



Kobe's time
Kobe Bryant has been awarded the NBA's MVP award after leading the Lakers to a stellar season. /1C

Britney's progress
Britney Spears was awarded expanded visitation rights with her children after a custody hearing on Tuesday. /7B



Johnson City Press

Volume 88-Number 265

Tri-Cities, Tennessee

www.johnsoncitypress.com

50¢

BRIEFING



High **76**
Low **56**

Some sun forecast, Page 3A

NEWS



Laura's role/5A
First lady Laura Bush is taking on a higher profile on diplomatic matters in the final months of the Bush presidency.



Cents sense/7A

Coins are costing more to produce than they are worth, prompting Congress to seek a return to steel coins.

Hospital start/1B

Ground breaking is scheduled for today on MSHA's new Franklin Woods Community Hospital.

TASTES



It's Canadian/1D

ALSO INSIDE

News

Local/1B | Tennessee/5A
Lottery/2A | Weather/3A
Nation/5A

Sports

Baseball/4C | On Air/2C
NBA/5C | Scores/2C
Preps/3C | Softball/1C

Elsewhere

Abby/6C | Comics/7C
Astrology/6C | Editorial/6A
Bridge/6C | Movies/7B
Brooks/1B | Puzzles/6C
Celebs/7B | Tastes/1D
Classified/5D | TV listing/6C

Deaths/2A

- JOHNSON CITY
Yates Biggs
Lisa Clark
James Morris
- DEER PARK, Texas
Vickie Richard
- JONESBOROUGH
Oscar Blalock Jr.
- LANCASTER, Pa.
Madeline Booth
- LAS CRUCES, N.M.
Steven Loyd
- SUN CITY, Fla.
J. David Rose

Front Page Design/Don Dale



7 14236 33050 2

Obama captures Carolina

Clinton leading late in Indiana.

Election08

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS — Democratic front-runner Barack Obama swept to victory in the North Carolina primary Tuesday night and lengthened his lead in the delegate race. Hillary Rodham Clinton led in Indiana as she struggled to stop her rival's

march toward the party's presidential nomination.

"Tonight we stand less than 200 delegates away from winning the Democratic nomination for president of the United States," Obama told a raucous rally in Raleigh, N.C. — and left no doubt he intended to claim the prize.

He said it appeared Clinton had won

Indiana's primary, although thousands of votes had yet to be counted in key counties.

Returns from 47 percent of North Carolina precincts showed Obama was winning 59 percent of the vote to 41 percent for Clinton, a triumph that mirrored his earlier wins in Southern states with large black populations.

Obama won at least 40 delegates and Clinton at least 31 in North Carolina, with 116 still to be awarded in the two states.

That made Indiana a virtual must-win Midwestern state for the former first lady, hoping to counter Obama's persistent delegate advantage with a strong run through the late primaries.

There, returns from 73 percent of the precincts showed Clinton with 52 percent of the vote to 48 percent for Obama.

▶ See **OBAMA**, Page 4A

Myanmar aid begins as toll hits 22,000

U.S. to send more than \$3 million, seeks entry for disaster assessment team.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

YANGON, Myanmar — International aid began to trickle into Myanmar on Tuesday, but the stricken Irrawaddy delta, the nation's rice bowl where 22,000 people perished and twice as many are missing, remained cut off from the world.

The White House said Tuesday the U.S. will send more than \$3 million to help victims of the devastating cyclone, up from an initial emergency contribution of \$250,000.

The additional commitment of funds, announced by press secretary Dana Perino, comes as Myanmar continues to resist entry for a U.S. disaster assessment team. The Bush administration insists that permission for such a team to enter the Southeast Asian nation and look at the damage would allow quicker and larger aid contributions.

In the former capital of Yangon, soldiers from the repressive military regime were out on the streets in large numbers for the first time since Cyclone Nargis hit over the weekend, helping to clear away rubble. Buddhist monks and Catholic nuns wielded axes and long knives to remove ancient, fallen trees that were once the city's pride.

However, coastal areas of the delta worst hit by the high winds and tidal surges were out of reach for aid workers, isolated by flooding and road damage.

