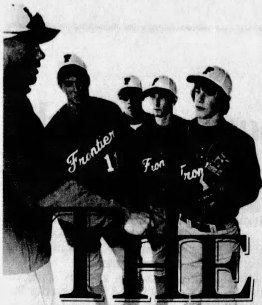


Spring sports

Scholastic Spotlight returns with a look at baseball and boys lacrosse. Page D6

SEEKING NEW HOME

O'Connell troupe sings "Side by Side" in theater closer. Page C1



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Northwest, Delta OK plan for merger

Deal would create world's largest airline

By HARRY R. WEBER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines, squeezed by record high fuel prices and a slowing economy, are combining in a stock-swap deal that would create the world's biggest air carrier.

The boards of both companies gave the deal the go-ahead Monday.

Delta said the combined airline, which will be called Delta, will have an enterprise value of \$17.7 billion. It will be based in Atlanta, and Richard Anderson, Delta's chief executive officer, will head the combined company.

The two carriers emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection a year ago. Both are losing money again but are in much better shape than they had been.

The deal will need antitrust approval, and integrating the work forces of Northwest, which is fully unionized, and Delta, where pilots are the only major unionized work group, will be tricky.

See **Airlines** on Page A2

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Health care crisis looms for boomers

A new study confirms a troubling trend: The medical care system is not ready for the mass of aging baby boomers.

By RANDOLPH E. SCHMID
ASSOCIATED PRESS

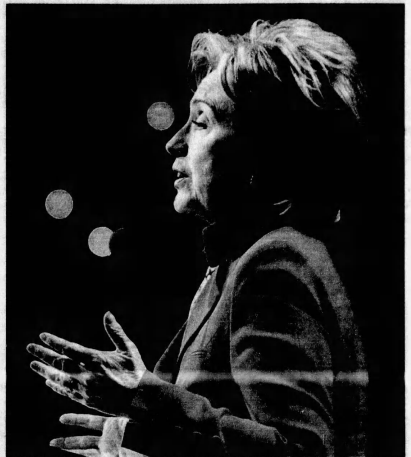
WASHINGTON — Millions of baby boomers are about to enter a health care system for senior citizens that not only isn't ready for them but also might even discourage them from getting quality care.

"We face an impending crisis as the growing number of older patients, who are living longer with more complex health needs, increasingly outpaces the number of health care providers with the knowledge and skills to care for them capably," said John W. Rowe, professor of health policy and management at Columbia University.

Rowe headed an Institute of Medicine committee that released a report Monday on the health care outlook for the 78 million baby boomers about to begin turning 65.

The report from the institute, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, cited:

See **Health** on Page A2



Entering the homestretch of the campaign for next Tuesday's key Democratic presidential primary in Pennsylvania, Sens. Barack Obama and Hillary Rodham Clinton address economic issues Monday during a Pittsburgh forum sponsored by the Alliance for American Manufacturing.

Pushing Pennsylvania hot buttons

Before a crowd not shy to express itself, Clinton and Obama get their presidential mettle tested

By JERRY ZREMSKI
NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

PITTSBURGH — The talk-show topic du jour — Sen. Barack Obama's comments that small-town Americans are "bitter" over their economic plight and "cling" to their religion or guns — didn't do much good for his Democratic rival for the presidency here Monday.

Speaking to several hundred union members at a forum on the future of manufacturing, Sen. Hillary Rodham

Clinton said: "I am well aware that at a fundraiser in San Francisco, he said some things that many people in Pennsylvania and beyond Pennsylvania have found offensive."

In response, several people groaned and booed.

But after Clinton laid out a far more detailed plan for cracking down on trade violations and boosting American manufacturing than Obama had an hour earlier, the audience stood on its feet and cheered.

Those two moments said a lot not

only about the struggling steelworkers who gathered to hear the two candidates, but about the battle for Pennsylvania, which holds its Democratic presidential primary a week from today.

Out of 25 voters interviewed after Monday's presidential forum on manufacturing, only two cited Obama's comments as a major issue. Yet a plurality of those voters — just like in the Pennsylvania polls and a majority in the neighboring blue-collar state of Ohio — back Clinton.

Many of those interviewed Monday said she has what Obama hasn't got: a good economic plan and the experience and toughness to get it enacted.

