

NEWS DIGEST

WSU students harassed

1 PULLMAN, Wash. — Some Washington State University students with similar names are receiving harassing phone calls.

Pullman police began getting calls over the weekend from women who had received telephone calls from a man who addressed them by name.

"We think he's gone through a directory and sorted it by name," said Pullman Police Sgt. Jim Corcoran.

Pullman and WSU police have received almost a dozen reports about the telephone harassment, considered a gross misdemeanor.

The man's pattern was to call several different groups of women with the same first name, police said. Corcoran said investigators believe the caller was selecting women with a specific first name.

Corcoran said the man allegedly claims to have the women under surveillance and threatens them if they mention calling the police.

Most of the people who received the calls were distressed because the caller identified them by name, he said.

Corcoran said he considered the threat of violence unlikely.

"Given the volume of calls, it would be difficult to keep this many women under surveillance," he said. "(The caller) used their first name to add credence to his threats."

Twenty-five cases of dengue confirmed

2 DALLAS, Tx. — Texas has recorded 25 cases of dengue fever since July, including the only cases of the tropical disease acquired in the United States this year, health officials said.

At least five cases were acquired in the United States, while some were believed caught in Mexico and Brazil. Others are still being investigated.



It's the state's largest outbreak since 1995, when 29 people caught the disease, seven acquired in the state, officials said Wednesday.

Texas is the only state that has reported locally acquired cases of the virus in the last 50 years, said Vance Vorndam, a microbiologist for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Although diseases like dengue, yellow fever and malaria were common in the United States earlier this century, they have been mostly wiped out.

Dengue symptoms include high fever, severe headaches, joint and muscle pain and nausea. The disease usually lasts about two weeks and is rarely fatal. There is no vaccine or cure for dengue.

The CDC confirmed 90 cases of dengue in the United States last year, all acquired in other countries. Since dengue is rarely fatal, many cases might go unreported or misdiagnosed.

Texas is experiencing spillover from an outbreak in northern Mexico, where 7,000 cases have

been reported this year. Arizona had three suspected travel-related cases of dengue fever this year and California had a handful of cases.

Two stockbrokers found shot to death

3 COLTS NECK, N.J. — Two brokers who sold penny stocks via the Internet were shot to death gangland-style inside a mansion in a crime that has baffled investigators.

"This was an execution. Reasons, we're not certain yet," Monmouth County Prosecutor John Kaye said.

Friends found Alain Chalem, 41, and Mayir Lehmann, 37, face down early Tuesday on the marble floor of the estate Chalem shared with his girlfriend and her 13-year-old son.

Chalem had been shot in the chest and five times in the head, while Lehmann, who lived in Woodmere, N.Y., was shot in the leg and once in the back of the head. Their cellular telephones

were inches from their hands.

The men traded stocks for investors on a Web site operated from the mansion. Investigators said they had no idea if the trading had anything to do with their slayings. And Kaye said there was no sign of burglary.

The prosecutor said he had no suspects and no murder weapon.

"In this county, there are about a dozen homicides a year and they are not 'whodunits,'" Kaye said. "This is an unusual killing."

Nurses end Ireland's biggest strike

4 DUBLIN, Ireland — Union leaders representing Ireland's 27,500 nurses ordered an end to their eight-day strike — the largest in the country's history — after winning key concessions from the government Wednesday.

Most of the Irish Republic's nurses walked off their jobs last week in hopes of winning higher pay and status.

The state and union leaders agreed on a plan Wednesday to give new ranks and extra wages to at least 6,500 of the nurses.

The striking nurses agreed to resume work while the union voted on the proposal in the next several days.

Prime Minister Bertie Ahern's government had resisted the nurses' original demands for fear of encouraging strikes by other state-paid workers.

But the government and union leaders accepted a compromise plan by Labor Court Justice Finbarr Flood that proposed creating a new, highly paid grade of senior nurse.

Flood's suggestions addressed one of the nurses' biggest complaints — that their current pay scale stops at \$30,000, regardless of their years in service or special training.

Rebel group takes news photographer captive

5 BOGOTA, Colombia — Leftist rebels seized a Reuters news agency photographer while he was on assignment in a mountain town and said they would put him on trial for publishing a photo of a rebel leader's face.

Henry Romero, a freelancer who works regularly with the London-based agency, was detained by guerrillas of the National Liberation Army, or ELN, on Tuesday evening in Jamundi, a town near the western city of Cali.

Reuters' editor-in-chief, Mark Wood, urged Romero's immediate release. "Reuters considers it totally unacceptable that a photographer who works for us should be held captive by the National Liberation Army in Colombia," he said in a statement.

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