

IN SPORTS: THE CELTICS DOWN THE CAVALIERS, 76-72, IN GAME ONE OF THE EASTERN CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

The Day

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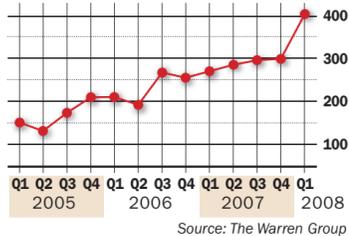
VOL. 127, No. 311 32 PAGES 50 CENTS

'It's an absolutely terrifying real estate situation in Massachusetts; it's a bad dream in Connecticut.'

Vincent Valvo, group publisher at The Warren Group, publisher of New England real estate and financial information

Foreclosures soar

The chart below shows the number of legal filings for mortgage foreclosures in New London County, quarter by quarter, since the start of 2005.



Foreclosures up more than 50% in state, county

Property values seen as likely to sink further under 'strain'

By **LEE HOWARD**
Day Staff Writer

Local foreclosure filings during this year's first quarter jumped more than 50 percent, according to statistics released Tuesday, and experts say housing prices will likely drop as a result.

Numbers from The Warren Group, publisher of New England real estate and financial information, show that first-stage foreclosure filings in New London County were up 54.2 percent during the January-through-March period compared with the same period in 2007. A total of 407 foreclosure filings were started in the past quarter, compared with 264 last year.

That's nearly double the number of foreclosures in the same period of 2006.

Statewide, the number of foreclosure starts increased by about 2,000 last quarter compared with the same period last year. That translates into a 54.5 percent increase.

"The victims of foreclosure, for the most part, are not able to re-enter the housing market right away, so there are thousands fewer people in the market for a new home," Timothy Warren Jr., chief executive of the Boston-based Warren Group, said in a statement. "It will take some time before the number of foreclosures starts to

See **FORECLOSURES** page A5

House snuffs out proposal to ban smoking at casinos

Bill dies in Democratic caucus; UAW says Amann backtracked

By **TED MANN**
Day Staff Writer

Hartford — The House of Representatives will not take up a proposal that could have extended the state smoking ban to the Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun casinos, the chamber's leader said Tuesday.

One day before the adjournment deadline of the 2008 regular session, the decision by the House Democrats effectively killed the bill, which had been aggressively sought by some labor groups but opposed by other unions and by the owners of the two casinos, the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes.

In a closed-door meeting of the House Democratic caucus, opinion had run nearly two-to-one against the bill, said House Speaker James A. Amann, D-Milford, who had previously expressed skepticism about the proposal but agreed to consider a vote on it amid fierce lobbying from the United Auto Workers union.

The UAW has won the right to represent deal-

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SEE RELATED STORY ON B5

CAMPAIGN 2008

CLINTON FINDS OPTIONS BEGINNING TO RUN OUT

Indiana primary hangs in balance; Obama wins big in North Carolina

By **ADAM NAGOURNEY**
New York Times News Service

In this case, even a split would not be a draw.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's loss in North Carolina on Tuesday night, combined with a tight race

in Indiana, where the counting was continuing deep into the night, did nothing to improve her chances of securing the Democratic presidential nomination. If anything, Clinton's options for overtaking Sen. Barack Obama may have dwindled further.

For Obama, the outcome came after a brutal period in which he was on the defensive over the inflammatory comments of his former pastor. That he was able, at a minimum, to hold his own under those circumstances should allow him to make a case that he has proved his resilience in the face of questions about race, values and patriotism — the very kinds of issues that the Clinton campaign has

suggested would leave him vulnerable in the general election.

When paired with Obama's comfortable victory in North Carolina, a bigger state, Clinton's performance in Indiana did not seem to be enough to cut into Obama's lead in pledged delegates or in his overall lead in the popular vote. And because Clinton did not appear to come particularly close in North Carolina, despite a substantial effort



Sen. Barack Obama
See **CLINTON** page A5

'GOOD TO BE BACK'

Lt. Col. Spyros Spanos of Waterford gets a welcome home hug from his wife, Rita Provatas, and his son, Nicholas Spanos, upon his arrival at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Windsor Locks. Fifteen soldiers from the Connecticut National Guard Embedded Training Team returned home from a deployment in Afghanistan on Tuesday.



DANA JENSEN
The Day

All Present And Accounted For

State's National Guard units all back home for first time in five years

By **JENNIFER GROGAN**
Day Staff Writer

Windsor Locks

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE the start of the Iraq War, the Connecticut National Guard units are all home.

The last unit overseas, a team that was training and mentoring security forces in Afghanistan, returned to the Army Aviation Support Facility in Windsor Locks Tuesday.

"It's a great relief to have them all back," said Gov. M. Jodi Rell, who welcomed the 13 members of the unit on the runway. "At one time, we had over 1,000 deployed."

Their respite will be brief. By the end of the year, about 300

members of the Connecticut Army National Guard will deploy overseas, with about half of them leaving the state this month to start training. Another Air National Guard unit is not currently scheduled to deploy.

The state has roughly 5,200 Air and Army National Guard members.

"For a brief moment in time, we will all be home. We wish it was longer but ..." said Lt. Col. John

Whitford, the Guard's director of communications.

"It's the nature of our business," he added.

Family and friends waved "welcome home" signs and American flags as two C-21 aircraft descended to the runway. Rell asked if everyone thought this was a good Mother's Day present. They all cheered.

"Oh, look at that," Penni
See **ALL** page A3



TIM MARTIN/The Day

Tim Frink, a hydrologist technician with the U.S. Geological Service, collects a water sample in the Pine Grove neighborhood in Niantic on Tuesday. Data is being collected to determine what impact the installation of sewers has had on water quality.

East Lyme neighborhoods expected to yield some useful geological data

Well-water tests could have an impact on Niantic River

By **JUDY BENSON**
Day Staff Writer

East Lyme — Sometime today, a 4-ounce bottle of water packed in dry ice will arrive by Federal Express at the U.S. Geological Survey's laboratory in Denver, Colo., a journey that began with its capture Tuesday afternoon from a well dug deep into the sand and gravel soils of the Pine Grove neighborhood.

Using hoses, a device called a flow-through

chamber and a filter, Tim Frick of the USGS Connecticut office intercepted and bottled these few gulps as the water flowed underground on its way to the Niantic River. The groundwater from this and 17 other wells throughout Pine Grove, a neighborhood on a peninsula on the river with narrow streets and cozy older homes on pocket-sized lots, is being sampled and tested by the USGS as part of a project that began in 2005.

Samples from two additional wells in other river neighborhoods, Saunders Point and Sandy Point, are also being tested as part of the project.

"Whether we ultimately see any trend or
See **VALUABLE** page A5

INSIDE TODAY

NEWS

Death Toll Rising

The number of dead and missing in the Myanmar cyclone soars past 60,000 amid signs the toll will rise even higher. **A2**



Viable Alternative?

With skyrocketing food costs and hunger spreading across the globe, ethanol's favorability is getting a second look. **A4**

WEATHER

Sunshine, Mid-60s

Today, mostly sunny and mild. High 63. Thursday, chance of a morning shower, clearing later. High 62. **B8**

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