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THE DAILY NEWS

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INTERIOR DEPT.

Two tribes claim 27M acres in Colorado

Cheyenne and Arapaho say they'll trade military posts, Pikes Peak for 500-acre, casino-friendly reservation

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DENVER — In an extraordinary proposal, two American Indian tribes have prepared a detailed claim to 27 million acres in Colorado they say they will exchange for a new, 500-acre reservation where they can build a casino.

The Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma say they have a claim to land that covers the entire northeast section of Colorado — more than 42,000 square miles that includes Pikes Peak, secret military posts key to the nation's security and the state's densely populated Front Range, including metropolitan Denver, home to more than 2 million people.

The tribes hope to submit the plan to the Interior Department soon, said Steve Hillard, a Longmont-based venture capitalist who has organized financing for the project.

"From an economic standpoint, it's 65 to 70 percent of the value of the state," Hillard said Thursday.

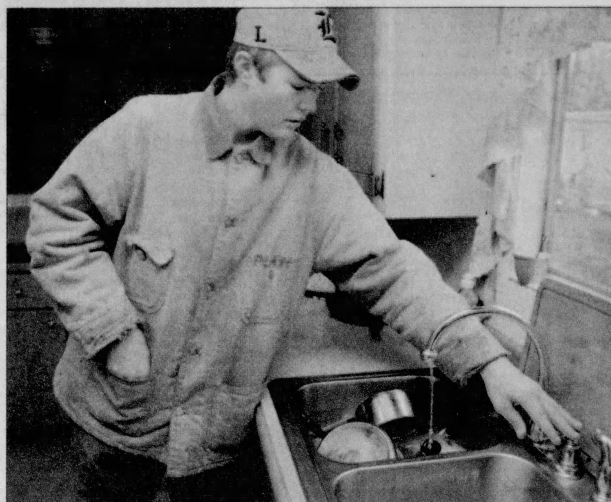
The plan calls for dropping claims to the land in exchange for a parcel upon which to build a \$150 million casino, travel center and cultural center. The tribes would purchase the 500 acres where they would try to establish a reservation, Hillard said.

Officials with the tribes did not return several telephone messages. As unlikely as the plan might sound, it comes as tribes nationwide are claiming ancestral land in hopes of building lucrative casinos.

Another Oklahoma-based tribe, the Delaware, filed a federal lawsuit Thursday to stake its claim to 315 acres in Pennsylvania in a quest to operate a gambling facility in the state. Tribal officials have been negotiating for months with New York Gov. George Pataki about settling tribal land claims through

See Tribes, Page A4

MOBILE HOME PARK



Mike Kaminski Jr., 17, could get only a trickle Tuesday when he turned on the kitchen tap full force at the family's mobile home in The Oaks Mobile Home Park in Longview. His father said the water pressure had improved slightly by Thursday as repairs to broken water lines and other leaks continued.

Oaks above water

New manager faces storm-damaged water lines as she struggles to raise mobile home community's profile

By Eric Apalategui
THE DAILY NEWS

More than a week after Mike Kaminski Sr. ran out of water at The Oaks Mobile Home Park in Longview, he started running out of patience as well.

"I've been as patient as I could be, but I can't flush my toilet, I can't bathe my body, my kids are suffering," the 48-year-old trucker said earlier this week. "We're not in Ethiopia. We should be able to get good water."

New manager Kathy Sherman understood the frustration. She and her staff fixed a dozen leaks in the park's water lines this

week after freezing weather fractured pipes. Sherman's two-person maintenance staff now is attempting to repair smaller leaks inside the mobile homes, RVs and motel-room apartments at The Oaks, she said Thursday.

"At this point I'm almost willing to do whatever it takes," Sherman said, after buying a large bag of assorted washers and gaskets to staunch smaller leaks that continue to plague the park's water system. She'll help out with the small fixes, she said, but tenants will be responsible if their own mobile homes and RVs need larger repairs.

"We're going extra steps because it's good for The Oaks community," which currently includes about 140 families. "We've been working 12-hour days since this started," Sherman said.

Kaminski said he first noticed water problems two weeks ago, and that the water coming from the tap dribbled to a trickle — or no water at all. He demonstrated the problem Tuesday by opening his kitchen tap wide, sending a meek stream of water thinner than a pencil into the sink.

At one point, the flow stopped

See Oaks, Page A4

SUSPENSION

Ex-Rainier band teacher may return to classroom

State panel sets requirements for Nathan Parker to teach in Oregon again after district says he downloaded explicit material on school computer

By Venice Buhain
THE DAILY NEWS

SALEM — The teaching license of Nathan Parker, the popular Rainier High School band teacher who quit last November amid controversy, will be suspended for three months, possibly followed by a two-year probationary period, a state licensing board decided Thursday afternoon.

The Teaching Standards and Practices Commission, which oversees Oregon teaching licenses, reported that Parker downloaded a sexually explicit article with a school computer hooked up to the Internet, copied the material on school equipment and showed it to two other employees at the high school. One of them complained that the article was inappropriate and offensive, investigators said.

