

Shoptalk
Bushido's sushi joint one of two new restaurants in town: B1



Post Register

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TUESDAY

December 21, 2010

College Report

Butte Co. grad Kati Isham gets a career high in points **A9**



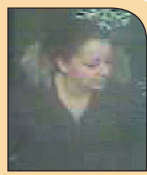
Christmas crooners

First-graders share their holiday spirit **B5**



I.F. holdups

Woman of interest sought in pair of robberies **B1**



Discovery Elementary School student Taysha Ford concentrates on her reading using a computer reading program that has significantly increased students' reading abilities.

Robert Bower
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AMWTP praised for work

■ The DOE recognized the contractor for its use of stimulus funds in speeding up its cleanup work at INL.

By SVEN BERG
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After a trying year, Bechtel BWXT-Idaho could use the pat on the back it received Friday.

One of the major cleanup contractors on the Idaho National Laboratory site, Bechtel was the target of a glowing report from the U.S. Department of Energy's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The report highlighted Bechtel's use of more than \$22 million in federal stimulus money to accelerate its cleanup of radioactive waste stored on the INL site.

The DOE credited 52 workers hired with stimulus money with helping to unearth, process, package and ship out of Idaho nearly 4,800 cubic meters of radioactive waste from the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project this year. Workers retrieved an additional 2,051 cubic meters of waste that is now awaiting treatment and shipment out of state.

"The expectations of DOE for successfully executing the Recovery Act were clearly met at AMWTP," said Idaho Cleanup Project Acting Deputy Manager Jim Cooper. "It was most impressive to see how new employees could quickly and safely integrate into the existing work force. By all accounts, the Recovery Act has been successfully carried out at AMWTP."

Though Bechtel has been generally praised for its management of the treatment project, this year has brought its share of bad news.

In March, the DOE announced that a new contractor, CH2M Hill Newport News Nuclear, had won a nearly \$600 million contract to take over the project's operations through September 2015. Bechtel and treatment project partner The Babcock and Wilcox Co.

■ Of the 52 hires, all but 7 remain on the job; the rest left their positions voluntarily

AMWTP, Continued on Page A4

Leading the pack

Program accelerating kids' reading abilities

■ With the help of the Fast ForWord computer program, Discovery Elementary went from the bottom of the district to top reading scorer.

By RACHEL COOK
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Discovery Elementary School students' speed-reading skills are getting a boost from a computer program.

When Discovery opened two years ago, administrators knew from test scores that many students coming to the school struggled in reading and language. Discovery Principal Ken Marlowe said they knew Discovery would have the needs of a lower socio-economic school based on the school's boundaries.

"We kind of knew that reading was

going to be an emphasis that we'd have to make," he said.

The district took on reading challenges with a computer-reading program called Fast ForWord, a product from the Scientific Learning education company. Marlowe said the software is a "brain fitness program" that helps train students' neuropathways for reading and language.

The school was Bonneville Joint School District 93's pilot for the program, and the software quickly took flight. Discovery's standardized test scores sailed from the bottom to the top of the district.

"It was phenomenal growth," District 93 Superintendent Chuck Shackett said.

Shackett learned about the program in early 2008 and decided to test the program



INSIDE

■ School, businesses bring Christmas to families / **B5**

at Discovery, which opened in fall 2008.

"The thing that impressed me about (Fast ForWord) was that it wasn't a reading product that was created and then research was done to see if it worked," Shackett said.

Teachers for the new school were hired with the program in mind and the school's computer lab was dedicated solely to the program. The district tapped about \$96,000 in federal Title I money to purchase the program for Discovery.

In the first year, all Discovery students not reading at grade level used the program.

The results were impressive. Students using the program improved their number of words read per minute by 69 percent according to the next year's Idaho

■ The school's first- and second-graders use the reading program on a daily basis

READING, Continued on Page A4

Study: Colds little affected by echinacea

■ Research indicates that there is little, if any, benefit from taking echinacea to battle the common cold.

NEW YORK (AP) — Got the sniffles? The largest study of the popular herbal remedy echinacea finds it won't help you get better any sooner.

The study of more than 700 adults and children suggests the tiniest possible benefit — about a half-day shaved off a weeklong cold and slightly milder symptoms. But that could have occurred by chance.

For most people, the potential to get relief a few hours sooner probably isn't worth the trouble and cost of taking the supplement, researchers said.

