

Weather

Chance of a shower.
High 66, low 48.
Yesterday: High 77,
low 54.
Details on Page B-8

TV TRYOUT

Teen shares acting exploits
BUZZZ



THIEVES LIKE GPS

Car gadgets going, going, gone
WORK & MONEY D-1



The Modesto Bee

★ ★ THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY ★ ★
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2007

WWW.MODBEE.COM

PRICE 50¢

Today's Scoop



Using his noggin



It's called the "seal dribble" and it's causing quite a stir in Brazil.

A soccer player gets past defenders by bouncing the ball on his head. **Page C-1**

Marriage woes

For the first time since at least World War II, married people had a less than even chance of still being married 25 years later, according to a census survey released Wednesday. **Page A-6**

CSU pay hikes

Despite criticism from lawmakers and others, California State University leaders moved ahead Wednesday with substantial pay raises for top executives. **Page B-1**

The big 1-0-0

The slogan? "A small community with a big heart." The celebration? Hughson will mark its centennial Saturday. **Page B-1**

Robotic boy wonder

Picture a robotic pal that's an interactive learning companion — one that can convey emotion and engage in conversation. **Page D-1**



Coming Friday

Broadway musical star Patti LuPone and the Modesto Symphony Orchestra are performing at next week's swank grand-opening gala for downtown Modesto's Gallo Center for the Arts. Get the details in **Scene**.

modbee.com

On the silver screen

"The Brave One" is, at best, high-toned pulp, while "Mr. Woodcock" is an uneven comedy that has its moments. For these movie reviews and more, including theater showtimes, go to www.modbee.com/movies. For more modbee.com highlights, see **Page A-2**.



Index

- ClassifiedF-1
- Comics.....Buzz
- CrosswordF-3
- Local NewsB-1
- MoviesBuzz
- ObituariesB-4
- OpinionsB-6
- SportsC-1
- TV listingsBuzz
- Work&MoneyD-1



Thanks for reading The Bee!

To pass on news tips, call 238-4519

To subscribe or report a late or missing paper, call 578-2222

The Modesto Bee, © 2007

MULTIPLE FIGHTS AT PATTERSON HIGH

School locked down



JOAN BARNETT LEE/THE BEE

Anxious families await news on the front lawn of Patterson High School during Wednesday's nearly four-hour lockdown.

200 parents gather as officers hunt for gun; four students arrested

By **CHRISTINA SALERNO**
csalerno@modbee.com

PATTERSON — A dozen brawls involving nearly 100 students erupted at Patterson High School on Wednesday, prompting about 30 sheriff's deputies and California Highway Patrol officers to descend on the campus to quell the violence.

The melee, which authorities and students said was likely gang-related, started just before 10 a.m. The school was placed on lockdown while members of the Stanislaus County Sheriff's department searched for a reported gun on campus.

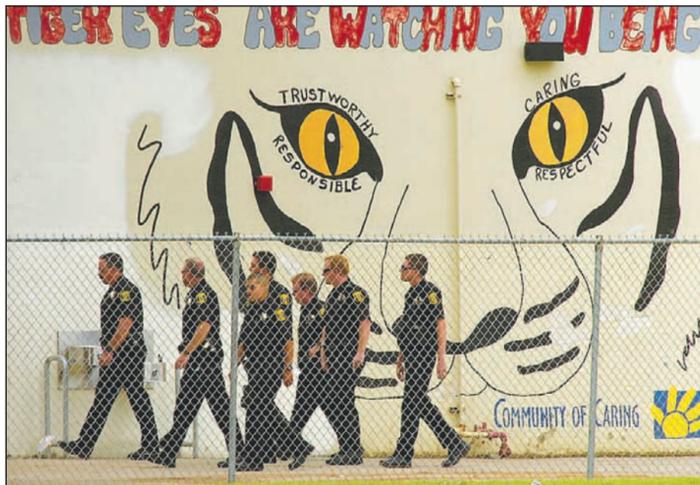
About 200 parents gathered anxiously on the lawn outside the school during the nearly four-hour ordeal, many with cell phones pressed to their ears as they spoke to their children, who were locked inside classrooms. No weapons were found and the students were released a little after 1:30 p.m. Four people were arrested.

The day's events started during the morning recess when someone pulled a fire alarm as a prank. Everyone was waiting outside because of the fire alarm when a student jumped another student, said Sandra Pementel, 17, a senior at the high school.

"All of a sudden, a fight breaks out," Sandra said. "There was another fight, and then another fight."

