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NEWS BRIEFING

A LOOK AT THIS MORNING'S HEADLINES

Constitution ruling decides legitimacy of student drug testing



COTTAGE GROVE (AP) —

The South Lane School District has postponed a mandatory drug testing policy until it sees what the Oregon Supreme Court does with the Vernonia drug testing case.

In the meantime, South Lane schools will continue a voluntary testing program that started last month.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Vernonia school officials can require athletes to undergo drug tests even if they are not suspected of using illegal drugs.

But Joe Richards, attorney for the South Lane district, said there are unresolved legal issues. He noted that the high court ruled only on the question of whether the Vernonia policy violated the U.S. Constitution, not whether it violated the Oregon Constitution.

"Until you have an Oregon Supreme Court ruling, I just thought it was in their best interest to use a voluntary program," Richards said. "There is no constitutional question with the voluntary program."

In the meantime, mandatory drug-testing programs will continue to be subject to legal challenge, said Tom Christ, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union.

"Historically, a search is considered unreasonable if there isn't probable cause that you've done something wrong," Christ said.

Under the district's voluntary program, students in grades six through 12 are subjected to random voluntary urine tests for various drugs if they and their parents have agreed in advance. The school nurse is the only official who knows the test results.

If a student tests positive, the nurse notifies the parents and the parents must decide how to respond. If they seek help from school staff, the student will be referred to counseling and other community services. If the parents don't respond, the matter is dropped.

Store owner stamps Washington's bill with 'I Grew Hemp'

WOODSTOCK, N.Y. (AP) — George Washington grew hemp, and Joy Beckerman wants to make sure you know. Her way of making the point, though, could get her in trouble.

At her Heaven on Earth hemp store, dollars given as change are stamped in red ink with little word balloons saying, "I GREW HEMP" next to Washington's picture.

That caught the attention of police in this counterculture capital, and they told the Secret Service, which told Beckerman to stop. Not because of the message itself, but because it's illegal to mutilate currency.

Beckerman, sitting in her store amid hemp twine, hemp paper, hemp shoes, hemp shirts and hemp shorts, said Monday that she's not backing down.

"It's the message we want to promote: that George Washing-

Government readies for shutdown if Clinton vetoes bill



WASHINGTON (AP) —

The government braced Monday for imminent partial shutdown as President Clinton vetoed one budget bill and prepared to reject another in a dogged fiscal standoff with Republicans.

Citing GOP budget priorities that would "rob the American dream from millions of Americans," Clinton vetoed emergency legislation that would extend the government's ability to borrow money beyond its expected expiration Wednesday. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin immediately took steps to raise cash and prevent a first-ever default, which could cause financial tumult.

The Senate, by voice vote, passed and shipped to Clinton on Monday a separate stopgap bill financing agencies through Dec. 1. That, too, was destined for a veto. Knowing that, congressional leaders planned to keep the House and Senate in session until midnight or later in case the president and Republicans could find middle ground. But first, they said, Clinton would have to contact them, not vice versa.

"We'll be available if the president gives any indication he doesn't want to shut down the government," Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., told reporters.

But with most agencies' power to spend money set to expire at the start of business Tuesday, failure to break the political deadlock meant that 800,000 federal civilian employees — 40 percent of the work force — would be sent home, the first federal shutdown in five years.

Air traffic controllers, meat inspectors, prison guards and others with crucial jobs would keep working, as would military personnel and the Postal Service.

Two groups suspected for attack killing six, injuring nearly 60



RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) —

A bomb ripped through a building filled with U.S. and Saudi military personnel on Monday, tearing off the facade and engulfing the building in flames. Six people were killed, including five Americans.

At least 60 people were wounded, including more than 30 Americans. It was not clear whether the attack was aimed at the Saudis, the Americans, or both.

President Clinton pledged to "devote an enormous effort" to bring those responsible to justice, calling it "a hideous act" of terrorism. A dozen FBI agents and evidence specialists were being sent to Saudi Arabia to help with the investigation.

King Fahd convened his Cabinet, which "expressed its condemnation of this criminal act, which is foreign to our society, beliefs and religion," the Saudi Press Agency reported.

Two groups claimed responsibility for the attack, but neither could be verified, said Raymond Mabus, U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

One was the little-known Islamic Change Movement, which demanded last spring that Western forces leave Saudi Arabia or it would "exert all available means to evict these forces." The second was the previously unknown Tigers of the Gulf.

While open opposition to the ruling al-Saud family is not permitted, some underground groups have threatened to strike against the deeply conservative Saudi leadership and the Western forces.

Jeff Thomas, the U.S. Embassy spokesman, said late Monday the death toll among Americans had risen to five after one of the critically injured victims died in the hospital.

Man shoots himself showing girlfriend shotgun in pants

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (AP) — A man showing his girlfriend a sawed-off shotgun in his pants accidentally shot himself in the genitals, police said.

Police called to the scene found Kevin Hall lying on a street corner clutching his groin. His pants, which had a large hole, were still smoking.

Hall, 18, told police he had been hit in a drive-by shooting, but his girlfriend said he had been showing her the gun when it went off.

Hall was treated at a hospital Friday for a cut to his penis and powder burns on the inside of his thigh. Police then arrested him on several charges, including possession of an illegal weapon.

The gun was found in some nearby bushes, police said.

Hall also was arrested on suspicion of reckless endangerment and illegal discharge of a firearm.



ton was a hemp farmer. He's quoted in his diaries saying make the most of the hemp seed," the 25-year-old merchant said. "Our forefathers were very hip."

Washington really did grow hemp, but for rope fiber, not marijuana, said John Riley, historian at the first president's home in Mount Vernon, Va.

Defacing U.S. currency with intent to render it unfit for use is punishable by a fine and up to six months in jail, said Timothy Koerner, chief Secret Service agent in Albany.

Beckerman wants to sue the town for harassment — not that she hates the police.

"They're very nice," she said, but added: "They're extremely ignorant. Nobody told them they were doing the dirty work for industrialist pigs."