With no cure for the common cold,

■ Echinacea research hard to compare due to different varieties and parts used

COLDS, Continued on Page A4

Americans' gas consumption on decline

■ Experts say U.S. demand should fall for good following peak usage in 2006.

NEW YORK (AP) — The world's biggest gas-guzzling nation has limits after all.

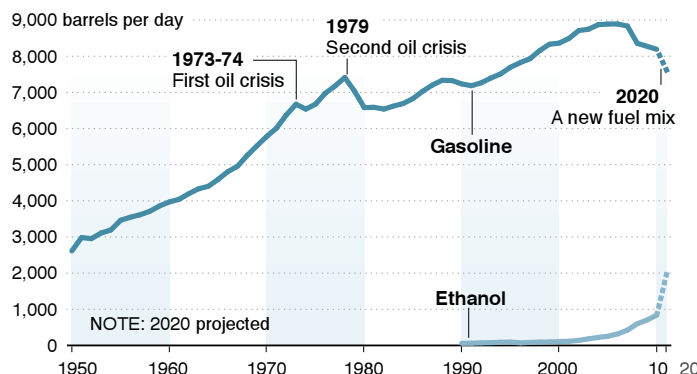
After seven decades of mostly uninterrupted growth, U.S. gasoline demand is at the start of a long-term decline. By 2030, Americans will burn at least 20 percent less gasoline than today, experts say, even as millions more cars clog the roads.

The country's thirst for gasoline is shrinking as cars and trucks become more fuel-efficient, the government mandates the use of more ethanol and people drive less.

"A combination of demographic change and policy change means the heady days of gasoline growing in the U.S. are over," said Daniel Yergin, chairman of IHS Cambridge Energy Research Associates

Gas demand may be at a turning point

After seven decades of mostly unabated growth, U.S. gas consumption may be on the decline with biofuels taking on greater importance.



SOURCE: IHS Cambridge Energy Research Associates

AP

and author of a Pulitzer Prize-winning history of the oil industry.

This isn't the first time in U.S. history that gasoline demand has fallen, at least temporarily. Drivers typically cut back during recessions, then hit the road again when the economy picks up. Indeed,

the Great Recession was the chief reason demand fell sharply in 2008.

But this time looks different. Government and industry officials — including the CEO of Exxon Mobil — say U.S. gasoline demand has peaked for good. It has declined four years in a row and will not reach the

2006 level again, even when the economy fully recovers.

In fact, the ground was shifting before the recession. The 2001 terrorist attacks, the war in Iraq, Hurricane Katrina and pump prices rising to a nationwide average of \$3 a gallon for the first time in a generation reignited public debates about the political and economic effects of oil imports and climate change. Also, the popularity of SUVs began to wane, and the government started requiring refiners to blend corn-based ethanol into every gallon of gasoline.

Americans are burning an average of 8.2 million barrels — 344 million gallons — of gasoline per day in 2010, a figure that excludes the ethanol blended into gasoline. That's 8 percent less than at the 2006 peak, government data says.

The decline is expected to accelerate for several reasons.

■ As a result, families will spend less on fuel, emissions will drop

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Movies.....B8
Obituaries.....B2, B3
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West.....B1

31 High / Low 24

Today: Mostly cloudy. Forecast: **A2**



READING

From Page A1

Reading Indicator test scores, more than any other school in the district. Marlowe said the success was well worth the program's price.

"It's really pennies on the dollar that we're investing," he said.

Discovery's lab technician, Margaret Bowden, said Fast ForWord is the best product she's encountered in 18 years of working with educational computer programs.

"This is the only one that really works," Bowden said. "I've watched it change lives."

Bowden first saw the program at work when a friend purchased it for their daughter with a learn-

ing disability and her test scores improved dramatically.

"Overall, it's just fun to watch all the little lights go on," she said. "All of a sudden, they understand."

Discovery's first- and second-graders use the program daily, as do students in upper grades with lower reading levels. Teachers said the program makes a difference in students' reading capabil-

ities and confidence.

"It's repetitive yet challenging, and it reviews skills learned in a different format," first-grade teacher Sherry Martineau said. "Anytime you can boost the confidence of a student, it shows up in other areas."

Since Discovery's achievements, Fast ForWord has been installed districtwide. The district included \$1.3 million for dis-

trictwide use of the program in its 2008 school construction bond, which paid for Mountain Valley Elementary School.

"One of the selling points (of the bond) was the reading program," Shackett said. "I think it's been something that has impacted our students' reading growth more than any other activity that we've done."