The school staff ran around frantically trying to subdue the fights, she said, but "then another would break out." Sandra said

SEE PAGE A-3, FIGHTS



About 30 Stanislaus County sheriff's deputies and CHP officers were on the scene at Patterson High School after a fire alarm was pulled and fights broke out.



Some students talked with their families via cell phone during the ordeal, while others got creative with signs to let parents know they were OK.



For a video report, click on the links with this story at www.modbee.com/local.

Parents held in death of toddler

Ceres couple say girl shot self with gun; police find drugs, weapons at home

By **MICHELLE HATFIELD**
mhathfield@modbee.com

CERES — A 2-year-old girl died early Wednesday from a gunshot wound to her chest, and police are investigating the parents' statements that Cruzita Arellano shot herself.

Christina Castrillo, 24, and Felix Arellano, 26, told officers the shooting was accidental, Sgt. Allen McKay said. Police later arrested Castrillo on a child neglect charge and Arellano on suspicion of manslaughter and other charges after interviewing them most of the day.

"We have no reason to disbelieve the parents right now, but we will confirm what happened, like with all incidents," McKay said.

When they searched the southeast Ceres home, police found guns, drugs and a stolen vehicle, investigators said.

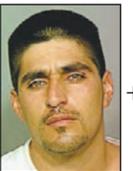
Officers brought Arellano and Castrillo into the police station for questioning and arrested them Wednesday afternoon, McKay said. Arellano faces charges of manslaughter, child neglect likely to produce great bodily injury, possession of stolen property and possession of controlled substances.

Castrillo faces a charge of child neglect likely to produce great bodily injury. She was being held Wednesday night in lieu of \$35,000 bail. As of late Wednesday, Arellano was being held on \$25,000 bail.

McKay said both were talking with police but he would not give details about their statements.

Another daughter, who was in the home when the 2-year-old was shot, was placed in the care of her maternal grandmother.

SEE PAGE A-3, TODDLER



Arellano



Castrillo

2 plead guilty to swindling homeowners

One year in jail, restitution for 20 families mark deal

By **GARTH STAPLEY**
gstapley@modbee.com

Two men who swindled homes from vulnerable families by posing as Christian do-gooders avoided trial and state prison with a plea deal Wednesday, and agreed to make restitution to some victims.

Lonni Ashlock, 56, of Waterford and Ronald Buhler, 26, of Riverbank entered no contest pleas to six felony counts and were sentenced to one year in Stanislaus County Jail. They may be eligible for alternate work programs, Judge Hurl Johnson said.

The plea bargain negated most of the 50 felony counts they would have faced at a trial scheduled to begin next month. Those counts stemmed from cases involving 12 families.

A Bee review showed Ashlock and Buhler acquired at least 142 properties from owners facing foreclosure in four counties. They were charged only in Stanislaus County.

SEE PAGE A-3, PLEA DEAL

THE SERIES

Modesto has a gang problem, with one-third of the murder cases pending in Stanislaus County Superior Court involving gang allegations. Gang-on-gang violence is most common, but some of the killings involve victims who did not realize the color of their clothing or a refusal to show a gang member "respect" could lead to tragedy. In the second of a two-part story, The Bee looks at the changing gang landscape and the need for parents, teachers and community activists to intervene.

Gangs thriving in Modesto

Experts expose lifestyle myths, urge teens' families to step up

By **SUSAN HERENDEEN**
sherendeen@modbee.com

Take a walk with Modesto police Detective Richard Delgado and you'll get an earful about a persistent problem that thrives on fear and intimidation, prompts cycles of violence and cannot be solved with arrests and incarceration alone.

A decade ago, most gang members in the region affiliated with the Norteños, or northerners, who claim red.

Due to a migration of street gang members from Southern California — and home-grown youngsters who simply choose blue over red because that's the dominant color in their neighborhood — the number of documented

Sureños now is rising faster than Norteños. So the north-south rivalry is growing, too.

"It's all about a color," said Delgado, a member of the Stanislaus County Gang Intelligence Task Force, which includes representatives from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

Although the authorities think gang membership has grown along with the population in the last decade, they cannot pinpoint that growth because the Sheriff's Department and city police departments adopted a standardized classification system only two years ago.

The task force has documented about 4,000 gang members, which is less than 1 percent of the population. And its members believe the true number is 7,000 to 10,000.

The vast majority of documented gang members, 87 percent, are Latino, though Asian,

SEE BACK PAGE, GANGS