

News digest

Many flights canceled, delayed during holiday

1 BOSTON — Logan International Airport controllers guided arriving planes Sunday using a composite radar system from three regional airports, one day after a wind storm knocked out its central antenna.

Delays and cancellations at the country's ninth busiest airport were felt nationwide over the Easter holiday weekend, a busy travel time as families gather for celebrations and students return from spring break.

"I wish it was happening last weekend, or next weekend. But there's really no ideal time," said Bart Bartanowicz, New England regional administrator for the Federal Aviation Administration.

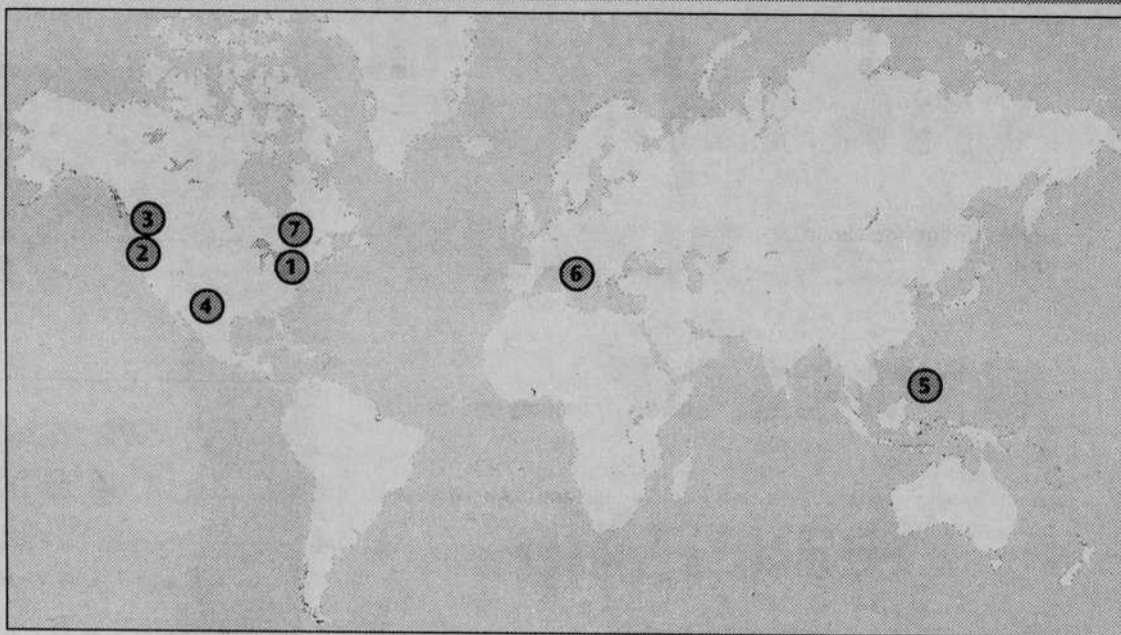
New radar equipment from a supply center in Oklahoma City arrived at Logan Sunday, officials said. A team of five technicians was traveling with the heavy equipment, which could take several days to assemble and test, Bartanowicz said.

Until the new radar is ready, Logan was using a triangular "composite" system of radar from Truro, on Cape Cod; Cumington, in western Massachusetts near the Berkshire Mountains; and Providence, R.I.

The antenna damage — plus rainy and windy weather — caused 210 cancellations Saturday and 130 by noon on Sunday.

Earthquake that shook Tacoma called normal

2 TACOMA — A small earthquake that rattled Pierce County over the weekend was normal for the region and almost identical to one reported a year ago in the same place, a spokesman at the University of Washington's Seismology Lab said.



The quake, which was felt by some area residents just before midnight Friday, was of magnitude 3.6 — at the very low end of tremblers that can be felt by people nearby, scientists say. It was followed by two small aftershocks. No injuries or property damage was reported.

The UW Lab said the quake occurred at 11:43 p.m. and was centered about 10 miles west of Mount Rainier and about 5.5 miles underground.

It takes a quake of at least magnitude 5.4 to cause structural damage to even poorly constructed buildings.

Increasing bold coyotes threaten Vancouver

3 VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Like brazen bandits, Vancouver's urban coyotes are pulling off daring daylight kidnappings and robberies.

Wildlife control officer Dennis Pemble says coyotes have moved into the city, invading city parks,

green spaces and even people's back yards.

The coyotes are becoming increasingly bold and aggressive, taking cats and small dogs right off porches.

Officials are even beginning to fear for the safety of small children.

"They have moved right into downtown Vancouver and you can see them in broad daylight and they are doing things we've never seen coyotes do before," Pemble said. "You'll see them lying in the parks under the trees in broad daylight."