COLDS

From Page A1

Americans spend billions on over-the-counter pills, drops, sprays and other concoctions to battle their runny noses, scratchy throats and nagging coughs. Some turn to echinacea, a top seller marketed as a product that helps the immune system fight infections.

In the past, some studies found it did nothing to prevent or treat colds; others showed modest benefit. Research on echinacea, also known as purple coneflower, is hard to compare because there's more than one kind of plant and different parts of it are used.

With government funding, Dr. Bruce Barrett and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin tackled the

question again, using newspaper ads and posters to find volunteers with colds in the Madison, Wis., area.

The participants ages 12 to 80 were randomly assigned to get echinacea tablets, a dummy pill or no treatment at all. Those who got the herb took the equivalent of 10 grams of dried echinacea root the first day and 5 grams the next four days.

Twice a day, they graded their symptoms until their cold was gone.

From those scores, the researchers saw a trend toward shorter and slightly less severe colds for those taking echinacea compared to those who didn't. However, the results did not reach statistical significance, meaning they could have occurred by chance. There were no apparent side effects from the echinacea.

Barrett and other experts said the findings would probably be viewed as positive by echinacea supporters but as the "nail in the coffin" by critics.

"It's not a compelling result in either direction," said Mark Blumenthal, executive director of the American Botanical Council, which follows research on herbal products. He said Barrett is on the group's advisory board.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFLY

Pedophilia guide's author arrested

PUEBLO, Colo. (AP) — A Colorado man who wrote a how-to guide for pedophiles is headed to Florida to face obscenity charges.

Phillip R. Greaves of Pueblo, Colo., waived his right to fight extradition Monday after he was arrested at his home on a warrant that charges him with violating Florida's obscenity law.

Sheriff Grady Judd in Polk County, Fla., said his office was able to arrest Greaves because he sold and mailed his book, "The Pedophile's Guide to Love and Pleasure: a Child-lover's Code of Conduct," directly to undercover Polk deputies. Judd says Greaves even signed the book.

Oswald's brother disputes coffin sale

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The brother of Lee Harvey Oswald said Monday that a coffin that once held the body of the presidential assassin should have been destroyed years ago rather than being auctioned off and allowed to exist as a ghoulish keepsake.

Robert L. Oswald said he didn't know the coffin still existed until he read in a Texas newspaper this month that it had been put up for sale.

Oswald, 76, said he attempted to contact a funeral home owner to halt the sale, but his call was not returned. He said a similar request was

ignored by the Santa Monica auction house that handled the sale.

"This is not about money on my part," Oswald said. "The coffin should have been destroyed years ago, and that is what I desire now."

An anonymous bidder on Thursday bought the water-damaged coffin.

Delta flight makes emergency landing

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — A Delta Air Lines Inc. jet with 52 people aboard made a safe landing in Syracuse after experiencing problems with one of its two engines.

A city aviation spokeswoman, Christina Reale, said a low oil pressure gauge lit up when the Detroit-to-Syracuse flight was about five miles from its destination.

The pilot shut down the engine and declared an emergency landing. The regional jet landed without incident shortly after noon Monday at Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

'Austerity' chosen Word of the Year

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP) — As Greece faced a debt crisis, the government passed a series of strict austerity measures, including taxes hikes and cutting public sector pay.

The move sparked angry protests, strikes and riots across the country as unemployment skyrocketed and the crisis spread to other European nations. The move also incited a rush to online dictionaries from those searching for a definition.

Austerity, the 14th-century noun defined as "the quality or state of being

austere" and "enforced or extreme economy," set off enough searches that Merriam-Webster named it as its Word of the Year for 2010, the dictionary's editors announced Monday.

GM using oil spill boom in Chevy Volt

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Boom from the BP oil spill is getting a new charge from the maker of the Chevrolet Volt electric car.

General Motors says that instead of going to landfills, roughly 100 miles of plastic boom material will be converted into vehicle parts.

The parts deflect air around the vehicle's radiator.

Protesters decry 'Secession Ball'

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — The memory of the Civil War collided with modern-day civil rights Monday as protesters targeted a "Secession Ball" commemorating South Carolina's decision exactly 150 years ago to secede from the United States of America.

NAACP leaders said it made no sense to hold a gala to honor men who committed treason against their own nation for the sake of a system that kept black men and women in bondage as slaves. They compared Confederate leaders to terrorists and Nazis.

Organizers of the ball said it had nothing to do with celebrating slavery. Instead, the private event was a fundraiser to honor the Southern men who sacrificed their lives for their homes and their vision of states' rights.

