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'I fight for Americans'

GOP MAVERICK McCAIN TRUMPETS HIS RECORD ON REFORM

SHARED PAST, STRONG MESSAGE

POW experience 'transformed' Del. man, McCain

By NICOLE GAUDIANO
News Journal Washington Bureau

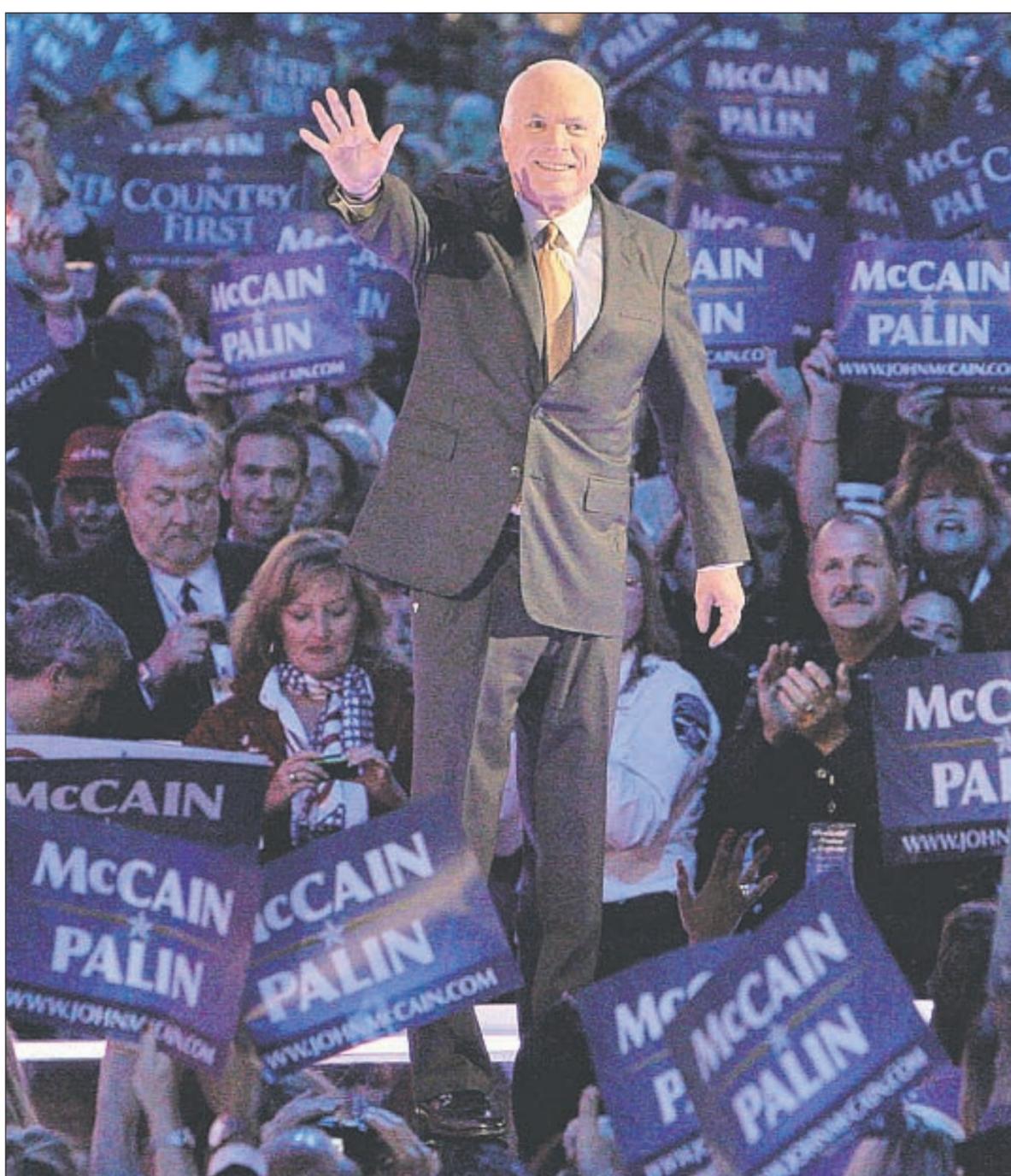
ST. PAUL, Minn. — Sen. John McCain's experience as a prisoner of war during Vietnam may not qualify him to be president by itself, but it demonstrates character, commitment and dedication to country, another former POW and McCain backer said.

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Jon A. Reynolds should know. As a fighter pilot in 1965, Reynolds, who now lives in the Centreville area, was shot down in North Vietnam and spent the next seven years and 76 days in the same prison system where McCain was held.