To such voters, Clinton's complaints about Obama, and Obama's argument that Clinton's anti-trade rhetoric is nothing more than that, fell on deaf ears.

"I think he's a good speaker, but she has a better command of the issues," said John DeSue, 63, a steelworker from Glassport. "She actually says what she's going to do."

Retired steelworker Michael Pasco, 85, cited Clinton's track record.

"What I like about Hillary is, she's experienced," Pasco said. "And there's no question that she's a fighter."

There's no question, either, about Clinton's attention to detail. Speaking before a crowd filled with workers who said they've lost more than one job to the decline of heavy industry,

See **Democrats** on Page A2

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM: To COMMENT ON THIS STORY, GO TO THE INSIDE THE NEWS BLOG.

FOCUS: PROSTITUTION

Arrests aim at escorts, not at customers

Most liaisons arranged now on the Internet

By STEPHEN T. WATSON
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

As the 26-year-old escort entertained a client last summer inside a room at the Motel 6 on Maple Road in Amherst, some friends waited for her outside.

They drew the attention of police officers, who entered the room and broke up the romantic liaison.

The escort was arrested and later served 90 days of the one-year sentence she was given for prostitution. Police never charged her customer, who walked free that night, she said.



Rosetta Menifee, left, and Jackie Andula are among organizers of Buffalo's "john school," which has fallen into disuse because of shifting priorities. Andula said too few johns are being arrested.

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM: To COMMENT ON THIS STORY, GO TO THE INSIDE THE NEWS BLOG.

"It was screwed up," said the escort, who advertises online and who asked not to be named. "Cause we're both doing the crime. Not just one person. Both the escort and the client."

This escort's experience isn't so unusual. Prostitutes are far more likely to be arrested and convicted of a crime than are the johns whose demand drives the industry.

And sting operations, like the one that ended former Gov. Eliot L. Spitzer, tend to be prompted by suspect financial transactions, human-trafficking concerns and other issues.

In Buffalo, a prior initiative that focused on johns and gave them the chance to attend a groundbreaking "john school" fell into disuse as a result of shifting police and prosecution priorities.

"Today, most of the prostitution in

See **Crime** on Page A2

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WEATHER

Mostly sunny, a bit milder. High temperature 52, low 33. Details on Page B12.



Charles Lewis/Bufalo News

Things were looking up Monday for Jim Busse and son Ethan, 5, who were flying a kite in Delaware Park.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Iraqi troops free CBS journalist

BAGHDAD — Iraqi troops freed a kidnapped British journalist for CBS News on Monday after finding him hooded and bound in a house during a raid in Basra. Richard Butler was thin but in good condition after two months in captivity. Story on A3.

Beijing planning to cut pollution

BEIJING — City officials announced plans Monday to temporarily close steel and chemical plants, cut back emissions by 30 percent at 19 heavy-polluting companies and stop construction at hundreds of sites in order to clean Beijing's polluted air for the Olympics. Story on A3.

'Voices From the War'



About 600 Western New Yorkers are among a group of National Guardsmen serving in Afghanistan, many in remote mountain locations where Taliban and al-Qaida have been operating. Many of these soldiers have agreed to share their experiences and thoughts with News readers, starting today with a blog — "Voices From the War." The blog allows them to speak directly to WNY, and beyond, and gives News Web readers a chance to respond. Go to buffaloblog.com.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Obama the moralist, Clinton the wonk focus on trade

DEMOCRATS • from A1

Clinton repeated some of her long-time economic proposals while spelling out a proposed crackdown on unfair trade.

Clinton promised to aggressively challenge unfair trading practices through the World Trade Organization, create a new "Intellectual Property Enforcement Network" to protect America's trade secrets and consider tough action such as tariffs against China so it might end its manipulation of currency.

Sketching out her ideas in lingo heavy with acronyms and numbers, the New York senator summed up by saying, "We need solutions to fix our trade laws, build a strong manufacturing base, and stand up to China and say that unsafe toys and unfair currency practices are unacceptable. . . . And if you give me the chance, I will stand strong for you every single day as president."

In contrast, her opponent from Illinois skipped all the turgid trade terminology and point-by-point policy prescriptions. Instead, he addressed the fight for fair trade in moralistic terms.

"The men and women you represent haven't been getting a seat at the table when trade agreements are being negotiated, or tax policies are being written, or health care and pension laws are being designed, because the special interests have bought every chair," Obama said.

