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San Bernardino County's Newspaper

TODAY'S WEATHER

MOSTLY SUNNY
90s / 60s
More weather on Page B8

FRIDAY | SEPTEMBER 5, 2008

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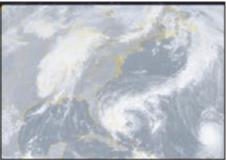
PREP FOOTBALL SEASON KICKS OFF | C1



Hometown honky-tonk

INSIDE | B1

the SCOOP



Storm watch
Tropical Storm Hanna roared along the edge of the Bahamas on Thursday ahead of a possible hurricane hit on the Carolinas, leaving behind at least 61 dead in Haiti.
Hurricane Ike, a still-more-dangerous Category 4 storm, was advancing from the east.
Hanna was forecast to pass east of the Atlantic archipelago before striking along the coast of North or South Carolina by Saturday, but the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said Hanna's sprawling bands of outer winds are likely to hit far sooner.
Read more on Page A12

Filling a seat
The Redlands City Council plans to appoint someone to fill the city treasurer's post vacated by Mike Reynolds, who retired before pleading guilty to charges of felony forgery and altering records.
Read more on Page A3

Big plans
Yucaipa's Brian Conroy has come a long way since his first building purchase more than a decade ago.
He's now the owner of the Marketplace, and he's got more big plans for it.
Read more on Page A6

Suspects snagged
Fontana police have made two arrests in the shooting of a man who confronted two gang taggers and ended up getting shot in the neck and back. The 41-year-old victim survived the shooting.
Read more on Page A4

Sweet send-off
Bert and Rocky's, a place that's served homemade ice cream to the citizens of Upland and others in the area lucky enough to visit, is closing after 20 years.
Read more on Page A9

Share smiles
Submit those photos from your final summer getaway with friends and family at SBSUN.COM. Some reader photos may be published in the newspaper.

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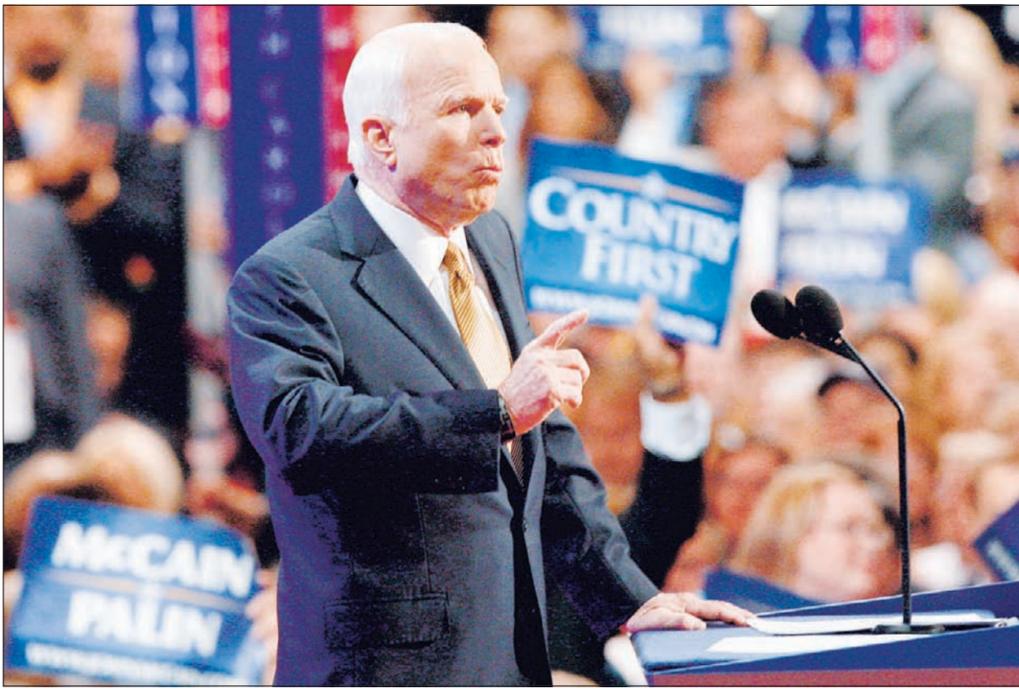


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FROM THE CONVENTION

Call to fight

McCain promises change for nation



The Associated Press

John McCain, a POW turned political rebel, vowed Thursday night to vanquish the "constant partisan rancor" that grips Washington as he launched his fall campaign for the White House. "Change is coming," he promised the roaring Republican National Convention and a prime-time television audience.