They have met but never talked about their experience. Reynolds said they don't need to. "His prison experience was a crossroads," he said. "It was a transforming experience, as it was for me. By his own account, and I've heard him say this, it gave him a seriousness of purpose."

Reynolds is one of more than 20 former POWs at the Republican National Convention who are making the case for electing McCain this fall. In the past few days, he's delivered speeches to the Delaware, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico delegations — the most he's talked about his POW ordeal in two years, he said.

See MESSAGE — A10



Sen. John McCain waves to the crowd as he goes onstage Thursday in St. Paul, Minn. He says he's worked with both parties "to fix problems that need to be fixed."

NOMINEE REALIZES LONGTIME GOAL

Arizona senator says he'll make a better country for all

The News Journal

Sen. John McCain hit a new high Thursday night when he officially accepted the Republican nomination for president, a milestone in a career that once seemed doomed by controversy and attacks from former GOP opponents.

McCain repeated one of his main messages, saying he puts the welfare of the country before himself or his party, and drew sharper lines in the sand between himself and Democratic nominee Sen. Barack Obama.

"Again and again, I've worked with members of both parties to fix problems that need to be fixed. That's how I will govern as president," McCain said. "I have that record and the scars to prove it. Senator Obama does not."

The nomination by the party once seemed like an impossible goal for McCain.

He weathered the "Keating Five" savings and loan controversy in 1989, was considered down for the count after he took a beating in the 2000 presidential primary and was known for defying the party's base when he publicly disagreed with the right wing.

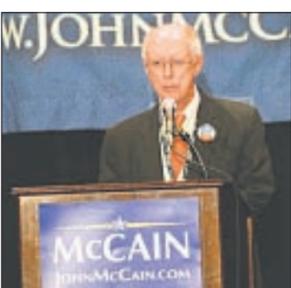
He began the current campaign as the Republican front-runner, but his chances seemed to collapse last winter when opposition to the Iraq war rose among independents and conservatives grew upset over his backing for legislation to give illegal immigrants a path toward citizenship.

In one of the most remarkable comebacks in recent times, he recovered to win the New Hampshire primary in early January, then wrapped up the nomination on Feb. 5 with big-state primary victories on Super Tuesday.

See McCAIN — A10



"It's not about talking pretty, it's about talking straight," Tom Ridge said before McCain's speech.



Gannett News Service/HEATHER WINES
Centreville-area resident Jon A. Reynolds is one of more than 20 ex-POWs attending the convention.

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Watch video of McCain's speech, and see photos and stories from the convention, as well as the campaign trail.

CASTLE LIKES RIDGE

Delaware House member wanted McCain to pick former Pa. governor. A10



BIDEN EXCLUSIVE

Democratic VP nominee says he's not going to be an "attack dog." A11



OBAMA IN PA.

In Lancaster, candidate pushes back against GOP attacks. A11

Former Sussex principal pleads guilty to sex with student

Goodman faces sentencing for two counts of rape stemming from months-long affair with 17-year-old

By ESTEBAN PARRA and DAN SHORTRIDGE
The News Journal

The former principal of Sussex Central High School in Georgetown pleaded guilty to having repeated consensual sex with a 17-year-old student.

Dana I. Goodman, 38, of Melrose Park, Pa., pleaded guilty to two counts of fourth-degree

rape and one count each of endangering the welfare of a child and official misconduct. He entered the pleas two weeks before he was scheduled to go to trial on 30 counts of fourth-degree rape.

The two counts of fourth-degree rape, carry a combined sentence of up to 30 years in prison. Sentencing has been set for Nov. 14.

Officials and parents in the Indian River

School District said Thursday they're glad it's over.

"I think everyone knows that Dana Goodman was an aberration," school board member Donald Hattier said. "It's a wonderful school, it's got great people in it ... and frankly, they did not deserve that breach of trust."

Goodman's plea was entered Wednesday during his final case review hearing as attorneys prepared for his Sept. 22 trial.

Jason Miller, spokesman for the Attorney General's Office, said his agency would not comment until after sentencing.

The Delaware State Police began investigating the former principal in May after the school district received an anonymous letter about the affair.

The incidents occurred at various locations in Kent and Sussex counties beginning in January and ending in April.

According to court records, the incidents took place in Goodman's car and at motels in Laurel and Dover.

Police do not believe that anything occurred at the school, which Goodman joined during the 2006-2007 school year.

See PRINCIPAL — A14



Dana Goodman entered a plea two weeks prior to his trial date.

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TODAY'S FORECAST

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