

The Star-Ledger

5EX11

FINAL EDITION

TODAY'S FORECAST: Mostly sunny and very warm.



at 7 A.M. 58°

at 2 P.M. 78°

at 7 P.M. 78°

DETAILS, PAGE 2

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THE NEWSPAPER FOR NEW JERSEY

They decided, step by step, to convict

Minus any star exhibits, jurors say totality of evidence led to James verdict

BY MAURA McDERMOTT AND NAWAL QAROONI STAR-LEDGER STAFF

There was no smoking gun. No key witness, or single document, or dramatic courtroom moment that convinced them. "It was the whole trial," said Tara Behring, one of a number of jurors who broke their silence yesterday to publicly discuss for the first time how they convicted for-

mer Newark mayor Sharpe James of illegally steering city land deals to his one-time girlfriend.

"There wasn't one piece of paper we held up and said, 'This is it,'" recalled Behring, known only as Juror No. 10 for the past five weeks. "There was a lot."

Juror No. 8, Jose Valenzuela, a 25-year-old real estate agent from New Brunswick, agreed with the assessment, saying the evidence

just mounted up against the defendants in the highly charged political corruption trial that ensnared one of the state's most influential power brokers.

"I don't think there was a star witness. I remember every one of them, but I don't think any one stood out," Valenzuela said in an interview.

The jurors — whose ranks included two teachers, a computer

programmer, a postal worker, a sales representative for a software company and a recent college graduate — were anonymous throughout the federal trial and declined to comment immediately after the verdict, as U.S. marshals escorted them from the courthouse in Newark to their cars.

Yesterday, however, The Star-Ledger reached out to the 12 men and women who deliberated for six

days before delivering their verdict. Many asked not to be identified, and several refused to talk at all.

But six who were willing to discuss their deliberations painted a picture of a methodical process that focused on the prosecution's array of tedious evidence while ignoring the sordid details of the mayor's extramarital affair with his co-defendant, Tamika Riley.

One juror, who asked not to be named, said there was a general [See JURORS, Page 18]

JAMES COVERAGE

■ The guilty verdict for the ex-mayor does not mean the legal wrangling is over. PAGE 19

For complete coverage of Sharpe James, the trial and the aftermath, visit NJ.COM/STARLEDGER/SHARPEJAMES

Army calls on Rutgers to restore ailing GIs

\$85M project's goal is limb regeneration

BY WAYNE WOOLLEY STAR-LEDGER STAFF

Rutgers University will lead a group of top research institutions in an \$85 million Pentagon project to help severely wounded soldiers regrow skin, bones, nerves, muscles and blood vessels, Army Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker said yesterday.

The effort will be called the Armed Forces Institute of Regenerative Medicine and offers the promise of medical breakthroughs in the repair of massive wounds

caused by bomb blasts in Iraq and Afghanistan, said Joachim Kohn, a biochemist who is leading the Rutgers effort.

A second group of researchers will be led by Wake Forest University in North Carolina. The two universities will receive \$42.5 million each and oversee research at two dozen other institutions across the country.

"To alleviate the pain and suffering of these very severely injured people requires a truly national effort and it requires the synergy of a very diverse group of expertise," Kohn said in an interview before the Pentagon announcement.

The Department of Defense expects the teams to focus on ways to rapidly heal burns, as well as facial reconstruction and the regeneration and transplantation of limbs and skin. Work begins immediately and funding lasts for five years.

"The new institute will work to develop techniques that will make our soldiers whole again," said Schoomaker, the Army's top medical officer.

Creation of the institute marks one of the broadest Pentagon efforts to use private and public [See RUTGERS, Page 11]

IN OTHER NEWS

Working to avoid shutdown

With haggling over his proposed budget cuts in full swing, Gov. Jon Corzine hopes to avoid a repeat of the feud that shuttered state government two years ago. PAGE 21.

Springsteen bandmate dies

Jerseyan Danny Federici, whose keyboard was instrumental to Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, died yesterday after a long battle with cancer. He was 58. PAGE 31.