"Fight with me. Fight with me. Fight with me. Fight for what's right for our country," he said in a convention crescendo.

To repeated cheers from his delegates, McCain made only passing reference to an unpopular George W. Bush and criticized fellow Republicans as well as Democratic rival Barack Obama in reaching out to independents and swing voters.

Read more about the convention on Page A10

CONVENTION COVERAGE

INSIDE

WHAT YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE SAYING
Inland Empire residents give their impressions of McCain and the convention | A10

FROM ST. PAUL

Gov. Palin blames Democratic presidential ticket supporters for spreading "flat-out lies" about her and her family | A11

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WORD FOR WORD

Miss the big speech? Get the transcript of McCain's address on Thursday in St. Paul

LET'S HEAR IT

Visit the Opinion section of our Web site and share your thoughts on the conventions and the election

Legal issues delay report

Phoenix probe still in progress

By Andrew Edwards
Staff Writer

SAN BERNARDINO — An independent investigator hired to look into Operation Phoenix-related problems that have come to light over the course of the summer will not be able to present conclusions to the City Council for at least one month, City Attorney James F. Penman said.

Penman said the delay stems from legal issues surrounding personnel records that were kept on city computers. The information is stored on hard drives that are presently in the custody of the sheriff's crime lab. A court order is required for those documents to be examined.

"Thirty days is on the early side of when it will get done," Penman said.

The investigator, Penman said, reports to the city Human Resources Department. The probe was launched at the direction of City Manager Fred Wilson, Penman said.

The inquiry is in progress while San Bernardino officials continue to debate how the city should react to the July 3 arrest of former Operation Phoenix center manager Mike Miller.

Miller has been charged with several counts of child molestation, and a San Bernardino Superior Court judge has entered "not guilty" pleas on his behalf.

News of Miller's arrest has been followed by reports of other problems at city-run recreational facilities.

Part of the debate is whether the Police Department's criminal investigation of Miller and the city's administrative probe are sufficient to discover any lingering problems in the anti-crime or recreation programs.

Thus far, a majority of the City Council has been satisfied to wait for current investigations to run their course before increasing scrutiny.

First Ward Councilwoman Esther Estrada has twice asked for her colleagues' support for

See PROBE | Page A4

New councilman walks a fine line

By Stephen Wall
Staff Writer

LOMA LINDA — Before he was elected to the City Council in June, Ovidiu Popescu was an outspoken leader of a citizens group that favors slow-growth policies.

The group, Save Loma Linda, has had an adversarial relationship with City Hall, fighting to stop high-density housing and preserve open space.

Even after he took office in July, Popescu has remained a member of the group while participating in discussions involving it with City Council members.

While it's unlikely that Popescu has violated a law, his actions have raised some eyebrows.

"If I were in his shoes, I wouldn't do what he's doing,"

said Councilman Floyd Petersen.

Popescu did not abstain when the council had a closed session on July 22 to discuss a lawsuit involving Save Loma Linda, according to City Clerk Pamela Byrnes-O'Camb.

The group sued the city two years ago, claiming that officials did not properly analyze and mitigate all potentially significant environmental impacts before adopting the city's General Plan in July 2006.

Popescu said he is doing nothing wrong and has no plans to leave the group while he is on the council.

"There is no issue regarding my ability to represent the best interest of citizens in this matter," Popescu said. "I am a proud member of this group

See POLICY | Page A4

POLICE STATION CLOSING



Rick Sforza/Staff Photographer

The 47-year-old edifice in Redlands known as Safety Hall has been deemed the opposite of safe, leading Redlands police to move their operations in that building elsewhere. Contractors recently discovered asbestos in the floor and ceilings and structural issues related to cracks found in concrete wall panels supporting the roof. | **Read more on Page A3**