"That's not the America I believe in. And that's why when I'm president, we'll make sure Washington serves nobody's interests but the people's."

Hearing all of that, several of the voters interviewed afterward lauded Obama's rhetorical skill — and said they were voting for the wonkish woman who used to be the first lady.

"I'd like to see Hillary get it," said Ann Swanson, 55, who attended the event with her husband, Frank Swanson, who works at a factory that makes solar panels. "I'd like to see a woman in there."

Ricky Bergstedt, 53, a former union local president who said he could be among the pending layoffs at the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Corp. steel plant in Allentown, said he likes both candidates but prefers Clinton.

"Listening to her, you get the sense

that there isn't any issue she can't take on or any person she can't take on," he said.

There's no doubt she's taking on Obama. Ever since Obama's comments from San Francisco were revealed Friday, she has taken every opportunity to attack the front-runner.

Undeterred by the groans and the man shouting, "No! No!" Clinton continued her assault at the forum.

"I don't think he really gets it that people are looking for a president who stands up for you and not looks down on you," Clinton said.

Hearing those words, Mark Willoughby, a steelworker from Saxenburg, was by no means impressed. "She started off poorly, going negative against him like that," Willoughby said. "I made me think: Maybe he's the guy."

Several voters said that while Obama might not have expressed his sentiments very well, in one way, they were dead-on.

Noting that industrial jobs continue to disappear and gasoline now costs nearly \$3.50 a gallon, Dave Novak, 55, of McKeesport, said: "You're going to be bitter about the economy? Well,

why wouldn't you be?"

Nevertheless, Obama felt compelled to address the controversy yet again at the forum — while opening up a new line of attack on Clinton.

Acknowledging that "it may be that I chose my words badly," Obama lashed out at Clinton for her husband Bill's support as president for passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, as well as for the free-trade ties of her former chief strategist, Mark Penn, whose work for the Colombian government got him demoted in the Clinton campaign.

"You can't spend the better part of two decades campaigning for NAFTA and free trade with China and then come here to Pennsylvania and tell the steelworkers you've been with them all along," Obama said.

Clinton dismissed the NAFTA criticism by saying: "As smart as my husband is, he does make mistakes."

That argument didn't go very far with the Obama supporters in the crowd.

"I was for Hillary at first, but when I listen to Obama speak, I wish that he's honestly telling people what needs to be done," said Henry McCloud, who

works for Allegheny Technologies, a Pittsburgh-based specialty metals company.

"He's just the breath of fresh air that this country needs," said Susan Greco of Charleroi, whose husband, Gary, is a steelworker.

Yet voices such as theirs appeared to be outnumbered in the crowd at the forum, which was sponsored by the Alliance for American Manufacturing, a business-labor effort that presses for fair trade.

Bill Wheeler, 61, of Avella, said Obama's recent comments might hurt him among Pennsylvania voters he knows who voted for George W. Bush so their guns wouldn't be taken away.

"There are guys that will tell you that I don't believe it," said Wheeler, who added: "A lot of people don't want a black man to be president."

Pasco also said Obama's comments could hurt him, but he stressed Clinton's toughness as a big plus:

"It would be good to get a woman in there. She would be like (former British Prime Minister) Margaret Thatcher, and she was pretty good."

e-mail: jiremski@buffnews.com

Merger to bring job cuts

AIRLINES • from A1

Northwest pilots and the union representing most of Northwest's ground workers immediately announced they would fight the combination.

The joining of Atlanta-based Delta and Eagan, Minn.-based Northwest, if approved by regulators and shareholders of both companies, will result in a company with annual revenue of \$31.7 billion, vaulting it ahead of Fort Worth, Texas-based AMR Corp.'s American Airlines for top spot in the United States.

It would be the biggest carrier in the world in terms of traffic, before any further domestic capacity cuts and any divestitures that might be required by anti-trust regulators.

The agreement follows several months of discussions between Delta and Northwest and at one time between Delta and Chicago-based UAL Corp.'s United Airlines. Analysts say they believe that a Delta-Northwest combination will stand up better to regulatory scrutiny because the two carriers have less overlap.

Delta's routes are strongest in the Eastern United States and to Latin America and Europe. Northwest would complement that with its near-lock in the Midwest along with flights to its Tokyo hub and other points in Asia.