THE POPE'S COMPASSION



At the conclusion of Mass, Pope Benedict XVI greets the crowd that jammed Nationals Park in Washington, cheering him both before and after the ceremonies.

STEFAN ZAKLINEUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY

After celebrating Mass, Benedict meets with 5 victims of clergy sex abuse

BY MARK MUELLER STAR-LEDGER STAFF

WASHINGTON — Pope Benedict XVI knelt in prayer with five victims of clergy sex abuse yesterday at a chapel inside the Vatican embassy, his most dramatic gesture so far during a U.S. visit in which he has paid much greater attention than expected to the harm caused by the scandal.

The meeting, set up by the archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, lasted

for about 20 minutes, the Vatican said. The five victims each had a private audience with the pope, and they knelt with him to pray the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary."

"For eight years, I've been asking to hear the words from the top and from no one else," one of the victims, Olan Home, told National Public Radio afterward. "And we heard them today. And we heard them face to face, without a filter, without a proxy.

"It wasn't symbolic. It was from him to me."

The five people at the meeting were middle-age men and women from the Boston area. A papal spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said the pontiff listened to their personal accounts and offered them words of "encouragement and hope."

"The pope was very affectionate with them," he said.

The meeting was the most dramatic

and significant moment of the pope's first days in the United States. It came late in the afternoon, an addition to one of the busiest days of the pope's whirlwind visit to Washington and New York.

In the morning, he celebrated Mass for 46,000 people at the sun-splashed home of the Washington Nationals baseball team, Nationals Park. In the evening, he met with Catholic educators and then with more than 200 leaders of other [See VICTIMS, Page 15]

At ballpark, some discover roots of their faith

BY PEGGY McGLONE STAR-LEDGER STAFF

WASHINGTON — There was still four hours before Pope Benedict XVI would celebrate Mass in the newly opened Nationals Park.

In the early-morning darkness, in a hushed plaza behind center field, lines formed outside two white tents. The only furniture inside: 65 pairs of wooden folding chairs facing each other.

Seated in half the chairs were Dominican, Capuchin and diocesan priests wearing purple stoles, waiting to confer the sac-

rament of reconciliation — confession — to thousands of Catholics arriving early for Mass.

"It's a good way to prepare myself," said Dave Baran, a 19-year-old Georgetown University freshman from Indianapolis.

"He is The Man, so I should probably get it all off my chest," Baran's buddy, John Murray, 19, said of the pope.

Baran and four of his friends had come to confess their sins before taking their seats in the baseball park for the papal Mass.

They hardly fit the profile of those who

typically receive the sacrament also known as penance. Reconciliation has fallen out of favor with a majority of American Catholics — especially the young.

It is a fact Benedict acknowledged in his homily hours later.

"This sacrament," said the pontiff, "needs to be rediscovered and reappropriated by every Catholic. To a great extent, the renewal of the church in America depends on the renewal of the practice of penance."

Three-quarters of the nation's roughly [See CONFESSION, Page 16]

COMPLETE COVERAGE

■ Benedict will be in New York today. Check our guide for the traffic hot spots. PAGE 15

■ The pope thanked more than 200 educators in an address last night at Catholic University. PAGE 16

For complete coverage of the pope's visit, go to NJ.COM/STARLEDGER/POPE

LOCAL NEWS

Man gets 5 years in fraud attempt

A South Orange man is sentenced to five years in prison for his part in a \$500,000 mortgage-fraud scheme that resulted in his being handcuffed at the real-estate closing. Page 33



'88 Minutes' just a waste of time

Al Pacino's new movie probably sounded like a great idea, and the usually uncontrolled actor gives a subdued performance. But he is sunk by a screenplay that is ridiculously far-fetched.

Ready to ride the Munchmobile?

Food. Fun. Road trip. If those words make your tummy tingle, you could find yourself riding along on the Big Dog's 10th anniversary extravaganza. Find out how to get in on the festivities. Page 57

N.J. energy plan could cost you

The state unveils a plan that calls for more solar and wind power and raises the possibility of another nuclear plant, but some say the plan will lead to higher electric bills. Page 51

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