu of $13,500 cash bail.

Police are asking any witnesses to the vehicle theft at the Valero Shore Stop to call Troop 9 at 378-5218, ext.622, or Delaware Crime Stoppers at (800)TIP-3333.

Police Say Two Men Robbed Woman's Wedding Ring (WILNJ)

By Terri Sanginiti, The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

A Wilmington woman out for an early morning walk Saturday in Brandywine Park with her husband was robbed at gunpoint by two thieves who stole her wedding ring.

Wilmington police later arrested Bryan D. Roberts, of the 1800 block of N. Tatnall St., and Kendal Morris, of the 900 block of Linden St., both 18, and charged them with first-degree robbery, first-degree attempted robbery and conspiracy.

Roberts also was charged with aggravated menacing and carrying a concealed dangerous instrument, Master Sgt. John O'Connor said.

The incident occurred about 7:45 a.m. Saturday in the area of 16th and West streets. According to police, the couple was walking along a footpath when they were approached by the two men, one of whom carried what appeared to be a handgun, O'Connor said.

The man shoved the barrel of the gun in the woman's stomach and said, "Give me what ya got," according to court records.

The victims told the bandits that they didn't have anything.

Then 42-year-old woman took off her gold wedding band and handed it over to the gunman, police said. The two assailants turned to her 42-year-old husband and told him to remove his ring, but he couldn't get it off. The victim said the assailants kept yanking at her husband's ring but couldn't remove it.

Then they patted down the two victims to see if they were hiding any other valuables and ran west on North Park Drive toward the Brandywine Zoo with only the woman's inscribed slender gold band valued at $50.

The victims provided officers with a description of the assailants and they searched the area and found two men matching the bandits' descriptions headed west in the 1000 block of W. 18th St., O'Connor said.

The officers stopped the duo and found Roberts with a handgun -- later identified as a pellet gun -- in the waistband of his pants under his shirt.

Police later conducted a photo line-up for the victim who identified the two men.

Both men were committed to Young Correctional Institution in lieu of bail.

Troopers Recruiting For NCCo Citizens Academy (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

Delaware State Police are looking for people interested in participating in the 2009-2010 Citizens Police Academy in New Castle County.

Classes will start Dec. 22 and last for seven weeks. They will be held on Tuesday nights at Troop 2 in Glasgow.

Citizens will visit other troops, hear presentations and learn about the state police.

Anyone interested in participating can email dsp_pio@state.de.us or call Senior Cpl. Jeff Whitmarsh at 598-5188 during regular business hours.

Sussex Correctional Inmate, 36, Dies (WILNJ)

By The News Journal

Wilmington News Journal, November 18, 2009

A Newark man in prison for a felony died Friday at Beebe Medical Center in Lewes, prison officials reported Monday.

The Department of Correction said Gernell J. Archie, 36, who was sentenced to more than eight years for possession of a deadly weapon, robbery, and theft, was housed at the Sussex Correctional Institution.

Archie began serving his sentence on March 30, 2008.

He was pronounced dead at 5:55 p.m. His body was to be turned over to the state Medical Examiner's Office.

No foul play is suspected.

BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Police Car Ahead Of Biden Crashes (NYT)

By Anahad O'Connor

New York Times, November 18, 2009

A police car assisting Vice President Joseph R. **Biden** Jr.'s motorcade collided with another vehicle on the West Side of Manhattan on Tuesday as Mr. **Biden** was on his way to appear on a television show, the police said.

The accident took place just before 6 p.m. on the corner of West 49th Street and 10th Avenue as the police car was driving ahead of Mr. **Biden**'s motorcade to help clear the way, the authorities said. Mr. **Biden** was on his way to a taping of "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart," which is recorded at a studio on 11th Avenue near West 52nd Street.

The police car, the authorities said, was part of an "advance element" of the motorcade made up of three marked police cars that traveled about three minutes ahead of Mr. **Biden**'s vehicle to help clear the way and make sure there were no "breakdown issues" along the way.

As the marked cars traveled west on 49th Street with lights and sirens on, one of them collided with a livery cab at the intersection. Two officers and the driver of the livery cab were taken to a hospital with neck and back injuries, the police said. None of the injuries were serious.

Mr. **Biden** was informed of the crash after taping the show, and spoke with one of the injured officers from Air Force 2 on his way back to Washington, a spokeswoman said. She added that Mr. **Biden** was happy to hear that all those who were injured had been released from the hospital.

It was the second accident involving Mr. **Biden**'s motorcade this week. On Monday, a sheriff's vehicle escorting Mr. **Biden**'s motorcade in Albuquerque was hit by a car that went around two units blocking an intersection, injuring a sergeant in the vehicle.

Last week, a man in Maryland was killed when he was hit by two Secret Service cars: a limousine sometimes used by Mr. **Biden**, and a Chevrolet Suburban used in his motorcade. Mr. **Biden** was not in the limousine or the Suburban at the time of the accident.

NY Police Car In Accident Ahead Of Biden Motorcade (AP)

By Colleen Long, The Associated Press

Associated Press, November 18, 2009

NEW YORK -- A police car working ahead of Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in a minor traffic accident Tuesday evening, but it wasn't part of the procession and the vice president was unhurt.

Three unmarked police vehicles, with their lights and sirens on, were traveling 5 to 10 minutes ahead of the motorcade on Manhattan's West Side and were checking traffic before **Biden** passed en route to an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," chief police spokesman Paul Browne said.

The cars were going through an intersection when the second one collided with a livery cab around 5:40 p.m. Traffic had stopped for the police, but the livery cab driver pulled out around the line of vehicles and was trying to go through the intersection, police said.

A passenger in the livery cab refused medical attention at the scene. The cab driver and two police officers were examined at a hospital and were released.

The police vehicles had been sent out as a routine patrol ahead of **Biden**, and the motorcade was not involved, Browne said.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford said the motorcade continued on its route to the Comedy Central channel show's studio, a few blocks from the accident site.

Biden was told about the accident after taping the show. He spoke with one of the injured officers and the officers' supervisor from his plane on the way back to Washington, D.C., his spokeswoman Elizabeth Alexander said.

"He was very happy to hear reports that the injuries were not serious and that all involved have already been released from the hospital," Alexander said.

