

WEATHER

Tonight:
Clear,
Low of 46°
Tomorrow:
Some sun,
High of 60°
Page 14

NEWSPAPER
OF THE YEAR

The Patriot Ledger

BRAINTREE, CANTON
HOLBROOK
MILTON, QUINCY
RANDOLPH, SHARON
STOUGHTON
WEYMOUTH

**ROCKLAND FLOORING
COMPANY IS SIMPLY
'GYM' DANDY**

BUSINESS 15



SUPER-SIZE EGO

Who is the real Morgan Spurlock?

MOVIES AND MUSIC 23



**JOHN ADAMS
SLEPT HERE**

Adams Park set for weekend opening

LOCAL 9



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FRIDAY
APR 18 2008

**Good
Afternoon**

Latest news from the South Shore and world

NATION / WORLD

**STUDY: 1 IN 5
TROOPS SUFFERS
MENTAL STRESS**

■ A Rand Corp. study says one in five vets of Iraq and Afghanistan has major depression or PTSD. **Page 4**

**OBAMA SAYS ABC
DEBATE A FARCE**

■ Sen. Barack Obama dismisses the recent debate as focusing on 'gotcha' politics rather than issues. **Page 14**

LOCAL

**BILL AIMS TO
BOOST NURSING
SCHOOL FACILITIES**

■ A health care proposal would give financial perks to nursing graduates to entice them to take teaching jobs. **Page 9**

**RANDOLPH WORKS
TO FILL NEW JOBS**

■ Soon after advertising nearly 60 new teaching jobs paid for with a Prop. 2½ override, Randolph gets nearly 300 applications. **Page 9**

STATE

**FROM A CURSE
TO CHARITY**

■ A secretly buried jersey meant to jinx the Yankees is on the auction block to raise money for the Jimmy Fund. **Page 3**

BUSINESS

**SISTERS SUSPEND
APARTMENT PLANS**

■ The nuns who run Marian Manor drop their plans for an apartment complex for retirees in Quincy. **Page 15**

SPORTS

**MONTREAL DENIED
AN EASY WIN**

■ A move to a tougher lineup helps prevent the Bruins from becoming an easy first-round mark for Montreal. **Page 17**

**COMING
TOMORROW**



FIRE UP THE GRILL

■ We don't get much outdoor time in New England — jump on the grilling bandwagon while you can.

INDEX

DEAR ABBY	27
BUSINESS	15, 16
CLASSIFIED	28-32
COMICS	8
EDITORIAL	6
LOCALS	9-12
MOVIES & MUSIC	23-26
OBITUARIES	13, 14
SPORTS	17-21
STATE	3
TV LISTINGS	27

NOT THE GOOD SON

Quincy man guilty of strangling his 92-year-old mother to death



Hugh Crawford

Patriot Ledger staff

DEDHAM — A Quincy man has been found guilty of murdering his 92-year-old mother by strangling her with the cord of the Lifeline pendant she wore around her neck.

Hugh Crawford, 61, faces a sentence of up to life in prison following Thursday's second-degree murder conviction in Norfolk County Superior Court. He will be eligible for parole in 15 years.

The prosecution said that Crawford strangled his mother June 8, 2006, with the cord of the medical alert pendant. The murder took place

in the kitchen of the home the two shared at 54 Tyler St., Quincy.

Crawford, who worked as a custodian for the U.S. Postal Service, told police that he found his mother unconscious after she had fallen and that he pressed the button on the alert pendant to call for help.

The next day, a doctor at Quincy Medical Center told police there was severe bruising on Mary Crawford's neck and chest that was not consistent with a fall.

Mary Crawford died June 11, and the state medical examiner ruled the death a homicide after an autopsy found ligature marks on her neck.



Mary Crawford

Police searched the house after and found the alert pendant in Crawford's basement bedroom.

Prosecutor Robert Nelson said Crawford strangled his mother and left her bleeding on the kitchen floor before staging a call for help.

During the trial, Nelson played a tape for jurors of police interrogating

Crawford.

