

The Modesto Bee

★ ★ THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY ★ ★

WWW.MODBEE.COM

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2008

PRICE 50¢

Today's Scoop

'Suicide by cop'
 Fresno police called Wednesday's shooting that resulted in the death of a 17-year-old student "a case of suicide by cop." But the teen's relatives questioned the department's version of events. **Page A-5**

Some to pay twice
 More than 8,000 homes and businesses will be billed by Pacific Gas & Electric Co., even though they get power from other valley suppliers. **Page B-1**

Don't panic yet
 Bee fantasy sports columnist Stu Rosenberg says it's too early for owners to consider cutting bait on their slumping baseball stars. **Page C-1**

Ag's holding steady
 The real estate slump does not seem to include agriculture. A report says farmland values are holding steady or increasing slightly in the Northern San Joaquin Valley. **Page D-1**

Coming Saturday



● In celebration of Earth Day, we take a look at many things green, including how to make your spring cleaning eco-friendly. **Your Home**

● Trash produced in Stanislaus County enters a complex web that spins off into landfills, energy production and compost. Some is recycled into products that end up back in your home. **The Front Page**

modbee.com

All about the Nuts
 If you're a Modesto Nuts fan, you'll love our special section devoted to the local nine. Read game stories, check the box scores and standings, watch player videos, and do more at www.modbee.com/nuts. For more modbee.com highlights, see **Page A-2**.

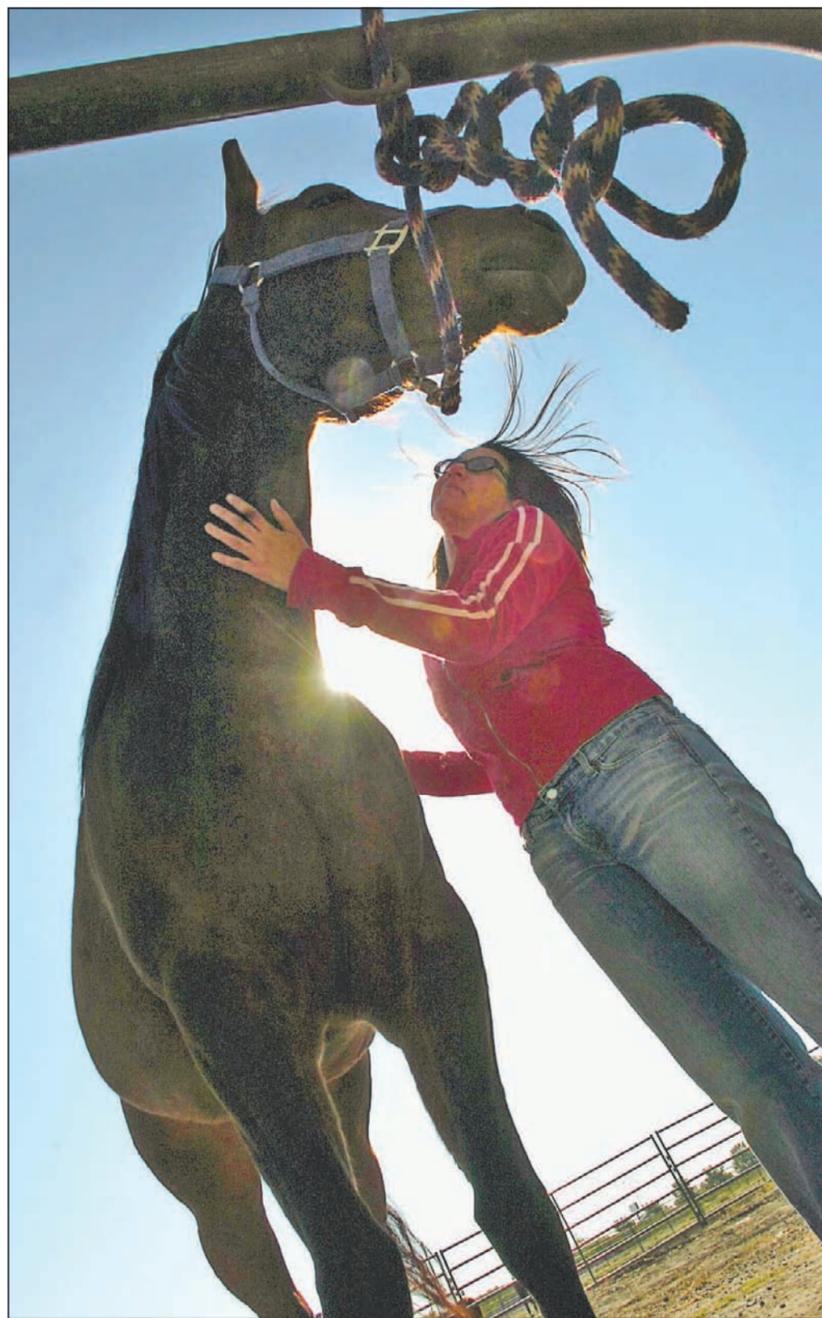
Index

- CarsE-1
- ClassifiedE-7, F-1
- ComicsScene, G-28
- CrosswordScene, G-26
- Horoscope, BridgeF-2
- Local NewsB-1
- MoviesScene, G-9
- ObituariesB-4
- OpinionsB-6
- SportsC-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, © 2008

A HORSE COURSE



BART AH YOU/THE BEE

Modesto Junior College student Emigh Gonzales brushes a horse near the stables on the west campus. Equine sciences is emerging as a big career area in the valley, from people who continue their education to be veterinarians or work in horse nutrition. That is why MJC hopes to start a program that allows students to pursue a degree in equine studies. For the story and more photos, see **Local News, Page B-1**.