Rainier administrators alerted the state commission and suspended Parker from the classroom shortly after the Oct. 16 incident, prompting dozens of band students to rally behind the teacher. Despite the support from the students and many of

See Parker, Page A4

APRIL 15

Most filers will find bigger tax breaks this year

Last year's tax-law changes will offer larger refund to many

By Mary Dalrymple
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Tax rates dropped last January, but most taxpayers have received only half of the cuts coming to them. That means many of them can expect a bigger refund or a smaller tax bill when they figure their 2003 tax return this year.

The tax law enacted last May dropped tax rates across the board and removed some of the "marriage penalty" built into the structure of marginal tax rates, which can cause married couples to pay more tax than they would as two singles.

Nearly everyone benefited from an expansion of the lowest, 10 percent bracket to \$7,000 for single people and \$14,000 for married couples. The law also expanded the 15 percent bracket for married couples to twice that of singles. Married couples now pay the same amount of tax on income within the bottom two rates as two singles.

The law also lowered the higher marginal rates ahead of schedule and made the change effective Jan. 1, 2003. The higher rates are now 25 percent,

See Taxes, Page A6

WINTER WEATHER

Bitter cold, snowstorm pound Northeastern states

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

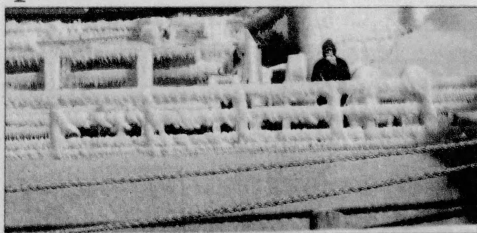
NEW YORK — A snowstorm combined with painfully cold arctic air descended on the Northeast on Thursday, trapping New York-bound ferries in the ice, grounding hundreds of flights and prompting warnings to bundle up from Maine to Pennsylvania.

Fine, powdery snow fell across much of the region, with the mercury dipping into the single digits in many places and 20 and 30 degrees below zero in others — a brutal combination that closed schools, disabled car batteries, caused fender-benders and forced even ski resorts to close.

In Yonkers, N.Y., retired construction worker Thomas Robbins, 66, pulled over to the side of the slippery Bronx River Parkway. "Mostly I'm resting my hands," he said. "I'm gripping the wheel so tight because I'm afraid of skidding."

A hiker was found dead in New Hampshire's White Mountains, where temperatures fell to minus 44 and the wind chill approached minus 100. Friends said the middle-aged man had been outdoors since Monday.

The bitter cold could worsen today, leading to concerns about blackouts. New York City reached a high of just 14 degrees and got 5 inches of snow.



On board The Rays, a cargo ship berthed Thursday in Portsmouth, N.H., a crewman tries to chip ice accumulated during an Atlantic crossing this week.

The Associated Press

Braun quits race for White House

Nation ■ Page A2



TODAY'S DAILY NEWS

SECTIONS	FEATURES
Nation/World A2	Annie's Mailbox D2
Business A5	Comics D2
Viewpoint A7	Crossword E8
Area News B1	Horoscope D2
Obituaries B2	Lotteries B2
Community News B3	Movies A2
Sports C1	News of Record B2
This Day D1	Obituaries B2
Weather D4	Scoreboard C2
Classifieds E2	Stocks A6

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Chilling crime: Spokane streakers watch car drive away

SPOKANE — Three men streaking through the warmth of a Denny's restaurant were chilled and chagrined when they spotted a thief driving away in their getaway car, their clothing inside. Naked in the 20-degree weather, the three young men huddled behind cars in an adjacent parking lot until police arrived.

"I don't think they were hiding. I think they were just concealing themselves," police spokesman Dick Cottam said. The trio, wearing only shoes and hats, entered the restaurant in north Spokane about 5 a.m. Wednesday. They left their car

running outside so they could make a quick exit. But a man eating inside the restaurant saw the running vehicle and stole it, along with the streakers' clothes, Cottam said.

The streakers watched through the windows as their car drove away. Cottam said. They ran outside but could not catch it. Cottam did not name the victim of the car theft but said he was 21. The streakers were not arrested. "We always tell people to not leave their car running," Cottam added. — The Associated Press

SPORTS, PAGE C1

Prog Basketball	NBA
R.A. Long 74	Phoenix 105
Mark Morris 68	Portland 96

BUSINESS, PAGE A5

DOW JONES	+15.48
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NASDAQ	-2.05
	CLOSE 2,309.08

Oaks: Some tenants being evicted

From Page A1

before stuttering back to a trickle. He and his three tenants have had to take showers and get water elsewhere.

By Thursday, he still couldn't get enough water for a shower, but "it is better than it was," he said. Still, he believes that more work needs to be done because he thinks the park's owners are trying "to fix a wound with a Band-Aid that needs stitches."

