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The Modesto Bee

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Today's Scoop

HERSHEY DEAL OK'D

A Ceres woman whose arm was severed by a Hershey factory machine will get \$100,000 in exchange for criminal charges being dropped against the company, a prosecutor said Wednesday. **Page B-1**

THE WAITING GAME

Another day has passed, and Raiders coach Tom Cable twists in the wind. You thought Al Davis would make this quick? Not a chance. **Page C-1**



GAY UNION DEBATE

● An advocate of the state's same-sex marriage ban claimed gay rights activists would try to legalize sex with children, according to evidence in a lawsuit to overturn the ban. **Page A-3**
● Conservative legal giant Ted Olson is fighting the ban, arguing for "individual liberty." **Opinions, Page A-7**

BANKERS APOLOGIZE

Top Wall Street bankers apologized Wednesday for risky behavior that led to the financial crisis. But they told the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission their actions seemed appropriate at the time. **Page B-7**

IRE OVER MID RATES

● A day after a hearing on an 11 percent Modesto Irrigation District rate hike, the Stanislaus Taxpayers Association wants key financial data. **Page B-1**
● MID directors must admit that the rate-hike proposal process was handled poorly. **Opinions, Page A-6**

MALE EVOLUTION

Women may think men are primitive, but research shows the Y chromosome, which makes a man male, is evolving faster than the rest of the human genetic code. **Page A-4**



COMING FRIDAY

Actor Ted Neeley has seen "Jesus Christ Superstar," which is coming to the Gallo Center, go from being seen as blasphemous to being perceived as a "spiritual 'Sesame Street.'" **In Scene**

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WEATHER
Fog, then some sun
56 / 40
Complete forecast, **Page B-8**

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People search for survivors under the rubble of a collapsed building in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Wednesday. RICARDO ARDUENGO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calamity Unfolds

Rescuers dig as first relief lands in Haiti

BY JACQUELINE CHARLES, LESLEY CLARK AND FRANCIS ROBLES
The Miami Herald

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Rescue workers dazed from collapsed buildings, dazed homeless wandered the streets and the death toll climbed Wednesday as dozens of aftershocks from a massive earthquake rattled this capital city.

The Roman Catholic bishop was dead. The top U.N. envoy remained missing. And politicians and police struggled to keep the nation from descending into chaos. It was a day of unfolding calamity. "I have probably seen 30 or 40 bodies today, but that is just one street," said Benjamin Hopp, a missionary with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He was gathering bodies and putting them in a pickup, a snapshot in suffering that reflected a grim reality. No reliable casualty count emerged even as President Rene Prével and Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive predicted the death toll could reach 100,000.

Rescue workers and frantic family dug through the rubble in the city of 2 million — some setting up makeshift morgues in churches, others collecting identification cards from corpses to try



Girls cry in the rubble-strewn streets. The death toll from Tuesday's devastating earthquake could reach into the tens of thousands. PATRICK FARRELL/THE MIAMI HERALD

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Above, injured people sit on the roadside in Port-au-Prince, where the 7.0 quake flattened much of the city of 2 million people. JORGE CRUZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At left, a woman stands amid the remains of her home. Tuesday's quake brought down buildings great and small. GREGORY BULL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AT A GLANCE

■ **TOLL:** Although there is no firm count, Haitian leaders say deaths could surpass 100,000.

■ **MEDICAL CARE:** With many hospitals collapsed, makeshift treatment areas sprang up, but witnesses said many people with terrible wounds lay dying in the streets.

■ **AFTER-SHOCKS:** More than 35 have hit the region in 24 hours.

■ **U.S. CITIZENS:** 45,000 are in Haiti.

■ **CHURCH:** Several Roman Catholic archdiocese buildings fell, and the archbishop and at least 100 priests and seminarians are dead.

■ **GOVERNMENT:** The parliament building and National Palace toppled, as did schools and the main prison.

■ **U.N. FORCE:** 150 people, including the chief of the U.N. mission, are missing after their five-story building collapsed. Sixteen are known to be dead.

Charities sending money, helpers to devastated nation

BY SUE NOWICKI
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The American Red Cross donated \$100 million Wednesday afternoon to help relief efforts in Haiti, devastated by Tuesday's powerful earthquake. The local chapter of the nonprofit organization is accepting donations that can be funneled directly to the Caribbean country.

Other faith-based and humanitarian groups are launching similar efforts. "It's so raw right now. It's hard to get a handle on the needs," said Rebecca Ciszek, executive director of the Red Cross' Modesto chapter. "It's very, very tragic. As the hours go on, it's getting more so."

Financial donations are the most critical need, she said. "Whether it's getting human resources there or investing in the food and medical materials people need, that all takes

SEE BACK PAGE, HELP

Hughson council absences add up

Though Crowder gone for many meetings, he was listed as 'excused'

BY PATTY GUERRA
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HUGHSON — Embattled City Councilman Thom Crowder has missed nearly half of his meetings over the past year. But that's not enough to remove him from office. Some residents are hoping state Attorney General Jerry Brown will step in, and sent a letter to his office seeking to implement a Stanislaus County civil grand jury report that called for the ouster of Councilmen Crowder, Doug Humphreys and Ben Manley.

In the report issued last month, the grand jury found that the three men violated the Brown Act — the state law that regulates public meetings — by conferring on issues via e-mail and plotting to remove City Manager Joe Donabed. It also found that Crowder violated the state Political Reform Act by trying to influence council decisions pertaining to property near his home and in promising to use political influence while seeking a job.

Monday night, Mayor Ramon Bawanan and Councilman Matt Beekman demanded that the three step down. But only Manley was there from the group targeted by the jury; Crowder and Humphreys missed the meeting. For Crowder, it was his 10th absence over the past 25 regularly scheduled Hughson City Council meetings. He was excused from the meetings because of continuing medical problems.

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INSIDE TODAY: SPORTS SQUEEZE

Sports programs won't be spared when Modesto City Schools cuts its \$250 million budget by 10 percent this spring.

Those grim prospects have the district's athletic directors preparing for their share of spending reductions.

They're mum on what's on the table, but a look at how other school districts trim athletic spending shows that Stanislaus County's largest school district could field fewer teams next year, eliminate some programs or consolidate certain sports to specific campuses. Or, the Modesto City Schools board of trustees could opt for none of the above.

Any reductions or changes are bound to be among the most controversial as the board balances a mandate to balance its books with a commitment to providing a well-rounded education for its students.

For more, see Page C-1.