In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.

Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraiser for two New Mexico Democrats.

Associated Press writer Virginia Byrne contributed to this report.

Police Car Ahead Of Joe Biden's Motorcade Crashes On Way To Film 'Daily Show With Jon Stewart' (NYDN)

By John Lauinger, Daily News Staff Writer

New York Daily News, November 18, 2009

An NYPD squad car traveling ahead of a motorcade for Vice President Joseph **Biden** crashed into a livery cab in rush-hour traffic on the West Side on Tuesday, police said.

The motorcade for **Biden** - in town to film an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" - was not involved in the 5:40 p.m. smash-up, a police source told the Daily News.

Biden made it to the studio just fine, and the taping wrapped up shortly before 7 p.m., a spokesman for Comedy Central confirmed.

The squad car with two detectives scouting the route for the motorcade was headed west on 49th St. when it was T-boned by a cab going north on 10th Ave.

The two detectives suffered minor injuries, and a third person was also injured.

The cab was registered in Nassau County to Zahid Butt. His registration was current but was revoked several times in recent years for lack of automobile insurance, state records show.

About five minutes later, the motorcade passed by on 49th St., said a witness

Joe Biden Unscathed In West Side Crash (NYPOST)

By Murray Weiss, John Doyle And Laurie Kamens

New York Post, November 18, 2009

A car responsible for clearing a path for Vice President **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in a West Side collision that sent three people to the hospital today, sources said.

Biden, who was headed to an appearance on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," was not hurt. It was the second accident involving a **Biden** trip in two days.

The latest crash occurred at 5:40 p.m. at West 49th Street and Tenth Avenue.

Biden's motorcade, which was going to make it's way uptown to the show's 11th Avenue studio, was about ten minutes away at the time, authorities said.

Cops had stopped traffic on Tenth to clear a path for **Biden** when a livery cab tried to get around it by driving up the left lane.

Meanwhile, three unmarked police cars were headed west on 49th Street. At the intersection the middle car hit the livery cab, police and federal sources said.

"They t-boned him," said Joe Lewis, a clerk at the nearby Skyline Hotel.

The livery driver and two Intelligence Division cops in the middle car suffered neck and back injuries and were taken to Roosevelt Hospital where they were treated and released. The cab had a passenger who was treated at the scene for a minor injury and was released.

Witnesses said the passenger side door of the cab was caved in and the police car's bumper was ripped off.

But cops were able to push the crash cars aside so that **Biden** was able to continue on his way to the studio to tape the show that aired at 11 p.m.

The crash was a bizarre echo of an accident in **Biden**'s motorcade on Monday.

The vice president was in Albuquerque, N.M. to help Democratic candidates when a woman drove around two police vehicles who were blocking an intersection for the vice president's motorcade.

The woman struck the car of a sheriff's deputy, who was rushed to a hospital for evaluation.

New York Police In Crash Ahead Of Biden Motorcade (AFP)

AFP, November 18, 2009

NEW YORK - A New York police cruiser driving ahead of US Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade struck another car in mid-town Manhattan Tuesday, injuring four people, city police said.

"At 1730 hours (2230 GMT) an advance element comprised of three police cars, lights and sirens operating, was traveling west on West 49th Street when the second of the three struck a Lincoln Town Car," New York Police Department Lieutenant Mike Wysokowski told AFP.

"It was not the vice president's motorcade," the officer stressed, noting that the police were running **Biden**'s route "several minutes before the actual motorcade."

He said two officers and two occupants of the other car were hurt. He did not describe the injuries.

Wysokowski said he was not immediately aware of whether the accident affected **Biden**'s travel.

The vice president was in downtown New York for a taping of satirical news program The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, where he made no reference to the incident, though he acknowledged that having the street cleared ahead of his motorcade was a welcome vice-presidential perk.

"Hell, I've never driven in New York with no traffic before," he said.

The crash is the third in a week involving the vice president's motorcade or Secret Service detail.

On November 11, the Washington Post reported that two cars normally part of **Biden**'s detail hit and killed a pedestrian in Maryland.

On Monday, the Alberquerque Journal reported that a deputy sheriff escorting the vice-president's motorcade in New Mexico was hit and injured by a car.

Accident Involving Biden's Advance Team (WABC)

WABC, November 18, 2009

NEW YORK (WABC) -- An accident involving an advance team for the Vice President's motorcade left two police officers and two others injured.

The accident happened at 10th Avenue and West 49th Street at 5:40 p.m.

Investigators say three unmarked police vehicles, with their lights and sirens on, were traveling ahead of the motorcade on the West Side. One of those police vehicles struck a taxi that had gone around traffic stopped because of the motorcade.

A passenger in the livery cab refused medical attention at the scene. The cab driver and two police officers were examined at a hospital and were released.

The advance team drives the motorcade route several minutes before the motorcade itself. Vice President Joe **Biden** was visiting New York City for a television appearance.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford said the motorcade continued on its route to the Comedy Central channel show's studio, a few blocks from the accident site.

In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.

Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraise for two New Mexico Democrats.

Biden's Security Detail Slams Taxi In Midtown (NBCNY)

NBC New York, November 18, 2009

Vice President Joe **Biden** was in midtown today for a taping of the John Stewart show, and his security detail hit a bit of a snag while paving his way to the show.

Three advance vehicles belonging to the NYPD were moving down 49th Street near 10th Avenue when they slammed into the back of a livery cab, officials said. The cars apparently had lights and sirens on at the time, officials said.

Four people -- two NYPD officers and two civilians -- were injured, NYPD spokeswoman Barbara Chen said.

Mr. **Biden** wasn't in the trail of cars at the time. His official motorcade was not affected and continued on as planned, the NYPD said.

Last week, two of the Vice President's official vehicles were involved in a tragedy outside of Washington.

According to The Hill.com, two Secret Service employees struck and killed a man last Wednesday in the cars the agency uses to transport **Biden**.

The vehicles had just been flown back to the D.C.-area from Fort Lewis, Wash., where they had driven the vice president before and after he spoke to a crowd of troops for Veterans Day.

Two NYPD Officers Injured In VP Motorcade Crash (NY1)

NY1, November 18, 2009

Two city police officers suffered minor injuries Tuesday during an accident involving the Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade in Manhattan.

It happened at 49th Street and 10th Avenue in Hell's Kitchen.

Officials say members of the Vice President's advance team collided with a livery cab.

The Vice President was not involved in the accident.

The police officers and the driver of the livery cab suffered minor injuries.

One witness says they saw the police escort but had no idea there was an accident.

"We got to the corner and we saw a bunch of bright lights. And next thing you know I see this. And then they pulling out the guy in this car that car and I'm like what happened?" said one witness.

Vice President **Biden** was on his way to tape an episode of "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

Biden's Police Advance Car Involved In Midtown Crash (WINS)

WINS-AM New York, November 18, 2009

WASHINGTON (AP /1010 WINS) -- The Secret Service says a police advance car working ahead of Vice President Joe **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in a traffic accident Tuesday evening in New York.

The car wasn't part of the motorcade and the vice president was unhurt. New York City police say two police officers and a livery cab driver were hospitalized with minor injuries.

The accident happened around 5:40 p.m. at West 49th Street and 10th Avenue.

Secret Service spokesman Darrin Blackford says the motorcade continued on its route.

Biden was headed to appear on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

In another accident involving the vice president this week, a sheriff's deputy was injured Monday in Albuquerque, N.M., when a woman drove around police vehicles blocking an intersection and collided with the deputy's car.

Biden had been in Albuquerque to speak at a campaign fundraise for two New Mexico Democrats.

Previously, on Nov. 11 in Washington D.C., a pedestrian was killed after a crash involving the vice president's motorcade.

VP Biden Makes 6th "Daily Show" Appearance (WDEL)

By Frank Gerace

WDEL 1150AM, November 18, 2009

Vice President **Biden** defends the Obama administration's economic policies on a late-night comedy show.

On Comedy Central's "The Daily Show", **Biden** told host Jon Stewart new job figures on the government's economic stimulus website, recovery-dot-gov, aren't wildly exaggerated.

Biden said the economy's turning around, thanks to the stimulus package, but job recovery will lag behind by about 12 to 18 months.

Biden's appearance on the show was his 6th, the previous one in August 2007, when he was competing with his current boss for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

Biden Bows (HARTC)

By Roger Catlin

Hartford Courant, November 18, 2009

It was a weird coincidence that the two vice presidential candidates in last year's election were both being featured on TV interview shows. Sarah Palin, of course, was all over the airwaves, first on Oprah, and then with Barbara Walters and by the end of the week probably with your local meteorology team.

Then tonight, the elected vice president Joe **Biden** showed up on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart." **Biden** had appeared on the show before during the campaign (including the day he announced his candidacy for president) but he's never been on as sitting veep.

His role was mostly to defend the administration, with talking points about jobs coming around the corner, inheriting a big mess from the last administration, and how the stimulus money has been used.

Just about the best moment was the beginning, when after a day of cable distress about the President bowing in China, **Biden** and Stewart both met each other with similarly deep bows.

Accounting For Stimulus Jobs: Be Careful What You Wish For (WP)

Congress demands elusive figures, then expresses outrage over errors

By Alec Macgillis

Washington Post, November 18, 2009

Another day, another flurry of outrage over the jobs numbers claimed by the government for the administration's $787 billion economic stimulus program.

House Appropriations Committee Chairman David R. Obey (D-Wis.) released a blistering statement Tuesday, taking to task flawed data in the federal figures that show $160 billion in spending had created or saved at least 640,000 jobs.

His criticism came in response to two ABC News stories. The first reported that the administration deleted 60,000 jobs from its list after it became clear that the figures were overstated. Then, on Monday, the network reported that the government had claimed $761,420 in spending and 30 jobs created in Arizona's 15th Congressional District -- a district that does not exist.

"The inaccuracies . . . are outrageous, and the administration owes itself, the Congress and every American a commitment to work night and day to correct the ludicrous mistakes," Obey said. "We designed the Recovery Act to be open and transparent. . . . Whether the numbers are good news or bad news, I want the honest numbers and I want them now."

But it is worth asking whether the administration's problem stems primarily from its decision to provide the numbers in the first place.

From the start, the Obama administration framed the stimulus act as a job-creating initiative, saying that it would create or save 3.5 million jobs over the next two years. Skeptics noted that this would be a very hard number to verify -- after all, how can one know for sure whether a job has been "saved"? But the administration and congressional Democrats not only stuck with that number, they also promised an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability, saying they would require recipients of the money to report how it had been spent and how many jobs they created or saved with it.

More and more, it is looking like this approach may have been a strategic mistake.

It is exceedingly difficult for even the most conscientious government agency or contractor to calculate the jobs impact of a stimulus grant or contract. How can one know for sure whether a job would have been lost in the absence of stimulus money? If money helped cover someone's paycheck for only a few weeks or months, how should that be counted? If money has been allocated but will not be spent for several months, should its jobs impact be tallied now or later?

A close examination of the stimulus reports suggests plenty of instances in which the number of created jobs is being understated, as some recipients of multiple millions of dollars report that they have yet to save or create a single job.

Even advocates for government transparency wonder whether the Obama administration would have been better off not trying to provide actual job tallies, instead simply requiring clear reports on how the money was spent -- information that is more useful and reliable.

"I would not have framed it as a jobs bill or a jobs law, as they have done," Gary Bass, the director of the government watchdog group OMB Watch, said in a recent interview.

As it is, the administration has left itself open to near-daily assaults on the credibility of the jobs numbers. Finding flaws in the data is as easy as shooting fish in a barrel, and reporters have been all too happy to fire away -- first reporting the numbers with fanfare when they are announced, despite all their obvious shortcomings, and then, days or weeks later, reporting that they are not entirely sound.

The constant barrage of such stories may be taking a toll. In the new Washington Post-ABC News poll, 23 percent of respondents say they think the stimulus act has hurt the economy, and 39 percent say that it has made no difference.

