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# The Anniston Star

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Khalid Mohammed/Associated Press

**Iraqi men talk Wednesday to a U.S. Marine outside the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad, Iraq, during a demonstration demanding the release of trial leader Sheik Abdul Karim Oda. Sheik Oda is accused of helping the insurgency.**

## Showdown looms

Activity points to U.S. forces launching major assault on Iraqi insurgents

**BY ROBERT H. REID**  
 Associated Press

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — An uptick in airstrikes and other military moves point to an imminent showdown between U.S. forces and Sunni Muslim insurgents west of Baghdad — a decisive battle that could determine whether the campaign to bring democracy and stability to Iraq can succeed.

American officials have not confirmed a major assault is near against the insurgent bas-

tions of Fallujah and neighboring Ramadi. But Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi has warned Fallujah leaders that force will be used if they do not hand over extremists, including terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

A similar escalation in U.S. military actions and Iraqi government warnings occurred before a major offensive in Najaf forced militiamen loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr to give up that holy city in late August. And U.S. and Iraqi troops retook Samarra

from insurgents early this month.

Now U.S. airstrikes on purported al-Zarqawi positions in three neighborhoods of eastern and northern Fallujah, 40 miles west of Baghdad, have increased. And residents reported this week that Marines appeared to be reinforcing forward positions near key areas of the city. Other military units are on the move, including 800 British soldiers headed

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**AMENDMENT 2**  
**Lawmaker speaks in support of measure**

Segregationist-era language would be removed from state constitution

**BY NATHAN SOLHEIM**  
 Assistant Metro Editor

State Sen. Charles Steele believes the upcoming vote on Amendment 2 could set Alabama back 40 years — to the days of George Wallace standing in the school-house door.



STEELE

Though Wallace's stand failed to keep the University of Alabama segregated, it sent an image around the globe that Alabama has yet to overcome — and that's why Steele wants people to vote Tuesday to remove segregationist-era language from the state constitution. Steele, who's now a statewide

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## Reaching out



Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star

**Nancy Hasty, right, a third-grade teacher at Cobb Elementary School, talks with parent Leslie Jackson and her daughter, Marticia Jackson, during a parent-teacher conference.**

### Cobb Elementary recruits parents to get involved

**BY BEN CUNNINGHAM**  
 Star Staff Writer

Sharon Thomas is a school principal, not a general, but she wants to recruit parents for a fight.

Thomas strolled around Cobb Elementary School on Monday during parent-teacher conferences, her hands folded behind the small of her back, paraphrasing Winston Churchill.

"Saying we did our best won't be good enough. We have to do what's necessary," Thomas said.

Parents are what's necessary, she said. Their support can help turn around sagging reading

scores and go a long way toward getting the school off federally mandated improvement status.

"I want to make sure that the parents understand that we cannot accept students choosing failure," Thomas said.

The school system's five-year strategic plan sets a goal of 90 percent attendance by parents at parent-teacher conference days such as the one at Cobb Elementary on Monday. The staff at Cobb did that goal one better, aiming for 100 percent attendance.

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**"Saying we did our best won't be good enough. We have to do what's necessary."**

— SHARON THOMAS, COBB ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL



Michael Dwyer/Associated Press

**Boston Red Sox fans, in a bar Wednesday night near Fenway Park in Boston, react to Trot Nixon's two-RBI double against the Cardinals.**

## Babe's ghost is gone

Fans celebrate first World Series for Boston since 1918

**BY JONATHAN FINER**  
 The Washington Post

**BOSTON** — Standing in the cold in Kenmore Square just before midnight, Ashwin Duggal knew the end was near only because of a phone call from his girlfriend. "One out away," he shouted to the crowd

assembled beside Fenway Park moments before the Red Sox, who were playing the St. Louis Cardinals halfway across the country, closed out a 3-0 victory to win their first World Series since 1918.

Flush with a feeling that has eluded fans here for 86 years, hordes of Bostonians — who can no longer be described as "long-suffering," as they were hundreds of times in news articles and television reports this week — streamed into the streets. They bellowed at the sky and embraced total strangers, reveling in their victory.

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## Road to presidency twists, turns in last days of campaign

**BY RON FOURNIER**  
 Associated Press

**WASHINGTON** — The road to the White House is taking some strange and sharp turns as tightening polls and pressure from party stalwarts force the presidential campaigns to adjust their strategies.

In a flurry of homestretch activity, former President Clinton was giving satellite

interviews to television stations in reliably Democratic Hawaii to shore up Sen. John Kerry's campaign Wednesday, and President Bush poured last-minute money into the Northeast to keep Democrats at bay in New Hampshire.

That's not all. Bowing to pressure from Clinton and two prominent senators, Democrats shifted resources to Arkansas and West Virginia despite doubts on Kerry's team about his ability to win there.

Democrats were also adding money to Michigan, reflecting concerns that Kerry has failed to nail down the must-win state.

And what's with the polls showing Arizona and New Jersey so close?

"Both sides are playing everywhere they can, because it's a close race and because they can — money is no problem for either campaign so they're spreading it around," said Democratic consultant Dane Strother. "It's too close to leave any-

thing to chance."

In any close race, presidential campaigns focus their resources on states that could add up to the winning 270 Electoral College votes, a majority of the 538 available.

This campaign is no exception, with nine states getting the most attention and advertising because polls show the candi-

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**WEATHER**

**MOSTLY CLOUDY**

**HIGH: 79**  
**LOW: 60**

Brittney Williams, 5th, Coldwater Elementary

**5**

**DAYS UNTIL THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.**

**OBITUARIES**

Sarah L. Ames, Montgomery  
 Ivera Blair, Ashland  
 Frances Adeline Booth, Anniston  
 Florine P. Cobb, Anniston  
 Shirley Evelyn Erickson Gurley, Pennsylvania

Irene Helton Ingram, Lineville  
 Rosetta B. McGhee, Anniston  
 Essie Darbus McIntyre, Moulton

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