



Family Displaced by House Fire

The Red Cross is providing shelter for a Portland family after a fire tore through their home at 532 N.E. Church St. Saturday afternoon. Firefighters arrived to find flames coming out of the building's first floor, extending to the second floor. No injuries or a possible cause for the fire were reported.

PHOTO BY RON WEBER/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

NAACP Opposes Alito Nomination

Hostility to civil rights cited

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund has announced opposition to the nomination of Samuel Alito Jr. to the U.S. Supreme Court, citing his hostility to strong enforcement of civil rights laws.

The group warns that the confirmation of Alito would threaten to shift significantly the Supreme Court's jurisprudence relating to affirmative action, voting rights, employment and criminal justice issues.

A 70-page report by the organization cites cases in which Alito has attacked congressional legislative authority in a manner that his colleagues viewed as extreme. As a Justice Department lawyer, he argued to uphold police use of deadly force and

undermine the rights of criminal defendants. In the area of affirmative action, the NAACP group highlighted "troubling signals" that Alito would tip the delicate Court balance to unravel policies "at the epicenter of the modern struggle for racial equality."



Samuel Alito Jr.

"We can predict with substantial certainty that Judge Alito will very likely vote in a manner

that, given the current composition of the Court, will cause a substantial shift in the Court's civil rights jurisprudence with devastating effects," the LDF report cautioned.

Judge Alito is scheduled to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee in early January for confirmation hearings.

Congressman Lived Like a King

(AP)—As Tom DeLay became a king of campaign fundraising, he lived like one too. He visited cliff-top Caribbean resorts, golf courses designed by PGA champions and four-star restaurants - all courtesy of donors who bankrolled his political money empire.

Over the past six years, the former House majority leader and his associates have visited places of luxury most Americans have never seen, often getting there aboard corporate jets arranged by lobbyists and other special interests.

Public documents reviewed by The Associated Press tell the story: at least 48 visits to golf clubs and resorts with lush fairways; 100 flights aboard company planes; 200 stays at hotels, many world-class; and 500 meals



U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay (left) and President Bush golf at Andrews Air Force Base in 2002.

at restaurants, some averaging nearly \$200 for a dinner for two.

Instead of his personal expense, the meals and trips for DeLay and his associates were paid with donations collected by the campaign committees and children's charity the Texas Republican created during his rise to the top of Congress.

Put them together and an opulent lifestyle emerges.

AP's review found DeLay's various organizations spent at least \$1 million over the last six years on top hotels, restaurants, golf resorts and corporate jet flights for their boss and

Until his recent indictment in Texas on political money laundering charges, DeLay was the second most powerful lawmaker in the House.

Bush Spying Program Defended

(AP)—Accused of acting above the law, President Bush defended a domestic spying program on Monday as an effective tool in disrupting terrorists and insisted it was not an abuse of Americans' civil liberties.

Despite the defense, there was a growing storm of criticism from Congress and calls for investigations, from Democrats and Republicans alike.

"Where does he find in the Constitution the authority to tap the

wires and the phones of American citizens without any court oversight?" asked Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said Bush's interpretation of the Constitution was "incorrect and dangerous."

The spying uproar was the latest controversy about Bush's handling of the war on terror, after questions about secret prisons in Eastern Europe, secrecy-cloaked government directives, torture allegations and a death

toll of more than 2,150 Americans in Iraq.

Appealing for support, Bush used the word "understand" 25 times in a nearly hour-long news conference. "I hope the American people understand - there is still an enemy that would like to strike the United States of America, and they're very dangerous," he said. Similarly, he said he hoped that black Americans who doubt his intentions "understand that I care about them."

Hundreds Attend Williams Funeral

(AP)—Hundreds of people attended a star-studded funeral Tuesday for executed killer Stanley Tookie Williams in the violence-wracked South Los Angeles section where he co-founded the murderous Crips gang three decades ago.

Under heavy police presence, mourners including gang members


flashing hand signs waited in line to enter the 1,500-seat Bethel AME Church. A big TV screen was set up in a parking lot for an overflow crowd. Vendors sold T-shirts with Williams' picture.

"The war within me is over. I battled my demons and I was triumphant," Williams said in a recording played to mourners,

whom he asked to spread a message to loved ones.

"Teach them how to avoid our destructive footsteps. Teach them to strive for higher education. Teach them to promote peace and teach them to focus on rebuilding the neighborhoods that you, others and I helped to destroy."

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