

TIMES DAILY

Florence • Muscle Shoals • Sheffield • Tuscumbia • Northwest Alabama

RED SOX VS. ROCKIES

Josh Beckett burns brightest in October. Sports 1C

Position-by-position breakdown. Sports 4C



PUMPKIN PERFECT



Halloween just a precursor to holidays.

Life 1E

LONG TIME COMING

Wildcats walk halls with heads high after win.



Sports 1C

LANDLOCKED

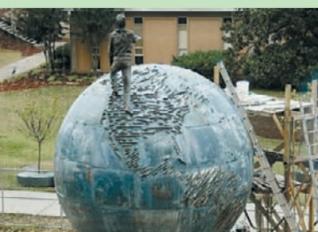
Mongolia becomes new maritime ally

WASHINGTON — Somebody should have looked at a map.

The State Department with great fanfare Tuesday signed an agreement with landlocked Mongolia that will allow Mongolian ships to be boarded and searched if they are suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction.

This despite the fact that Mongolia — a vast land that's home to the Gobi Desert, windswept steppes and largely populated by nomadic yak herders — has no navy at all and lies thousands of miles from open waters.

Still, its tiny merchant marine is recognized as one of 32 "flag of convenience" countries by international maritime authorities.



GLOBE COLLAPSES

Sculptor rebuilds sculpture of Earth

KENNESAW, Ga. — It took Finnish-born sculptor Eino roughly four months to rebuild the world.

His million-dollar stone sculpture, "Spaceship Earth," mysteriously collapsed in December at Kennesaw State University. The artwork was intended to remind future generations of the Earth's fragility.

After working since the end of June to rebuild the globe, he said this week he's putting the finishing touches on it.

"It really looks nice," said Eino, who uses only one name.

Eino had called the work "Spaceship Earth" to honor environmentalist David Brower, a leader of the Sierra Club.

ONLINE TODAY

A guide to choosing squash



TimesDaily.com/multimedia

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Tuesday's question: Which mode of travel do you feel safest using?

Car: 69.4%
Plane: 20.7%
Train: 9.9%

Today's question: Do you have an emergency fire plan?

Vote daily online at: TimesDaily.com

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Well-known Florence surgeon dies

By Tom Smith
Senior Staff Writer

Dr. John Murphy, a well-known orthopedic surgeon, died early Tuesday morning at a Nashville hospital after a sudden illness. He was 51.

Murphy, a native of Jackson, Tenn., had been practicing orthopedic medicine in the Shoals since 1990.

Dr. Michael Passarella, a physician in internal medicine specializing in gastroenterology at UAB Hospital, said

Murphy was the reason he decided to go into the medical field.

Passarella, a Bradshaw graduate, got to know Murphy when Murphy was a volunteer coach and team doctor for the Bruins.

"He made a big impression on my life. Besides being a mentor figure in my life, he was a special man,"



Murphy

Passarella said

Passarella said he will never forget a halftime speech Murphy made to the team during a game against Deshler.

"We were getting beat at halftime and really playing horribly. Dr. Murphy asked the other coaches if they would stay outside and let him speak to us at halftime," Passarella said. "It was one of the most dynamic and inspiring speeches I have ever heard. We ended up winning the game."

Chuck Lansdell, whose wife was a long-time patient of Murphy's, said he was floored when he heard the news about Murphy's death.

"She was just distraught," Lansdell said of his wife's feelings on learning of Murphy's death. "That speaks well of a man when a patient feels that way about a doctor."

"But then, everyone that knew him

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SAN DIEGO

Over 500,000 flee from fires



Wally Skalij/ Los Angeles Times

Firefighter Jason Falarski battles to save a house on Sand Hill Road in Poway, Calif.

Firefighters all but concede defeat to raging California wildfires

By Gillian Flaccus
Associated Press Writer

Faced with unrelenting winds whipping wildfires into a frenzy across Southern California, firefighters conceded defeat on many fronts Tuesday to an unstoppable force that has chased more than 500,000 people away.

Unless the shrieking Santa Ana winds subside, and that's not expected for at least another day, fire crews say they can do little more than try to wait it out and react — tamping out spot fires and chasing ribbons of airborne embers to keep new fires from flaring.

"If it's this big and blowing with as much wind as it's got, it'll go all the way to the ocean before it stops," said San Diego Fire Capt. Kirk Humphries. "We can save some stuff but, we can't stop it."

Tentacles of unpredictable, shifting flame have burned across nearly 600 square miles, killing one person, destroying more than 1,800 homes and prompting the biggest evacuation in California history, from north of Los Angeles, through San Diego to the Mexican border.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said the flames were threatening 68,000 more homes.

"We have had an unfortunate situation that we've had three things come together: very dry areas, very hot



Coast ablaze

The situation remains critical as 12 uncontained fires have burned more than 370,000 acres. The Santa Ana winds continue to be a challenge to contain the blazes. Hundreds of buildings have been damaged or destroyed.

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SOURCES: USDA Forest Service; ESRI; NASA

Patchwork laws, inattention have allowed misconduct to flourish

In the final installment of a three-day series on sexual misconduct by teachers in America's schools, the AP examines how a lack of decisive intervention in schools and legislatures allows abusers to keep operating.

By Robert Tanner
AP National Writer

Every school has rules governing teacher behavior. Every state has laws against child abuse, and many specifically outlaw teachers taking sexual liberties with students. Every district has administrators who watch out for sexual misconduct by teachers.

Yet people like Chad Maughan stay in the classroom.

Maughan got in trouble twice for viewing pornography at schools in Washington state

but was allowed to keep teaching. Within two years, he was convicted of raping a 14-year-old girl in his school.

Legal loopholes, fear of lawsuits and inattention all have weakened the safeguards that are supposed to protect children in school. The system fails hundreds of kids each year, an AP investigation found. It undoubtedly fails many more whose offenders go free.

State efforts to strengthen laws against sex abuse by teachers have run into opposition from school boards and teachers unions. In Congress, a measure that would train investigators and create a national registry of offenders hasn't even gotten a hearing. Few leaders recognize — let alone attack — a national shame.

"Instead of ignoring it or fighting it, why don't

Please see **Inattention**, Page 3A

Alabama legislature requires teacher background checks

By Tom Smith
Senior Staff Writer

Franklin County School Superintendent Bill Moss said the last thing administrators want to do is put someone in the classroom who would harm a student.

Moss said that before potential school personnel are hired, everything "humanly possible" is done to make sure the right people are selected.

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