

High school football action, Page C1



JACLYN BOROWSKI / THE CALIFORNIAN

Golden Valley quarterback Alexander Soto looks for a receiver while playing against Highland on Friday night.

The Bakersfield Californian

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POLITICS | GOP FUNDRAISER

Perry stands by 'Ponzi scheme' line during visit

BY COURTENAY EDELHART
Californian staff writer
cedelhart@bakersfield.com

Texas Gov. Rick Perry didn't back down from his much-quoted characterization of Social Security as a Ponzi scheme at a Bakersfield fundraiser Friday.

Asked about it after his speech at the Jam Events Center, Perry again said the safety-net program was "no worse than a Ponzi scheme."

That stance is becoming a major dividing point between Perry and the other top contender for the GOP presidential nomination, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

"For people who are on Social Security now, like my folks, and people who are approaching Social Security, like me, it's going to be there," Perry said.

But, he added, where is the transition? At what point will eligibility have to be raised because funds simply aren't there?

"People are tired of scare tactics," Perry said. "They're looking for a leader who will tell them the truth but also find solutions."

Romney has been arguing that Republicans won't stand a chance in November 2012 if their nominee is seen as anti-Social Security.

He has advocated for finding ways to save the program.

The issue is expected to come up again Monday when the two participate in a debate in Florida.

Tickets to the Bakersfield fundraiser ranged from \$1,000 to \$2,500 a plate. About 200 people turned out, and the event raised about \$200,000, said local Republican political consultant and Perry supporter Cathy Abernathy.

Perry's speech inside the Jam center was closed to the media but reporters still managed to overhear much of what was said.

The talk was brief, and he repeated his campaign message that the key to turning the weak economy around was to reduce taxes and regulation.

"Freeing the private sector from over-taxation and over-regulation" is the only way to reduce the national debt, Perry said.

The \$13.4 trillion national debt works out to more than

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CASEY CHRISTIE / THE CALIFORNIAN

Texas Gov. Rick Perry prepares to answer a few questions from the local media on Friday after his breakfast fundraiser speech at the Bakersfield Jam Events Center.

Why did safeguards fail in blackout?

BY SAM ALLEN, RALPH VARTABEDIAN AND MITCHELL LANDSBERG
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES

The failure of a single piece of equipment in Yuma, Ariz., ignited a massive blackout that left more than 4 million people without power, baffling utility officials baffled and highlighting the vulnerability of the U.S. electrical grid.

Authorities in Arizona said Friday that safeguards built into the system should have prevented the breakdown at a Yuma substation from cascading across southern Arizona and into California and northern Mexico.

They didn't, and the resulting instability led to the sudden shutdown of the San Onofre nuclear power plant, cutting off power to a large swath of Southern California. "We lost all con-

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Churches give message of hope after 9/11
Faith, Page A11

Local chef offers tips on good cooking
Eye, Page D1

Mission unimaginable: F-16 pilot remembers her assignment that day

BY STEVE HENDRIX
The Washington Post

Late in the morning of the Tuesday that changed everything, Lt. Heather "Lucky" Penney was on a runway at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and ready to fly. She had her hand on the throttle of an F-16 and she had her orders: Bring down United Airlines Flight 93. The day's fourth hijacked airliner seemed to be hurtling toward Washington. Penney, one of the first two combat pilots in the air that morning, was told

to stop it.

The one thing she didn't have as she roared into the crystalline sky was live ammunition. Or missiles. Or anything at all to throw at a hostile aircraft.

Except her own plane. So that was the plan.

Because the surprise attacks were unfolding, in that innocent age, faster than they could arm war planes, Penney and her commanding officer went up to fly their jets straight into a Boeing 757.

"We wouldn't be shoot-

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TECH SGT. JOHNATHON ORRELL/NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Maj. Heather "Lucky" Penney; she and her commanding officer were charged with bringing down hijacked United Airlines Flight 93.

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