"They are running right up to little kids, not because they are intent on attacking them but because they've learned that is a way to get food."

If the children become scared and drop their lunches, coyotes learn that taking a run at a child will net them a free lunch.

People have also been warned to keep pets inside at night.

Man arrested for murder of two teenagers

4 ALCALDE, N.M. — After suing an appeal for help, state police received a tip Sunday that led to the arrest of a man accused of shooting to death two teenagers making a spiritual pilgrimage to a church where thousands of people hope for miracles.

Carlos Herrera, 19, was arrested at a friend's home at about 2:40 a.m., state police Sgt. Royleen Ross-Weaver said.

Ross-Weaver said Herrera was an acquaintance of the 17-year-old shooting victims, high school sweethearts Richard Martinez and Karen Castanon. She did not elaborate. The teens' bodies were found Friday.

"We received bits and pieces from different people, put it together and started pursuing the information," Ross-Weaver said. "We were able to develop the suspect and we also have physical evidence linking him to the crime."

She wouldn't comment on a motive.

Ray Martinez, father of the slain boy, said his son did not associate with Herrera.

The arrest gave only brief comfort on a painful Easter, he said.

"These kids were beautiful. They were drug-free, alcohol-free, like peanut butter and jelly," he said.

The teenagers were among thousands of pilgrims making the annual spiritual trek to the Santuario de Chimayo, a small Roman Catholic church in the village of Chimayo that is said to contain healing dirt.

Nine rebels killed in raid

5 ZAMBOANGA, Philippines — Philippine forces advanced on the mountain base of Muslim rebels, hammering their defenses with air strikes and artillery in an attempt to free some 27 hostages.

The top general vowed to push ahead with the offensive against Abu Sayyaf rebels on southern Basilan island, despite rebel threats to kill more hostages after beheading two last week.

The rebels killed those two after authorities refused their demands for the release of Muslim militants jailed in the United States, including the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

At least three soldiers were killed in Sunday's fighting, officials said.

Nine teenage rebels were killed as they tried to escape bombardment of their camp on the slopes of the mountain range leading up to the main camp, Basilan Governor Wahab Akbar said.

Abu Sayyaf spokesman Abu Ahmad denied any rebel casualties. He said two hostages, includ-

ing a child, were injured in the shelling. Military officials said they could not confirm the report but have denied targeting the main camp, where the hostages are thought to be held.

Pope denounces racism, promotes peace on Easter

6 VATICAN CITY — Capping a grueling Holy Week schedule, a weary-sounding Pope John Paul II offered Easter wishes for peace in 61 languages and called on the world Sunday to end racism and xenophobia.

So many Holy Year pilgrims, tourists and Romans turned out for the pope's late-morning Mass in St. Peter's Square that by the time he delivered his Easter message at noon, the crowd, numbering close to 150,000, was spilling over into the boulevard leading to the Vatican.

The faithful passed through metal detectors recently installed in the colonnade around the square as part of security concerns over the heavy Holy Year schedule of public appearances by the pope.

Sounding tired toward the end of the two-hour appearance, John Paul expressed hope that the sense of life associated with Easter may "overturn the hardness of our hearts" and "impel individuals and states to full respect" for human rights.

Praying for the success of peace efforts around the world, including in Africa and Latin America, the pope cited "persistent tensions in the Middle East, vast areas of Asia, and some parts of Europe."

"Help the nations to overcome old and new rivalries, by rejecting attitudes of racism and xenophobia," the pope prayed.

Unlike past years, the pope did not single out any one country. John Paul asked God to "grant the human family of the third millennium a just and lasting peace."

Students stabbed on school shooting anniversary

7 TORONTO — A 15-year-old boy accused of stabbing five people at his high school apparently planned the attacks to coincide with the first anniversary of the massacre in Littleton, Colo., police said Sunday.

Det. Sgt. Ken Doyle said comments by witnesses and other evidence indicated the attacks Thursday were tied to the anniversary of the April 20, 1999, shootings at Columbine High School, where two students killed 13 people before turning their guns on themselves.

The stabbings Thursday began at about 11:21 a.m. — the exact same time of day that the Columbine shootings started.

Doyle refused to provide specifics about the evidence. Sgt. Leo Janveau said police had "some evidence of planning" prior to the stabbings, which left minor puncture wounds on four students and a lab technician who worked at Cairine Wilson high school in Orleans, a suburb of Ottawa.

Some witnesses interviewed by police would be interviewed again because of details they gave to news media that were missing from their police statements, Doyle said.

Classmates quoted in newspaper and television reports said the boy, who was not identified, was a loner and was teased about his thick, curly hair and acne. Doyle said none of the people interviewed by police so far had mentioned teasing.

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Nomination must be post marked or submitted by Friday, April 28, 2000.

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