Electricity remained cut for nearly all 6.5 million residents of Yangon, while water supply was restored in only a few areas. Some residents waited in lines for nine hours or more to buy gasoline to fuel generators and their cars. At one gas station in the Yangon suburb of Sanchaung, fistfights broke out, with weary residents hitting each other with sticks after someone tried to cut in line.

The U.N.'s World Food Program said international aid began to flow, with 800 tons of food getting through to the first of nearly 1 million people left homeless by the cyclone.

Concerns mounted over the lack of food, water and shelter in the delta region and adjacent Yangon, where nearly a quarter of Myanmar's 57 million people live, as well as the spread of disease in a country with one of the world's worst health systems.

"Our biggest fear is that the aftermath could be more lethal than the storm itself," said Caryl Stern, who heads the U.N. Children's Fund in the United States.

After days of little military presence in the streets, soldiers were out Tuesday clearing massive felled trees with power saws

▶ See **AID**, Page 4A



IT'S A ZOO!

Fields of Grace Petting Farm offers fun for kids in a storybook setting

Above, Cornpop the pig welcomes visitors to the farm while Grace the cat, above right, gets a ride on Flash. At right, Katie Pilkington and Sami Black take the reins of a covered wagon, and Sami nuzzles a rabbit. Below, Katie takes a ride on a pony with help from Tricia Pilkington.



Ron Campbell/Johnson City Press



By **JAMES BROOKS**

Press Staff Writer
jbrooks@johnsoncitypress.com

ELIZABETHTON — Put together the magic of fairy tales with a visit to an old-timey farm to play with the animals and you have a notion of what's in store for children at the Fields of Grace Petting Farm.

You go out Stoney Creek, or Tenn. Highway 91, about two miles past where it becomes two lanes and look for the sign. When you've been there once the kids will remind you where to turn off. According to owner Tricia Pilkington, nobody wants to leave.

For Tricia, a writer of children's stories, it's as if J.K. Rowling had set up her studio at Hogwarts School. There are pigs and goats, but they're washed with bubble bath.

The pig's skin is rubbed with baby oil to keep it nice and soft.

This is not your average farm, but as much a source of inspiration as it is a product of imagination.

"It's all done in a storybook environment," Tricia said. There's even a secret garden with a fairy house.

In terms of actual farm life, there's an opportunity to do some gardening, including pulling the dreaded weeds, but also to pick the produce and feed it to the rabbits.

In fact, there's a play yard with animals where children can have a picnic with the animals. Of course they're curious about what the kids are eating, but to keep their manners nice there are special animal snacks available as well. Nobody gets left

▶ See **ZOO**, Page 4A

Suspects in bank robberies appear in court

Cases reset in one robbery; woman arraigned in second.

By **BECKY CAMPBELL**

Press Staff Writer
bcampbell@johnsoncitypress.com

The four people charged with robbing a Johnson City branch of Regions Bank last week appeared briefly in Sessions Court on Tuesday, but only to have their cases reset.

Daniel W. Rouse, 27, Knoxville; Timothy R.

Cameron, 24, 299 McClelland St., Bluff City; Heather H. Collins, 23, 199 Brethren Church Drive, Johnson City; and Keshia R. Lafleur, 19, 119 Fitzsimmons Road, Elizabethton; are each charged with one count of aggravated robbery in the April 28 holdup at the East Watauga Avenue and Broadway Street bank branch.

The four now have attorneys — Rouse is represented by Jim Lonon, Cameron is represented by Assistant Public Defender Ivan Lilly, Collins is represented by Eric Reach and Lafleur is represented by Matthew Carter — and their cases were all reset until June 10.

Rouse is accused of being the one who went inside the bank and demanded money from the teller, while the other three were in the getaway car, according to Johnson City police investigators.

Cameron was the getaway driver, police said.

When Rouse fled from the bank with a handful of money, he ran down East Watauga and a dye pack in the money exploded. He dropped about \$400 of the cash.

When the four were arrested two days later,

▶ See **SUSPECTS**, Page 4A