When Sherman took over management of the park Oct. 1, she knew she had problems with tenants dealing drugs and not paying rent — sometimes for years. The Oaks, at 636 California Way, was among the city's most active addresses for police calls.

Sherman has gotten tough, working with police and the courts, and she already has evicted five tenants and is trying to remove eight more, she said.

"At that point I will have pretty much weeded out the core group" of problem tenants, she said.

Most of her tenants are good, she said, but she worries about kids who have stumbled across needles or drug deals. "Children don't deserve to live in this kind of mess."

She said if tenants are "not willing to be responsible members of the community, I'm not willing to have them in here."

Sherman, a former decorator and medical business consultant, sees herself as a problem solver no matter the job

New manager Kathy Sherman said if tenants are "not willing to be responsible members of the community, I'm not willing to have them in here."

title. She said she and her staff have removed more than 50 inoperable cars and other junk, and they are remodeling the rental office and rooms in the motel at the park's entrance.

She rents the motel rooms as apartments. Mobile home and some RV owners in the park pay \$275 to \$300 a month for their spaces and some utilities. The park also has RV spaces for short-term stays.

With the coming evictions, Sherman said, the park's occupancy rate is about 30 percent for its 200 units, including spaces and motel rooms. The Oaks has been losing money, but Sherman expects to increase income as improvements attract new residents, she said. She's waiting to be able to show off bigger improvements before hanging a new sign to replace the spray-painted "Oaks" sign on California Way.

Seco Financial Services, which has ties to Seco Construction Equipment based in Yakima, has owned The Oaks four years. The former owners, brothers Robert and David Brown, had filed for bankruptcy. Seco representatives did not return telephone calls this week.

The Oaks borders The Home Depot, but Sherman said Seco has a five-year plan to fix up The Oaks — a plan that Sherman said doesn't include selling out.

"There is no truth to the rumor that we're being bought out by Costco," she said with a laugh.

While she knew about problem tenants from the start, Sherman said the recent water problems struck suddenly with the bad weather, rupturing pipes that have been installed in segments over decades.

"This was a hard freeze," she said. In the past, seven-year resident Kaminski said, water pressure has waned periodically each summer. In 2001, residents lost water service again when pipes were broken and water shut off during Home Depot's construction.

Jim Shier, water and sewer superintendent for Longview, and other city and county officials suggested ways for The Oaks owners and managers to locate water leaks this week. But repairing leaks on private property is an owner's responsibility.

A few days ago, Shier said the water meter at the park entrance measured 250 to 300 gallons of water a minute, which should have been enough water to serve at least four times as many families as live in The Oaks but was mostly draining into the ground, he said. That much treated water, he added, would cost roughly \$600 a day.

"They certainly have their work cut out for them," he said.

Parker: Says he has taken 'boundaries training'

From Page A1

their parents, Parker resigned from the district in November, citing "personal and family issues."

Parker had been a teacher of middle- and high-school students at Rainier since 1999, leading the band to success in state competitions. He also coached swimming, golf and girls' soccer.

Accessing sexually explicit material on school computers violates the commissions'

rules, outlined in the Oregon Administrative Rules filed with the Secretary of State. The Commission may issue sanctions for violating its rules and code of ethics.

The investigators reported that Parker said he was sorry for his actions, and that he has completed a "boundaries training" course with McKanna Bishop Joffe and Sullivan, a law firm specializing in work-

place issues.

Investigators say Parker may return to Oregon classrooms after reapplying for a license. He must also submit an evaluation that determines whether he is fit to work with children and teenagers and is unlikely to repeat the same actions, the order states.

If he returns to teaching, he will be on probation for the first two years.

A message left on Parker's telephone was not returned Thursday.

The board Thursday also revoked the license of Rickey Burnham, a former teacher at Hudson Park Elementary who pleaded guilty last year in Clark County after being arrested during a prostitution sting at an Interstate 5 rest area. He was fired from Rainier shortly after his arrest.

Tribes: Casino still needs OK from governor

From Page A1

state gambling compacts. "There is open talk here about whether or not land claims can be settled by casinos," said Joseph Heath, general counsel for the Onandaga Nation in New York.

The area involved in the claim that amounts to 40 percent of Colorado corresponds with land designated by the federal Indian Claims Commission as traditional Cheyenne and Arapaho land. "It's generally considered by various historians and experts that (the Cheyenne and Arapaho) did live in the area," said Vincent Knight of the National Tribal Justice Resource Center in Boulder, Colo.

Should the Oklahoma tribes establish a legal claim to a large chunk of Colorado, they must also persuade the governor to sign off on a new casino. Federal law requires governor-approved compacts before tribes can open casinos.

Gov. Bill Owens opposes any expansion of gambling in Colorado, a spokesman said.

Curtis Berkeley, an attorney in Berkeley, Calif., specializes in land claims litigation for tribes around the nation. He said the strategy being pursued by the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes — using a land claim as a bargaining tool to get land for a casino — could be tied in courts for years.



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