Both Delta and Northwest serve the Buffalo market, accounting for a combined 16 percent of total outbound passengers and 17 percent of all flights at Buffalo Niagara International Airport in Cheektowaga.

Earlier Monday, Lawrence M. Meckler, executive director of the Niagara



Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines planes pass each other at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

Frontier Transportation Authority, said the then-as-yet unconfirmed merger would be positive news.

"There's no overlap in the routes they fly here, so it wouldn't appear they'd need to reduce service," he said. "If anything, it would mean Buffalo would be served by a stronger, combined airline."

Delta now offers direct flights from Buffalo to Newark, N.J.; Atlanta; and Cincinnati. Northwest flies nonstop to Detroit.

Under the terms of the transaction, Northwest shareholders will receive 1.25 Delta shares for each Northwest share they own. The exchange ratio represents a premium of 16.8 percent for Northwest shareholders, based on Monday's closing stock prices.

Daniel Carp, Delta chairman, will become chairman of the new board of directors, and Roy Bostock, Northwest chairman, will become vice chairman.

Consolidation of overlapping corporate and administrative functions will result in an unspecified number of job cuts or transfers, Delta said. The two airlines

employ more than 80,000 people combined. The company expects no involuntary furloughs of front-line employees and said the pension plans for both companies' employees will be protected.

Delta doesn't plan to close any of the two airlines' hubs.

Delta also said it has agreed with leaders of its pilot union to extend its collective bargaining agreement through the end of 2012. The agreement, which is subject to pilot ratification, would produce savings from the combined companies once the transaction is completed, Delta said. It also provides the Delta pilots a 3.5 percent equity stake in the new company and other enhancements to their current contract.

The agreement does not cover Northwest pilots. Delta said it will use its best efforts to reach a combined Delta-Northwest pilot agreement, including resolution of pilot seniority integration, before the merger closes.

News Business Reporter Sharon Linstadt contributed to this story.

Medicare cuts in pay to doctors add to woes

HEALTH • from A1

- Too few specialists in geriatric medicine.
- Lack of training opportunities.

- Insufficient pay for specialists.
- Medicare's failure to provide for team care, which many elderly patients need.

The study said Medicare even might hinder seniors from getting the best care because of its low reimbursement rates, a focus on treating short-term health problems rather than managing chronic conditions and lack of coverage for preventive services or for health care providers' time spent collaborating with a patient's other providers.

The American Medical Association responded that senior citizens' access to Medicare in coming years "is threatened by looming Medicare physician payment cuts."

"This July, the government will begin steep cuts in Medicare physician payments, and 60 percent of physicians say this cut will force them to limit the number of new Medicare patients they can treat," the AMA said in a statement.

AARP, the organization for older Americans, said the report highlights the growing need for immediate action to improve and strengthen the health care and long-term care work force.

The group said it is endorsing a bill by Sens. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., and Susan Collins, R-Maine, that would steer caregivers toward geriatric and long-term care roles and create an advisory panel to an-

alyze the sector and recommend ways to tackle its changing needs.

The report found about 7,100 doctors in the United States certified in geriatrics, one for every 2,500 older Americans.

Turnover among nurse's aides averages 71 percent annually, and up to 90 percent of home health aides leave their jobs within the first two years, the report said.

But while today's elderly tend to be healthier and live longer than previous generations, people over 65 tend to have more complex conditions and health care needs than younger folks.

The report urged that all health care workers be trained in basic geriatric care and that schools increase training in the treatment of older patients.

The federally required minimum number of hours of training for direct-care workers should be raised to at least 120 from 75, the report said, noting that more training is required for dog groomers than direct-care workers in many parts of the country.

It also urged higher pay for geriatric specialists, doctors, nurses and care workers.

A doctor specializing in elderly care earned \$163,000 on average in 2005 compared with \$175,000 for a general internist, even though the geriatric specialist required more training.

The report also urged training for family members and other informal caregivers who assist the elderly.

Prostitution arrests are declining throughout the state and locally

CRIME • from A1

this area seems to be arranged over the Internet, and we aren't hearing about streetwalkers causing problems in neighborhoods. If that became a problem again, we'd probably start prosecuting Johns, once again," Erie County District Attorney Frank J. Clark said.

But escorts and their advocates say that either the laws must be applied equally to prostitutes and their customers — or prostitution should just be legalized.