Diablo's price tumbles

Resort community hopes to attract buyer at \$85M, down from \$150M

By **TIM MORAN**
 tmoran@modbee.com

For sale! One golf resort. Includes two 18-hole championship courses, clubhouse, restaurant, winery and other swanky items. Price slashed! Was \$150 million. Snap it up for \$85 million.
 Diablo Grande resort, a victim of the sluggish housing market, has taken a page from beleaguered homeowners and dramatically reduced its price, looking for a quick sale.
 The resort, which filed a Chapter 11 reorganization bankruptcy last month, also won approval from the Bankruptcy Court in Modesto on Wednesday for \$1.5 million in interim financing from Fountainhead Development Corp. Inc. The financing will allow the development to continue operating through June.

For past coverage of Diablo Grande's problems, click on the links with this story at www.modbee.com/local.

SEE BACK PAGE, DIABLO GRANDE

Insurers shift cost of drugs to consumers

Patients now paying hundreds, thousands for high-priced meds

By **GINA KOLATA**
 THE NEW YORK TIMES

Health insurance companies are rapidly adopting a new pricing system for very expensive drugs, asking patients to pay hundreds and even thousands of dollars for prescriptions for medications that may save their lives or slow serious diseases.
 With the new system, insurers abandoned the traditional arrangement that has patients pay a fixed amount, say \$10, \$20 or \$30 per prescription, no matter the drug's cost.
 Instead, they are charging patients a percentage of the cost of certain high-priced drugs, usually 20 percent to 33 percent, which can amount to thousands of dollars a month.

AT A GLANCE

- **WHAT:** A growing number of health insurance plans require patients to pay up to 33 percent of the cost for very expensive drugs to treat certain cancers, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis or hepatitis C.
- **THE COST:** Instead of a \$10 to \$30 co-payment, patients are expected to pay hundreds or thousands of dollars a month for the medicine.
- **WHAT'S NEXT:** More plans are expected to adopt the pricing system.

SEE BACK PAGE, DRUGS

Report: War a can't-win 'debacle'

Ex-official raises doubts about outcome in Iraq

By **JONATHAN S. LANDAY**
 and **JOHN WALCOTT**
 BEE WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — The war in Iraq has become "a major debacle" and the outcome "is in doubt" despite improvements in security from the buildup in U.S. forces, according to a highly critical study published Thursday by the Pentagon's premier military educational institute.

The report released by the National Defense University raises fresh doubts about President Bush's projections of a U.S. victory in Iraq just a week after Bush announced that he was suspending troop reductions.
 The report carries considerable weight because it was written by Joseph Collins, a former senior Pentagon official, and was based in part on interviews with other former senior defense and intelligence officials who played roles in prewar preparations.

It was published by the university's National Institute for Strategic Studies, a Defense Department research center.
 "Measured in blood and treasure, the war in Iraq has achieved the status of a major war and a major debacle," says the report's opening line.
 At the time the report was written in the fall, more than 4,000 U.S. and foreign troops, more than 7,500 Iraqi security forces and as many as 82,000 Iraqi civilians had been killed and tens of thousands of others

SEE BACK PAGE, IRAQ

Squeezed by tough times, teens start penny-pinching

By **ANNE D'INNOCENZIO**
 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — The souring job market and rising costs of the usual teenage indulgences — a slice of pizza, a drive to the mall, the hottest new jeans — are causing teens to do something they rarely do: be thrifty.
 It's a far cry from the free-wheeling spending of recent years, when teens splurged on \$100 Coach wristlet handbags, \$60 Juicy Couture T-shirts and \$80 skinny jeans from Abercrombie & Fitch.
 Now, jobs for teens are less plentiful, and parents who supply the allowances are feeling the economic pinch themselves.
 The stalwart retailers of teen apparel, such as Abercrombie and American Eagle Outfitters Inc., are reporting sluggish sales, defying the myth that teen

spending is recession-proof: It holds up longer, but eventually can fold.
 It's even becoming cool to be frugal.
 Last week, Ellegirl.com, the teen offshoot of Elle magazine, launched a video fixture called Self-Made Girl, which shows teens how to make clothes and accessories. The first video offers tips on how to create a prom clutch.
 "It's a little tacky in the economic unrest to tote a big logo bag," said Holly Siegel, the site's senior editor. She said it's no longer about teens "one-upping each other," but rather where they can get it cheap.
 Victoria Bradley, a 16-year-old from Springfield, Mo., said the \$80 she earns each month from baby-sitting is being eaten up by

SEE BACK PAGE, TEENS

Pope meets with sex abuse victims

'My hope is restored,' one man says later

By **IAN FISHER** and **LAURIE GOODSTEIN**
 THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — Pope Benedict XVI came face to face with a scandal that has left lasting wounds on the U.S. church Thursday, holding a surprise meeting with several victims of sexual abuse by priests in the Boston area.
 Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston, who organized the meeting and attended, gave the pope a notebook listing about 1,000 boys and girls who were abused in the Boston Archdiocese going back several decades, a Vatican official said.
 The pope had requested the meeting, said the official, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, which took place at the papal nuncio's residence. The handful of victims are



roughly in middle age. The pope prayed and spoke personally with each of them, in a meeting that lasted about 25 minutes. Some wept, Lombardi said.
 "It was a moving experience,"

• **Pope Benedict XVI arrives to celebrate Mass at Nationals Park in Washington on Thursday.**

SEE BACK PAGE, POPE

SUSAN WALSH/
 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS