



FRIDAY July 25, 2008

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Good Morning!
TODAY'S VALLEY HIGH, LOW
111° 83°
Warm



50 AND READY TO PLAY FOR THE WNBA
Following Tuesday's WNBA skirmish that resulted in the suspension of 10 players and Detroit Shock assistant coach Rick Mahorn, the Shock on Thursday signed 50-year-old Hall-of-Famer Nancy Lieberman to a seven-day contract. **C1**

TODAY'S NEWS

House OKs AIDS bill

The House on Thursday approved legislation devoting \$48 billion to the global fight against AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. **A7**

DAILY LIFE

Valley's most wanted

Investigators are looking for a man suspected of molesting at least two girls in Indio for more than a year. **B1**

Chemical spill closes patient care center

A small hydrogen peroxide spill at the Dolores Hope Outpatient Care Center on Thursday morning kept the building closed for several hours. **B1**



Actor Hugh Jackman (left) and comic book creator Stan Lee.

Comic fans camp out

"Twilight" isn't bound for the big screen until December, but fan frenzy for the film practically took over Comic-Con on Thursday as teens camped overnight for a sneak peek. **E1**

Animal welfare

Come November, California voters will consider the most comprehensive farm animal rights law in the country, that would ban cramped cages for egg-laying hens, metal gestation crates for pregnant sows and veal crates for lambs. **E5**

IN TODAY'S PAPER

Bridge **D7** Obituaries **B5**
Classified **D1-12** **IN WEEKEND**
Crossword **D5** Advice **W19**
Horoscope **D4** Comics **W20-21**
Lottery **B5** TV listings **W22**



\$60 million in pot plants seized



Riverside County sheriff's agents guide a large load of marijuana into the back of a truck after U.S. Forest Service workers had cut down the remote crop off of Highway 243. A helicopter was used to bring the pot back to the truck, which then took the plants to an undisclosed location for destruction.

19,951 plants pulled out of Snow Creek Canyon area

BY ANGELA FRANZER
THE DESERT SUN

BANNING — U.S. Forest Service officials seized a plantation of marijuana early Thursday in a remote, rugged canyon between state Highway 243 and Snow Creek Canyon.

There were 19,951 plants that would be worth \$60 million had they reached full harvest, an official said.

Growers set up a camp near the creek and investigators are collecting evidence there, John Miller, public affairs officer for the U.S. Forest Service, said.

No arrests have been made. "We consider this a success even though we haven't arrested anyone. This is thousands of pounds of marijuana that is off the streets," said an undercover spe-

Please see POT, A6



An agent walks on top of a large load of marijuana in the back of a truck after U.S. Forest Service workers had cut down the remote crop on Thursday.

See more photos at mydesert.com

ROCK STAR RECEPTION FOR OBAMA



JAE C. HONG, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama shakes hands with supporters after speaking at the Victory Column in Berlin on Thursday. Cheered by an enormous international crowd, Obama summoned Europeans and Americans together to "defeat terror and dry up the well of extremism that supports it" as surely as they conquered communism a generation ago. Read more about what Obama told the crowd on **A2**

Poll: Obama is winning Latino vote

Democratic hopeful picking up many who initially backed Clinton

BY NICOLE C. BRAMBILA
THE DESERT SUN

Latinos overwhelmingly support Democratic Sen. Barack Obama for president over Republican Sen. John McCain, 66 percent to 23 percent, a poll released Thursday shows.

The national survey, conducted by the nonpartisan Pew Hispanic Center, found:

- More than three-fourths of Latinos who voted for Sen. Hillary Clinton in the Democratic presidential primary said they would now support Obama.

- Registered Latino voters said education, the economy and health care are critical issues for the presidential campaign — with crime, the war in Iraq and immigration more distant concerns.

- About 65 percent of registered Latino voters said they now lean toward or identify with the Democratic Party, compared to 26 percent with the GOP.

- Dissatisfied with the GOP, 70 percent of Latino voters said the country is headed in the wrong direction.

- About 78 percent of Latino voters say they somewhat or very closely follow the presidential election this year, up from 72 percent in 2004.

Local leaders said they are not surprised that Latinos support Obama nearly three to one. Latinos have coalesced around the Illinois senator, forming "Viva Obama Clubs" in much the same way organizers did with John F.



Obama: Latinos support the Democratic candidate 66 percent to 23 percent, a national poll conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center shows.

McCain: The GOP candidate plans to unveil an immigration policy package later this summer that his camp believes will lure more Latinos his way.

Kennedy clubs in 1960. "The Latino community is responding; it has nowhere else to go," said Armando Navarro, a political science professor at UC Riverside and coordinator of the National Alliance of Human Rights. The group helped orchestrate the 500,000-person protest in Los Angeles two years ago that decried enforcement-only immigration reform.

"What McCain represents is not good for us; it's not good for the country because it represents a continuance of the Bush administration," he said.

The National Alliance for Human Rights launched its Viva Obama Clubs in June.

"He knew the movement because he's promised he's going to

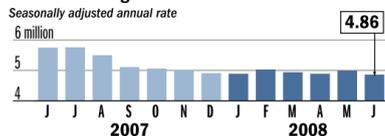
Please see SURVEY, A6

STATE OF THE ECONOMY

Housing, jobless troubles deepen

A grim report Thursday on sales of existing homes in June signaled that the housing crisis is deepening, with some analysts saying the slump could last into 2010. Meanwhile, the Labor Department said the number of newly laid-off people filing for unemployment benefits rose to 406,000 last week. **E1**

Sales of existing homes in millions of units:



SOURCE: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ford loses \$8.67B in second quarter

Ford Motor Co. posted the worst quarterly performance in its history Thursday, losing \$8.67 billion in the second quarter. In response, the company says it will retool more North American truck and SUV plants to build small, fuel-efficient vehicles. But plant retooling can't be done overnight. Read more about Ford's plans on page **E1**



The 2008 Ford Fiesta is one of three of the European small vehicles Ford plans to bring to North America.



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