The White House pushed back against Obey's statement Tuesday with a lengthy retort from Ed DeSeve, the adviser to Vice President **Biden** who is in charge of implementing the stimulus. DeSeve argued that it was unfair to slight the administration for culling the 60,000 questionable jobs at the same time as it was being blamed for letting other questionable jobs slip through. The mistakes in the data have represented a sliver of the whole and often are clerical flubs that don't really touch on the heart of the reporting, he argued. "Transparency is going to be messy -- but it is better than the alternative," he wrote.

"It would be great if every report filed was correct the first time, on time, and contained no errors. But that's not realistic when 130,000 reports are being filed in a 10-day period," he said.

Chances are, there will be plenty more outrage-filled reports of faulty figures in the weeks and months to come. Republicans have asked the head of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, Earl Devaney, to appear Thursday before the House oversight committee. His task: to answer for the validity of jobs numbers that Congress demanded, only to now be surprised to find that they are less than perfect.

Push To Curb Credit-card Rates Fades (BOS)

Democrats resist consumer outcry

By Michael Kranish, Globe Staff

Boston Globe, November 18, 2009

WASHINGTON - Efforts in Congress to cap credit-card interest rates are faltering because of opposition from Democrats and a lack of specific support from the White House, despite growing consumer outrage over a rush by banks to impose rates as high as 30 percent.

During the 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama vowed to back a strict limit on credit-card interest rates. But the White House is not yet behind any particular plan this year. While Obama has chastised credit-card companies, his spokeswoman declined to say this week how he planned to follow through on his campaign pledge.

Obama finds the behavior of credit-card lenders "outrageous" and "looks forward to reviewing additional legislation that caps interest rates," but he has not taken a specific position, spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Vice President Joe **Biden**, whose home state of Delaware is headquarters to many credit-card companies, did not respond to requests for comment.

The Senate soundly defeated legislation in May that was introduced by Senator Bernard Sanders, the Vermont Independent, to cap most credit-card interest rates at 15 percent. Nearly half of the Democratic senators joined Republicans in defeating the measure, 60 to 33.

Consumer groups say the problem of skyrocketing interest rates has only worsened since that vote, as banks scramble to boost rates in advance of a new rule scheduled to take effect in February, requiring banks to give consumers a 45-day advance notice of rate increases.

Sanders said many of the credit cards in the hands of American consumers are issued by four banks that received taxpayer bailout money after last year's economic meltdown: Citigroup, Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Wells Fargo.

"People are disgusted. We bailed these [companies] out and they then had the gumption to raise interest rates on the American people," Sanders said in an interview.

Sanders said he plans to reintroduce his proposal to cap rates at 15 percent; he predicted it will have more support this time. (Representing Massachusetts, Senator John F. Kerry supported the cap in May; the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who was fighting brain cancer, did not vote. Senator Paul Kirk, who took Kennedy's seat, has not declared a position on the issue, his spokesman said.)

But Sanders faces strong opposition from many Democrats, particularly those who have major credit-card business in their states. One prominent opponent, Senator Thomas R. Carper of Delaware, said in an interview that he understands the anger among consumers who have received letters from credit-card issuers informing them of big rate hikes. But Carper said he opposes any effort to cap the rates because it would hurt the ability of banks to charge higher rates to customers who have a greater risk of default.

"The question is, should banks be able to price for risk?" Carper said. "In a free market economy, I think they should."

Carper said that if consumers don't like the credit-card rates, they can pay off their balances and shop for a better rate from another company.

Senator Tim Johnson, a Democrat from South Dakota, another home to credit card companies, explained his vote against credit-card legislation in a May press release. The measure, he said, "could hurt South Dakota jobs and consumers."

The threat of another vote on Sanders's proposal is prompting companies to make a renewed push against caps. Bill Himpler, executive vice president of the American Financial Services Association, an industry trade group, said it is easy "from a populist standpoint" to embrace a cap on interest rates. But he said many firms could continue to offer credit if the rate was capped at 15 to 18 percent, as some have suggested.

"You lose money at 18 percent because it is a very labor-intensive business line to offer consumer credit," he said. "Where you cap rates you end up having credit tightened and the cost of credit being greater for the consumer."

The Consumer Federation of America, which worked to pass the 45-day advance notice requirement on rate hikes that takes effect in February, said it has not taken a position on the Sanders proposal.

"We want to give the law a little time to work," legislative director Travis Plunkett said yesterday. He warned that the federation would closely monitor to see if credit-card companies stop "the most abusive practices."

Senate Finance Committee chairman Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, who supported the 15 percent cap, has proposed legislation that would temporarily freeze certain interest rates, but only until February when the notification law takes effect.

For decades, many states had usury laws capping credit-card interest rates as low as 6 percent. But those rules were upended in 1978 by a Supreme Court ruling that a national lending company based in a state without a rate cap could charge any rate to customers who lived in a state with a cap. As a result, many credit card companies moved to states with lenient rules such as Delaware and South Dakota.

Biden, who served as Delaware's US senator from 1973 until last January, has long been noted for his ties to the credit-card business. **Biden**'s top contributor has been MBNA Corp., a company based in Delaware that was a major credit-card issuer and was bought by Bank of America in 2005.

Biden received $214,000 during his Senate career from MBNA-related donors, according to the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

NORM: Biden Finds Rank Has Its Privileges (LVSRJ)

By Norm Clarke

Las Vegas Review-Journal, November 18, 2009

Sometimes you make exceptions at a members-only golf club.

Especially if someone from the office of Vice President Joe **Biden** is on the telephone, calling back a second time with a more pointed request.

It happened Sunday morning at The Golf Club at South Shore, at Lake Las Vegas.

When the first call came in at 7 a.m., asking whether **Biden** could play the course, the PGA professional running the pro shop declined, citing the club's members-only policy.

A few minutes later, another call: a **Biden** staffer telling the club pro "you know the vice president would really like to play" and asked whether he could talk to a manager.

The club reversed its stand, and **Biden** arrived about 11 a.m. with a half-dozen Secret Service personnel.

"We came to our senses, out of courtesy of the position," said Mark Barrett, with a chuckle. He's the club's membership sales director.

Biden's visit "really created a buzz," said Barrett, a welcome boost after recent tough times at Lake Las Vegas.

Biden played 17 holes before heading to a fundraiser for Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev.