"We're not in favor of increasing client arrests because Buffalo market, accounting for a combined 16 percent of total outbound passengers and 17 percent of all flights at Buffalo Niagara International Airport in Cheektowaga.

Earlier Monday, Lawrence M. Meckler, executive director of the Niagara

Prostitution arrests

Arrests in New York State and Erie County have dropped in recent years, but prostitutes still are far more likely than their customers to be arrested.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
New York					
Total arrests	6,407	6,528	7,893	5,374	4,252
Prostitution only	3,294	3,737	4,583	2,922	1,999
Patronizing	2,620	2,268	2,669	1,999	1,672
Promoting	475	491	591	415	567

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Erie County					
Total arrests	285	206	96	197	119
Prostitution only	200	173	82	178	83
Patronizing	71	25	10	15	34
Promoting	14	8	4	4	2

Source: State Division of Criminal Justice Services

Justice Services data.

In Erie County, arrests for prostitution crimes fell from 285 in 2003 to 119 last year.

Of the statewide and county-wide arrests, most are for prostitution, not for patronizing a prostitute, the customer's crime.

In Niagara Falls, police made 97 arrests for prostitution or loitering for 2005 to 2007, compared with five arrests for patronizing, according to that city's Police Department.

Current and former escorts and prostitutes and industry advocates say the data confirms their impressions that the system treats sex workers unfairly.

One former prostitute, Michelle, who worked the streets of Niagara Falls for many years, was arrested about 30 times before she got out of the business and turned her life around.

She said she was caught several times with a customer, but the john was usually released by officers without charges.

"I don't understand why they don't go after both people," said Michelle, who spoke on condition her last name not be used.

Cities have tried different strategies to dissuade Johns. About 200 communities have tried to publicly embar-

ass Johns in some way, said Michael Shively, a senior associate at Avel Associates, a public-policy institute in Cambridge, Mass.

Shaming hasn't been shown to be a useful deterrent, he added.

Some cities have set up john schools, which educate Johns on the legal, medical and emotional risks of buying sex.

Buffalo's john school, which started in 1996, was one of the first in the country and grew out of the prostitution task force formed by social workers, law enforcement officials and community activists.

At the school, which Johns could attend as an alternative to jail, men listened as health workers and former prostitutes talked about the possible harm they were doing to the prostitute, to themselves and to their families.

"It's not about shame. It's about intervention," said Rosetta Menifee, a member of the former Buffalo Prostitution Task Force and organizer of the Buf-

falo john school.

The john school is all but inactive today for want of students, because police aren't making enough arrests, said another organizer, Jackie Andula.

Law enforcement officials acknowledge they can't completely address the problem of prostitution without going after the Johns.

"We did these prosecutions years ago because you had public outcry about streetwalkers in certain neighborhoods and the Johns coming to pick them up," said Clark, the DA.

Today, Clark said he would rather have his prosecutors concentrate on violent crimes such as homicide, robbery and sexual assault.

Even police actions that generate lists of customers suspected of illegal activity rarely lead to arrests of Johns.

Last December, law enforcement agencies raided four area massage parlors and charged the operators with forcing illegal immigrants to perform sex

acts for customers.

Police know the identities of many of the customers. However, the only customer charged is a retired Lockport police captain who pleaded guilty to twice transporting women across state lines to work as prostitutes.

There's a difference of opinion over what should be done to remedy this imbalance and, in a broader sense, to address the issue of prostitution.

Some point to a change in the law in Sweden, which made it legal to sell sex but illegal to buy it, as a strategy that shows signs of being effective.

But Leigh and others say no one should be arrested for working as a prostitute or for hiring a prostitute because the practice should be legalized entirely.

News Staff Reporter Dan Herbeck contributed to this report.

e-mail: swatson@buffnews.com

Corrections

A story in Gusto last week incorrectly stated that Dr. Barbara Harbach will lecture at 4 p.m. Friday at the University at Buffalo. Harbach will not be lecturing but will perform at 8 p.m. Friday in a recital on the

Fisk Organ in Lippes Concert Hall at Slee Hall on UB's North Campus. . . .

The Buffalo News corrects published errors of substance. To request a correction, please

notify the editor by writing to: P.O. Box 100, Buffalo, NY 14240. Or call The News at 849-4444 and ask to speak to the editor of the department in which the article was published. Or fax your request to 856-5150.