GAS

From Page A1

Starting with the 2012 model year, cars will have to hit a higher fuel economy target for the first time since 1990. Each carmaker's fleet must average 30.1 mpg, up from 27.5. By the 2016 model year, that number must rise to 35.5 mpg. And starting next year, SUVs and minivans, once classified as trucks, will count toward passenger vehicle targets.

The auto industry is introducing cars that run partially or entirely on electricity, and the federal government is providing billions of dollars in subsidies to increase production and spur sales.

By 2022, the country's fuel mix must include 36 billion gallons of ethanol and other biofuels, up from 14 billion gallons in 2011. Put another way, biofuels will account for roughly one of every four gallons.

Gasoline prices are forecast to stay high as developing economies in Asia and the Middle East use more oil.

There are demographic factors at work, too. Baby boomers will drive less as they age. The surge of women entering the workforce and commuting in recent decades has leveled off. And the era of Americans commuting ever farther distances appears to be over. One measure of this, vehicle miles traveled per licensed driver, began to flatten in the middle of the last decade after years of sharp growth.

As a result, families will spend less on fuel, the country's dependence on foreign oil will wane and heat-trapping emissions of carbon dioxide will grow more slowly.

Market watch	
Dec. 20, 2010	
Dow Jones Industrials	-13.78 11,478.13
Nasdaq composite	+6.59 2,649.56
Standard & Poor's 500	+3.17 1,247.08
Russell 2000	+2.79 782.30

Stocks of Local Interest — Monday, Dec. 20, Close

Name	Open	Close	Range	Name	Open	Close	Range
AnhBsch Inbev	N/A	57.22	N/A / N/A	Lckheed Martin	69.79	69.65	69.44/70.16
Bldg Mtrls Hldg	N/A	0.00	N/A / N/A	Martin Marietta	93.79	93.08	92.84/94.00
Chevron Texaco	88.96	88.80	88.57/89.60	Micron Technlgy	8.28	8.11	8.10/8.36
ConAgra Foods	22.57	22.44	22.20/22.58	OfficeMax	17.43	17.61	17.42/17.76
Exxon Mobil	72.24	72.22	71.88/72.50	PepsiCo	65.82	66.31	65.75/66.35
Gnrl Dynamics	70.39	70.01	69.62/70.47	PerkinsElmer Inc	26.03	26.14	25.98/26.16
Gnrl Electric	17.77	17.70	17.65/17.80	Qwest Comm	7.41	7.62	7.40/7.62
H.J. Heinz	50.45	49.85	49.78/50.51	Sherwin-Williams	81.76	82.95	81.76/83.08
Home Depot	35.25	35.20	35.06/35.49	Union Pacific	91.25	90.90	90.46/91.58
IdaCorp	37.65	37.60	37.43/37.76	U.S. Bancorp	26.17	26.14	26.08/26.33
KroyCorp	8.43	8.41	8.34/8.50	Viacom	38.69	38.59	38.51/38.75
Kroger	21.70	21.75	21.46/21.79	Wal-Mart	54.56	53.77	53.61/54.56
				Wells Fargo	30.02	30.10	29.85/30.28



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AMWTP

From Page A1

separately protested the DOE's decision, leading to the agency's decision to review bids submitted for



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radiation and leading the company to temporarily halt waste retrieval.


Last week's recognition from the DOE's headquarters didn't come as a surprise to Bechtel, but it was welcome nonetheless.

Spokesman Rick Dale said he was most impressed that of the 52 workers hired with stimulus money, all but seven remain in jobs at the project after the \$22 million ran out. Those who left did so

City of Idaho Falls Public Notice

CHRISTMAS DAY

Due to the observance of the Christmas holiday, Saturday December 25th, 2010, all commercial and residential garbage collection will be on schedule all week.



MONDAY'S COLLECTION WILL BE ON SCHEDULE

TUESDAY'S COLLECTION WILL BE ON SCHEDULE


WEDNESDAY'S COLLECTION WILL BE ON SCHEDULE

THURSDAY'S COLLECTION WILL BE ON SCHEDULE

FRIDAY'S COLLECTION WILL BE ON SCHEDULE

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Corrections: Our Code of Ethics calls us to admit mistakes and correct them promptly, which we do with a standing item in the first section of the paper. If you spot a mistake, call Executive Editor Roger Plathow at 208-522-1800 or e-mail him at rplathow@postregister.com. Readers interested in our commitment to accountability should review our ethics code at www.postregister.com/ethics

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