KIMMEL JOINS REGIS AND KELLY

Las Vegan Jimmy Kimmel returns home to join "Live! With Regis and Kelly" for a taping here. Kimmel attended Clark High School and attended UNLV before embarking on a career path that led to his late-night talk-show with ABC.

Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa tape four shows in two days, starting Sunday, at Encore Theater at Wynn Las Vegas.

The first airing on Monday will include Mark Harmon of CBS' "NCIS," Kelly performing with the cast of "Le Reve, the new "Project Runway" winner and "America Idol" winner David Cook.

Tuesday features Kimmel plus a segment in which Kelly revisits the chapel where she and Mark Conseulo got married May 1, 1996, after eloping.

On Wednesday, Kelly visits the cast of "Love" at The Mirage.

After taking Thursday off for Thanksgiving, Regis and wife Joy on Friday debut their new album "Regis & Joy: Just You -- Just Me." They celebrate their 40th anniversary in March. Also on Friday: Regis takes a helicopter trip along the Strip on his way to the Grand Canyon, several chefs engage in a cook-off with turkey leftovers and Uncle Kracker performs.

MEDIA UPDATE

Former KVBC-TV, Channel 3, weatherman John Fredericks has told friends he's moving to North Carolina. Fredericks recently came under police scrutiny, according to KLAS-TV, Channel 8, and was told by police to stop making calls to a woman he met through an Internet dating service. ...

UFC fan favorite Stephan Bonnar and Andrea Brown, public relations director at MGM Mirage, were married Oct. 30 at a villa in Tuscany, near Siena, Italy. They met nine years ago in Chicago when he became a personal trainer and she was his first client. Bonnar became part of UFC lore on April 9, 2005, when he and Forrest Griffin staged what has been voted the greatest fight in UFC history. ...

Karin Firmani, orphaned at age 4 in Yugoslavia and adopted by an Italian family from Kenosha, Wis., won the meatball/pizza cook-off Tuesday at Ciao Ciao Apizza Angelato, 4460 S. Durango Drive. Judges included comedian Marty Allen, Anthony Crivello of "Phantom: The Las Vegas Spectacular," KVBC-TV, Channel 3, morning show host Kim Wagner and yours truly.

THE SCENE AND HEARD

"Peepshow" star Holly Madison and a Lucille Ball impersonator will take turns stomping grapes about 3 p.m. today at the annual Paris Las Vegas Beaujolais Nouveau celebration. They will play out a scene reminiscent of an iconic "Lucy" scene. The event coincides with the start of the traditional uncorking of Beaujolais in France. ...

Deal of the Day: Happy hour at SeaBlue, a Michael Mina restaurant at MGM Grand. Sunday-Friday, 5:30-7 p.m., half-price lobster corndogs, half-price calamari, $1 oysters, $1 gulf prawns, $2 draft beers (Stella Artois and Fat Tire).

THE PUNCH LINE

"Nearly had to pull out of campaign after spraining her winking muscle." -- From David Letterman's Top Ten Surprises in the Sarah Palin book

Biden Touts Stimulus Benefits In Vegas (POL)

By Alexander Burns

Politico, November 18, 2009

Vice President Joe **Biden**, speaking at the Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, said the federal stimulus had provided 190,000 Nevadans with unemployment insurance, pumping $500 million into people's pockets through tax cuts and saving the jobs of about 4,000 educators in the state, according to a pool report of the event.

"In American history, in world history, there's only a handful of inflection points. We are at an inflection point in world history," **Biden** said at a fundraiser for Nevada Rep. Dina Titus, encouraging attendees to get involved in politics to "bend the arc of history - literally, bend it."

"In the next four to six years, our future will be determined for the next 40 years," **Biden** said. "This is a great chance, and this is going to be a tough slog. Next year, this is going to be the place where the decision will be made. Rome wasn't built in a day, but we've come a long way."

The vice president also was scheduled to participate in a roundtable at the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport - which has received $11.7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding to improve air travel - to boost the impact of stimulus spending on small-business lending, clean-technology investment, infrastructure projects and teaching jobs.

Titus, introducing **Biden** at the Atomic Testing Museum, praised Cash for Clunkers, the stimulus package and the first-time homebuyer tax credit.

"Even the old-timers are impressed so much is going on," she said. "It's not a time for the fainthearted."

In addition to the federal stimulus, **Biden** was giving a dose of vice presidential fundraising stimulus to several vulnerable Democratic House members. In Phoenix, he was scheduled to attend a fundraiser

for Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick and Harry Mitchell, and he was planning stops in Albuquerque, N.M., to boost freshman Reps. Harry Teague and Martin Heinrich.

Biden Stops By Albuquerque For A Fundraiser (NMI)

By Matthew Reichbach

The New Mexico Independent, November 18, 2009

Vice President Joe **Biden** appeared in Albuquerque for a fundraiser for potentially vulnerable Democratic Congressmen Martin Heinrich and Harry Teague on Monday. Congressman Ben Ray Lujan was in attendance but was not a focus of the fundraising.

Biden spoke for a little more than half an hour at the Hotel Albuquerque, according to a pool report by Albuquerque Journal writer Dan Boyd. The "about 100? attendees paid $1,000 to attend the event.

"They're good Democrats, but they also have heads of their own and minds of their own and it seems to me that's what you guys produce out here," **Biden** said, speaking of Heinrich and Teague.

The two Democrats are a part of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's Frontline Program, a program designed to help vulnerable Democratic candidates win re-election.

The state Republican party issued a statement saying that the fundraising event showed that Teague was "desperate" because Republican candidate Steve Pearce outraised Teague in the 3rd quarter of 2009. Teague still has more cash on hand.

"To the detriment of New Mexico families, Representative Teague has delivered votes that further the left-wing agenda of Nancy Pelosi and the Obama administration," Republican Party of New Mexico executive director Ryan Cangiolosi. "Today, Vice President **Biden** is returning the favor by helping Mr. Teague fill his campaign coffers safely outside Teague's district where many of these policies are unpopular."

In a separate statement, the party noted that Heinrich had attacked his Republican opponent for not reimbursing the county for $5,000 incurred for security for a fundraising event headlined by then-President George W. Bush.

More from the pool:

Biden said both representatives are fighting to better the lives of middle-class families, and contrasted that with Republican members of Congress who he described as believers in Wall Street.

