



Butch Davis
undergoes
chemo

IN SPORTS

Song choice of S.C. 'Idol' is questioned but fans remain loyal

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'A' LIST
ON PAGE 2A



The Charlotte Observer

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2007

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C D E F • • • | Price varies by county | 50¢

Homesick Boy Scout rescued after 3 nights lost in mountains



JENNIFER ROTENIZER - ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO

Amy Puryear (left), Susan Pabon (center) and Melani Sawyer embrace after learning that Michael Auberry, a 12-year-old Boy Scout who disappeared Saturday in McGrady, was found. They attend church with the Auberry family.

Child found hungry, dehydrated a half-mile from troop's campsite

BY MARCIE YOUNG
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McGRADY — Michael Auberry just wanted to see his family and friends Saturday afternoon when he wandered away from his Boy Scout troop's campsite in Western North Carolina's rugged mountains.

"He was homesick," said Kent Auberry, Michael's father. "He started walking and thought he'd hitchhike home."

Michael, a 12-year-old Boy Scout from Greensboro, spent



IMAGE FROM VIDEO VIA AP

Boy Scout Michael Auberry is transferred from an ambulance to Wilkes Regional Medical Center in North Wilkesboro.

three nights lost in the rocky and steep mountains in Doughton State Park before being found Tuesday morning. Rescuers, including a search

dog named Gandalf, found Michael shortly before 11 a.m. walking along a rushing creek about a half-mile from where he disappeared.



Kent Auberry



Gandalf

Michael was dehydrated and hungry for store-bought Grandma's cookies and chicken fingers, but he was in good spirits as he recovered Tuesday evening at Wilkes Regional Medical Center in North Wilkesboro, his father said.

Temperatures dipped into the 20s at night. Michael was wearing jeans, a base layer, a fleece, a winter coat, gloves and a baseball cap.

He drank water from a

SEE FOUND | 4A

[Sold a nightmare ■ PART FOUR OF FOUR]

Failed mortgages fly under the radar

From feds on down, no one keeps close track of foreclosures, limiting oversight

BY BINYAMIN APPELBAUM, LISA HAMMERSLY MUNN AND TED MELLNIK
Staff Writers

The city of Charlotte does not count foreclosures. Neither does Mecklenburg County. Nor the state of North Carolina. Nor the federal government.

As a result, authorities did not notice an emerging pattern: Foreclosures increasingly were concentrating in starter home neighborhoods.

An Observer analysis of county records found 35 Mecklenburg developments of low-priced homes built in the past decade with foreclosure rates of 20 percent or higher. Dozens of residents say the concentrations have damaged their communities. Prices fell. Renters moved in. Crime sometimes rose.

But as the foreclosures piled up, authorities were unaware.

"We wouldn't know it on a neighborhood level," says Mark Pearce, deputy N.C. commissioner of banks, which regulates loan sellers. "A 20 percent foreclosure rate in a neighborhood that's new is surprising and troubling."

Even the Federal Housing Administration, which insured many of the failed loans, didn't track the concentrations.

The Observer on Sunday profiled Southern Chase, a neighborhood of 406 houses in Concord built by Beazer Homes USA. Seventy-seven buyers lost their homes to foreclosure. Forty-five of the failed loans were insured by the FHA. But federal officials expressed surprise when asked about the

SEE MORTGAGES | 10A

INSIDE TODAY

10A | Who to call if you're facing foreclosure.

HOW ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Online map allows you to scan Mecklenburg developments for foreclosures.
www.charlotte.com

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

Deadlock breaks on school construction

Compromise by CMS board may pave way for bond referendum

BY PETER SMOLOWITZ
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The Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board reached a compromise Tuesday on school construction that could help clear the way for a \$467.8 million bond package in November.

The agreement, which would add about \$60 million to the package, ends a deadlock that had lasted more than a month.

Under the plan offered by Superintendent Peter Gorman, 15 projects from the failed 2005 bond campaign would be back on the ballot this year. Much of that construction would be at



Griffin

Gauvreau

schools closer to the center city, partly to ease criticism that Gorman's initial spending proposal focused too much on suburbs.

Six of the nine school board members endorsed the proposal, with vice chair Molly Griffin calling it "the beginning of a very good compromise."

Board member Larry Gauvreau, however, said the money was "misprioritized," saying Gorman's strategy shouldn't be supported just for the sake of avoiding another bond defeat.

The projects from the last

SEE CMS | 4A

FIRED U.S. ATTORNEYS

Bush, Democrats clash over aides' questioning

President says he'll fight subpoena efforts

BY LAURIE KELLMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush warned Democrats on Tuesday to accept his offer to have top aides speak about the firings of federal prosecutors privately and not under oath, or

risk a constitutional showdown. The Democrats' response: They said they would start authorizing subpoenas as soon as today.

Bush, in a late-afternoon statement at the White House, said he would fight any subpoena effort in court.

"We will not go along with a partisan fishing expedition aimed at honorable public servants," he said.

SEE AIDES | 7A



CHARLES DHARAPAK - ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO

President Bush said he would fight any subpoena effort in court.

MORE COVERAGE | 7A

Fired U.S. attorneys' performance not so lackluster, analysis shows.

INSIDE

Rainy, cooler
Low: 49. High: 55.
Morning rain and afternoon showers, both light. Showers could linger into evening. Partly sunny, warmer Thursday. Forecast, 8B.

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Business | 1D

Many call; few pets ill



Charlotte-area vets are fielding calls about a recall of more than 50 brands of pet food. But they say very few pets are showing symptoms. A dog and 13 cats have died nationwide, the FDA says.

Local & State | 1B

False Social Security numbers used for IDs

North Carolina has issued nearly 27,000 driver's licenses based on invalid Social Security numbers, a state auditor's report said Tuesday.



Also in the News

- Make your own mayo | 1E
- War protests proliferating in Carolinas | 1B
- Duke, N.C. State women keep rolling | 1C

Coming Thursday

So many palms to plant

It's warm enough in Charlotte to grow any of 50 palms in your yard. Expert John Denti gives his recommendations.

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