Crawford says on the tape that he wanted his mother back and that she was his best friend, but Nelson told jurors that everything Crawford had said "was an act."

Defense attorney Elliot Levine argued the prosecution's case was built on circumstantial evidence.

He said tests for DNA or skin cells or on the tensile strength of the pendant's cord should have been made.

If Crawford had intended to kill his mother, he would have "finished the job and built a defense for himself," Levine said.

'EVERYTHING'S MORE EXPENSIVE'



LISA BULL/The Patriot Ledger

■ Paul McDermott, owner of West Corner Farm in Randolph, talks about how the high cost of fuel has affected the cost of flowers this year. He says the price of oil touches his business in myriad ways.

Plant prices blooming

Retailers try to avoid passing higher costs on to customers

By ELAINE ALLEGRI

GateHouse News Service

YOUR VIEWS

Tell us how high prices are affecting your spring decorating.

WRITE: Your Views, The Patriot Ledger, 400 Crown Colony Drive, Quincy, MA 02169

E-MAIL: editpage@ledger.com
Please include your address and telephone number

Barbara White decided to plant pansies in her garden even though they cost more than last year.

"Everything's more expensive," said White, of Weymouth, who stopped by Lambert's in Brockton on Wednesday to check out the fruits and vegetables.

She's not kidding. Consumers are seeing the prices of food, home heating oil, gasoline, health care insurance and other essentials rise to historic highs.

And now gardeners may have to pay more to enjoy the seasonal splendor of



■ Pansies are smaller this year because high heating costs led to reduced winter greenhouse use.

Please see FLOWERS — Page 2

Quincy worker innocent of OUI, but is still fired

To lose job after conviction for insurance fraud

By JENNIFER MANN

The Patriot Ledger

QUINCY — A Quincy District Court judge has found a city employee innocent of the drunken driving charge that led to his suspension from the job.

But a February conviction in an insurance fraud case means Christopher A. Falco of Weymouth will be fired nonetheless.

In December, Falco was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving about an hour after he ended a shift as a motor equipment operator in Quincy's department of public works.

His ex-girlfriend, who called police, reported Falco followed her and a date earlier in the night, and that they came home to find her vehicle damaged. A judge issued an emergency restraining order against Falco.

Falco has been suspended without pay since the arrest was reported in The Patriot Ledger the week after the incident.

Falco waived a jury trial, and Quincy District Court Judge Paul McCallum on Tuesday found him not guilty.

Norfolk County Assistant District Attorney Kevin Freytag prosecuted the case.

The District Attorney's spokesman, David Traub, said the defense counsel relied heavily on how Falco appeared in a videotape of his booking at the police station.

Please see FALCO — Page 2

Hanson native leads daring rescue in Alaskan sea

Coast Guard lieutenant saved 16 fishermen from frigid waters, but ship captain, a Weymouth native, died

By PAULA M. DONNELLY

GateHouse News Service

A former Hanson man and his Coast Guard helicopter crew are credited with saving 16 fishermen from the frigid waters of the Bering Sea after their ship-processing vessel sank.

Coast Guard Lt. Brian McLaughlin, 30, and his three helicopter crew members were notified on March 23 that the Alaska Ranger, a fish processing vessel, was sinking quickly 200 miles off the coast of Alaska.

The Alaska Ranger was fishing in the lucrative but treacherous

Bering Sea, where the water temperature was 34 degrees and it was snowing.

McLaughlin, the captain of the rescue helicopter, and his crew responded to the stranded ship and its 47 crew members.

McLaughlin said his crew, the first responders on the scene, were

facing 25-foot seas and high winds when they approached the capsized boat.

"They were in pretty big trouble when we made radio contact with a member of the crew," McLaughlin said.

"When we got there we saw most of the crew in the water in

survival suits," McLaughlin said. "We were able to get 16 of the men out of the water. That was all the cabin would hold."

"It was tricky, but we were able to take them to a Coast Guard (ship)," McLaughlin said.

Please see RESCUE — Page 2