"I know what the Republicans are against," he said. "I haven't figured out what they're for."

"Change really has come to Washington," Teague said. "But we still have a lot of work ahead of us."

"It is incredible to have someone there who not only knows the last names of heads of state, but actually knows them," Heinrich said of **Biden**. **Biden** served as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee while a member of the Senate.

Biden also addressed the financial crisis that has been a source of concern for many Americans.

"We inherited a black hole this country had fallen into," he said. "I don't think anybody knew how deep this recession was at the time."

Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, House Speaker Ben Lujan, D-Santa Fe, former Oklahoma senator Fred Harris, New Mexico Democratic Party Chairman Javier Gonzales and former U.S. ambassador to Spain Ed Romero were all also in attendance according to the pool report.

This wasn't the first fundraiser for **Biden**, who has attended 26 fundraisers for Democratic House members so far this year according to Hotline. Tomorrow, **Biden** will be at a more public event - the Vice

President will be on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart. It will be the first time a sitting Vice President has appeared on the show, though it will be **Biden**'s sixth appearance overall.

Biden appeared in Mesilla, New Mexico last year during the Presidential campaign.

Part of **Biden**'s motorcade was involved in an accident, according to the Albuquerque Journal.

"Police say a woman drove around two police units blocking the intersection and hit a car driven by a sergeant with BCSO," the paper reported on their blog.

In 2006, a Rio Rancho police motorcycle officer that was part of a George W. Bush motorcade was involved in a fatal crash in Albuquerque. Print

Biden Returns To State To Give Dodd Campaign Maximum Attention (NHR)

By Mary E. O'Leary

New Haven Register, November 17, 2009

For the third time this fall, U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., is getting personal attention from the top echelon of the Obama administration as he faces his toughest re-election in 30 years.

Vice President Joseph **Biden** will come to Hartford Dec. 11 to stump for Dodd at a $500 a plate luncheon fundraiser at the Connecticut Science Center.

This comes two months after **Biden** shared a platform at the Fairfield Park and Ride with the senator, where the vice president drew attention to the use of federal stimulus money for a nearby Merritt Parkway project.

President Barack Obama then headlined a $1,000 a plate fundraiser for Dodd in Stamford on Oct. 23. The event raised $1 million for the Democratic Party, Dodd's re-election and for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

"The vice president and Senator Dodd worked hand-in-hand on so many issues throughout the years, and he knows first-hand how hard Chris has worked for the people back home in Connecticut.

"We expect this event to be an entertaining one, with a lot of good-natured ribbing, as well as some serious talk about the work Chris is doing for the people of Connecticut and the country, while partnering with President Obama and Vice President **Biden**," said Jay Howser, Dodd's campaign manager.

The latest Quinnipiac University Poll said voters disapproved 54 percent to 40 percent of the job Dodd is doing.

In a head-to-head match-up with Rob Simmons, Dodd would lose 49 percent to 38 percent, while also losing to newcomer Linda McMahon, 43 percent to 41 percent.

A total of five Republicans are vying for the GOP nomination to run against Dodd, and Dodd either loses or ties in theoretical match-ups with all of them, although 49 percent to 88 percent of the voters say they don't know enough to offer a favorable or unfavorable opinion about them.

The senator, as chairman of the Banking Committee, is advancing financial regulation and credit card reforms, while also leading the fight on health care - all of which are top priorities for the Obama administration.

The poll found 56 percent of the voters support giving people the option of being covered by a government health insurance plan, which Dodd has been championing, but for those whose major concern is the economy, the poll found they favor a Republican candidate.

The poll has been criticized by Dodd supporters as over-representative of registered Republicans and unaffiliated voters and for not tapping likely voters who are more likely to cast a ballot in 2010.

At this point in the race, they are not as concerned with the head-to-head outcomes, but there is expected to be an increased effort among women and unaffiliated.

The high profile fundraisers are good for bringing in money, but don't necessarily translate into voter support.

The Quinnipiac University Poll found 75 percent of the voters said Obama's visit doesn't make a difference on how they will vote on Dodd.

As Karzai Starts New Term, Doubts Grow That He'll Finish (MCT)

By Dion Nissenbaum

McClatchy, November 18, 2009

KABUL, Afghanistan - On the eve of Afghan President Hamid Karzai's swearing-in for a second term, speculation is growing that he could be forced to step aside before he finishes his next five years in office.

The challenge before him is monumental: Regain the trust of voters disenchanted by the fraud-tainted election that returned him to power, assure frustrated world leaders that the billions of dollars spent trying to stabilize Afghanistan haven't been wasted or stolen and, with the help of U.S. and NATO forces, recover control of large parts of the country from Taliban fighters.

The 51-year-old president has to please contradictory forces to survive: the discredited Afghan political allies who helped him win re-election, and the international community, which is demanding an end to cronyism and to pervasive government corruption.

Karzai has to assure President Barack Obama quickly that he has a credible partner if Obama decides to send as many as 40,000 more American soldiers to the fight in Afghanistan.

Karzai will have to help build a competent Afghan military capable of battling emboldened insurgents who now are operating in much of his country. He also has to contain a thriving opium industry that's the source of 90 percent of the world's heroin supply, often with the complicity of corrupt officials and police officers.

"It would take a miracle," said Abdullah Abdullah, the one-time foreign minister who abandoned a planned runoff against Karzai earlier this month because of concerns that the second round of voting could be as tainted as the first round was. "And, as Muslims, we don't believe miracles are possible now."

"The leadership in Afghanistan is getting more and more oblivious to the situation on the ground," Abdullah told McClatchy. "It's becoming obsessed with its own ideas, which are out of touch with reality."

The mood at the inauguration Thursday at the presidential palace is likely to be decidedly more somber than it was five years ago, when then-Vice President Dick Cheney led a high-profile delegation to Kabul as Karzai became Afghanistan's first democratically elected president.

Vice President Joe **Biden**, who has a strained relationship with Karzai, won't attend. Few world leaders are planning to fly to Kabul for an inauguration that will take place under heavy security, bracing for potential Taliban attacks.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the highest-profile American leader who's expected to take part in the inauguration, warned Karzai last weekend that the United States might suspend civilian aid to Afghanistan unless he takes new steps to prevent the money from being squandered or stolen.

With Karzai chafing at the international pressure, Obama's advisers are divided over how much support to offer the Afghan president.

Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal, America's top military commander in Afghanistan, has warned Obama that the United States could lose the war against the Taliban unless he agrees to send as many as 40,000 more soldiers over the next year.

However, some administration officials are reluctant to pursue an Iraq-style "military surge" until they're convinced that Karzai will match it with a "political surge" capable of restoring a measure of confidence in the Afghan government.

Chief among the skeptics is U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, a retired Army general, who's raised reservations about a major infusion of troops without a commitment from Karzai to fight corruption.

Eikenberry outlined his concerns Monday when he joined top Karzai ministers in unveiling a new anti-corruption task force in Kabul.

"Ordinary Afghans must be convinced that the powerful can no longer exploit their positions to make themselves wealthy while the less fortunate struggle to find work and to feed their families," Eikenberry said.

"The appearance of luxurious mansions around Kabul with many expensive cars ... surrounded by private armed guards, is a worrisome sign that some Afghans are cheating their people while claiming to be in their service."

Eikenberry and American officials in Kabul have been working quietly with Karzai to ensure that discredited Afghan leaders don't dominate his next Cabinet.

American and Afghan officials told McClatchy that the U.S. had given Karzai a list of 40 people whom it considered clean enough to be part of the new Cabinet. However, Karzai also faces pressure to reward shady political allies who helped him win re-election. Should he fall short of U.S. demands, some expect the Obama administration to push the Afghan president from power long before his term ends.

Sarwar Mohammed Roshan, who served as Karzai's campaign manager when he ran for president the first time, said the U.S. might have to support a caretaker government eventually to replace Karzai.

"If we don't do something drastic, believe me, we will be sorry," said Roshan, who suggested that adding more troops now would be counterproductive. "Bringing in more troops and keeping the status quo would create the impression that the Americans are making Afghans kneel before this (Karzai) gang."

Ashraf Ghani, the former finance minister who challenged Karzai for the presidency this year, echoed those concerns.

"Hamid Karzai assumes his second term as president without a honeymoon," Ghani wrote in a recent opinion piece for The Guardian newspaper in London.

"He faces a crisis of both domestic and international confidence," Ghani wrote, "and has the option to become either a statesman or an outcast."

MORE FROM MCCLATCHY

Taliban on motorcycles prove no match for U.S. helicopters

Another Afghan war: Media leaks spark administration fight

Taliban gain foothold in once-stable Afghan north

Check out McClatchy's politics blog: Planet Washington

ABC's Nightline Admits They're In Town For Joe Arpaio's Sweep, Denies Coordination; And Graffiti On Joe's Jai (PNT)

By Stephen Lemons

Phoenix New Times, November 18, 2009

Joe claims ABC just happened to be in town when the sweep started in this Channel 3 piece

Following up on my blog post of yesterday, wherein I quoted sources telling me that Arpaio's latest anti-immigration sweep was done with an out-of-town film crew in mind, specifically one from ABC national news, I finally got a rep from ABC on the horn. She confirmed that a crew from ABC Nightline was in Phoenix for the sweep, but denied that the dragnet had been staged for ABC's purposes.

"No, not at all," replied Nightline spokeswoman Alison Bridgman of the allegation. "We were already there. We've done profiles of Sheriff Joe in the past. This was already arranged."

Bridgman explained that an interview with Arpaio had been scheduled for Monday, and that the news show learned of the sweep while on the ground in Phoenix. She said Nightline correspondent Martin Bashir did the interview with our corrupt top constable. So far, there's no air date for the piece, according to Bridgman.

During his press conference yesterday, Arpaio copped the same line when someone asked him about ABC being along for the ride.

from Joe's Twitter

Well, it's only saying what everyone thinks...

"Oh, so I arranged this because ABC is here?" asked Joe, rhetorically. "The answer is no, we happened to be here. And they're smart enough to know that they may want to film the sheriff."

Thing is, ABC could be on the level, and Arpaio, not. Would it surprise anyone that Arpaio's PR hacks made sure the ABC interview was planned for a day a sweep was to begin? Or orchestrated one just because a big media outlet was swingin' by?

See, I know Arpaio tipped off others that there would be a sweep, and that ABC was flying in. Everything was set in stone as of last week. If that ain't a fix, I don't know what is.

Arpaio's credibility sunk to an all-time new low after he claimed on his Twitter account yesterday that he'd had a meeting with Vice President Joe **Biden**, who'd flown in to Phoenix to pimp the effect of the stimulus on job creation. According to **Biden**'s deputy press secretary Annie Tomasini, Arpaio showed up uninvited to a meeting **Biden** had with local Democrats at the Wyndham Hotel. All he got was a handshake in the hallway as **Biden** was leaving.

Which makes me wonder about this new Joe Tweet where he claims that one of his buildings has been tagged with an obscenity. (Specifically, the Sheriff's office property building, part of his vast incarceration complex.) Arpaio maliciously suggests that activists protesting his news conference may have done it.

Puente leader Salvador Reza scoffed at this latest piece of Joe baloney, denying responsibility on behalf of his movement.

How do we know this isn't another fake story our two-faced sheriff's shilling? (Joe does have a pic on his Twitter page, which I've reproduced above.) I'll have to drive down to Durango to check it out, and, hopefully, compliment the artist.

Makes me wonder: How secure can Joe's jails be if you can walk right up to one of his secure buildings and spraypaint humongo letters on the side? What's to keep someone from sticking a ladder up there? Sheesh.

Arpaio Launches New Immigration Sweep (YWV)

By Mike Sakal And Bill Bertolino

YourWestValley.com, November 18, 2009

Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio launched a two-day crime-suppression and illegal-immigration sweep on Monday, as dozens of protesters lined a south Phoenix street close to where the sheriff outlined the plans at a crowded press conference.

It is the second such operation since the federal government stripped Arpaio of street-level immigration patrols under the direction of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Arpaio contends he still can seek to identify illegal immigrants during street patrols using state laws against human smuggling and sanctions for employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants.

The sheriff said his office plans to target semi-trailers and other load vehicles along alternative routes Valleywide, where human smugglers could be attempting to avoid checkpoints, such as those along Interstate 10 and Interstate 17, en route to drop houses.

"We are also noticing a significant change in travel routes," Arpaio said. "State highways still remain the main travel paths for smugglers and their co-conspirators, but more and more vehicles are being apprehended at alternative, out-of-the-way routes."

Arpaio said anyone who films the stops along the interstate, including what he described as "open-borders groups," would be arrested, saying it is illegal to stop and stand unless it's an emergency.

"These open-borders activists will be warned only once," he said.

Dozens of protesters along Lower Buckeye Road stood with signs carrying statements, such as "We are human" and "I will not be bullied."

During the press conference, Arpaio downplayed questions about whether he was grandstanding while Vice President Joe **Biden** and the national media were in town. **Biden** spoke in Phoenix Monday morning about the national economy.

"This is just another example of Arpaio's lack of respect for the Obama Administration and he continues to thumb his nose at the administration," said protestor Lydia Guzman, president of SOMOS America. Guzman was among a group of protestors across the street from the entrance of the MCSO training building.

"Arpaio's sweep was nothing but political posturing," she said.

Mercedes Mercado-Ochoa, a member of the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens, said she believes Arpaio is doing the sweeps just to impress the national media in town.

"He's spending so much taxpayer money on these crime sweeps that it's not funny anymore," she said. "He should be held accountable to the taxpayers for the amount he is spending on these sweeps."

The sweep will entail 200 members of Arpaio's volunteer posse and reserves, as well as sheriff's office deputies. Helicopters will also assist in the operation, which Arpaio said will have a "substantial focus" on the crime of human smuggling.

This is Arpaio's 13th crime sweep. Since March 2006, the sheriff's office reports it has arrested a total of 3,532 human-smuggling suspects or illegal immigrants.

The sheriff's sweeps have drawn criticism that Arpaio's deputies racially profile people. The U.S. Department of Justice is investigating Arpaio's office over allegations of discrimination and unconstitutional searches and seizures.

AP Turns Heads For Devoting 11 Reporters To Palin Book 'Fact Check' (FOX)

By Robert Shaffer

FOX News, November 18, 2009

Reviewing books and holding public figures accountable is at the core of good journalism, but the Associated Press' treatment of Palin's book seems an unprecedented move at the wire service

Sarah Palin is no normal politician, and at the Associated Press, apparently "Going Rogue" is no normal book.

When the former Republican vice presidential candidate and former Alaska governor wrote her autobiography, the AP found a copy before its release date and assigned 11 people to fact check all 432 pages.

The AP claims Palin misstated her record with regard to travel expenses and taxpayer-funded bailouts, using statements widely reported elsewhere. But it also speculated into Palin's motives for writing "Going Rogue: An American Life," stating as fact that the book "has all the characteristics of a pre-campaign manifesto."

Palin quickly hit back on a Facebook post titled "Really? Still Making Things Up?"

"Imagine that," the post read. "11 AP reporters dedicating time and resources to tearing up the book, instead of using the time and resources to 'fact check' what's going on with Sheik Mohammed's trial, Pelosi's health care takeover costs, Hasan's associations, etc. Amazing."

The AP, an organization with over 4,000 employees and 49 Pulitzer Prizes earned for asking the hard questions, wouldn't comment on their own reporting for this story.

Reviewing books and holding public figures accountable is at the core of good journalism, but the treatment Palin's book received appears to be something new for the AP. The organization did not review for accuracy recent books by the late Sen. Ted Kennedy, then-Sen. Joe **Biden**, either book by Barack Obama released before he was president or autobiographies by Bill or Hillary Clinton. The AP did more traditional news stories on those books.

The attraction to Palin doesn't appear to be partisan, since AP didn't fact-check recent political tomes by Republicans Rudy Giuliani or Newt Gingrich.

The AP, however, regularly writes "fact checks" for major political speeches, such as a September health care speech by President Obama.

Doug Underwood, a University of Washington journalism professor who covered Washington politics in the late 1970s for Gannett, said Palin brings some negative attention on herself with a history of bad interviews and misstatements. In addition, the press cannot ever be perfectly consistent or fair, he said.

Still, the media treated **Biden** and Palin differently, he said.

Biden's book "Promises to Keep" became an instant best-seller when he was chosen to be Obama's running mate, but was not fact-checked by the AP and only received passing interest. In a story last year on **Biden**'s Vietnam War draft deferments due to asthma, the reporter notes **Biden** didn't mention the malady in his book.

Palin is not the standard presidential possibility for 2012, Underwood said.

"She's a figure who's a politician, but also a part of popular culture," he said.

Palin supporters believe 11 reporters poring over every word of her book is excessive- and further proof of the media's obsession and maltreatment of the hockey mom from Wasilla.

"They're obsessed with trying to discredit her," said Adrienne Ross, New York state organizer for the 2012 Draft Sarah Committee. "Because she's a conservative woman, they make fun of her accent, comment about her looks. She doesn't come in the package they want her to come in."

WHAT TO WATCH (WP)

By Garance Franke-Ruta
Washington Post, November 18, 2009

-- President Obama started his Wednesday in Beijing, on what was Tuesday night in Washington, by sitting down with reporters from CBS, CNN, Fox and NBC. He also met with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. In the evening, he departs for Seoul.

-- Back in the Eastern time zone, first lady Michelle Obama takes her nutrition and health messages to Hollin Meadows Elementary School in Alexandria in the morning, highlighting the Agriculture Department's Healthier U.S. School Challenge.

-- It's also a day for the first and second ladies to focus on the White House's military families project. Jill **Biden** stuffs packages and speaks at the first "USO Care Package for Women" party, at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill in the morning. In the afternoon, she and the first lady will host a gathering at the White House celebrating women in the military. Veterans and current servicewomen will be joined there by Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. James Cartwright, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their wives, and other military and administration officials.

-- The Labor Department releases the consumer price index for October, and the Commerce Department releases the October housing-starts report.

-- The Senate Judiciary Committee at 9:30 a.m. holds an oversight hearing on the Justice Department. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. testifies.