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HOBART, MERRILLVILLE & CROWN POINT

TEACHER ACCUSED OF FONDLING

Police arrest band director after classes at Clark school in Hammond

BY DAN HINKEL dhinkel@nwi.com 219.933.4183

HAMMOND | The band teacher at Clark Middle/High School was arrested after school Wednesday

over accusations he fondled a 14-year-old girl at school, authorities said. The eighth-grader's father told police that James Ciammetti, 40, of Oak Lawn, recently fondled the girl at the school in Hammond's

Robertsdale neighborhood, said Hammond police Lt. Richard Hoyda. Ciammetti was held at the Hammond police station Thursday night. He was not charged Thursday, but investigators planned to

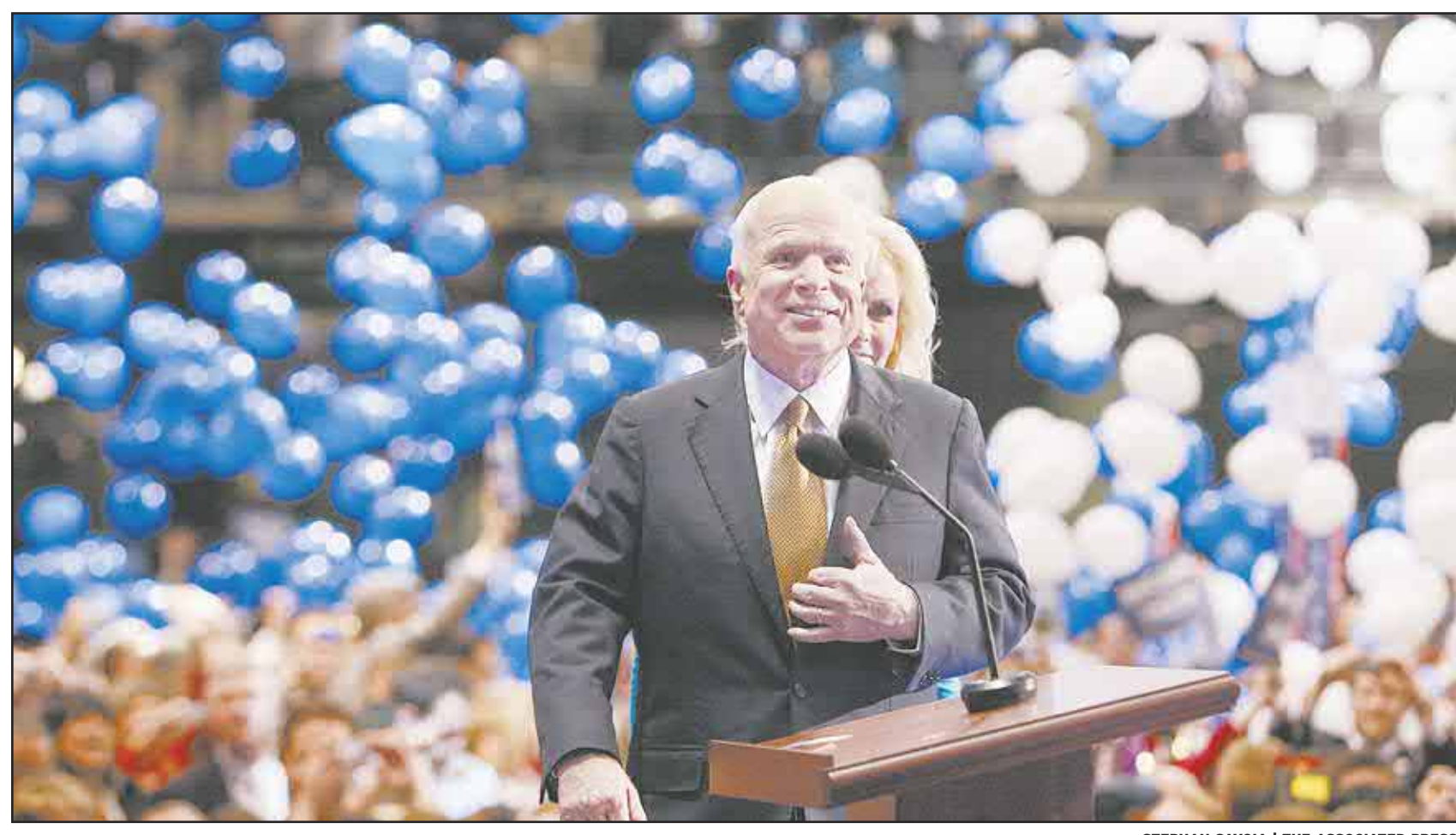
present their case to the prosecutor's office today, Hoyda said. Hoyda expected Thursday that Ciammetti will face charges of child molestation and child

See **FONDLING, A8**



Clark Middle/High School band teacher **JOHN CIAMMETTI** was arrested after allegations surfaced he fondled a girl, 14. He has not been charged with a crime, but police are expected to present their case to the prosecutor's office today.

McCain Promises: 'CHANGE IS COMING'



STEPHAN SAVOIA | THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republican presidential candidate U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., acknowledges the cheers of supporters Thursday after accepting his party's nomination for president during the last night of the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn.

Senator accepts GOP nomination for president

BY DAVID ESPO AND ROBERT FURLOW Associated Press Writers

ST. PAUL, MINN. | 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 urged 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 who will pick the next president. "We were elected to change Washington, and we let Washington change us," he said of the Republicans who controlled Congress for a

See **MCCAIN, A11**

MORE ELECTION INSIDE

- Police arrest several at anti-war rally. **A11**
- Nielsen: Obama not the only rock star. **A11**
- Americans get to know obscure governor. **A19**
- Lieberman's criticism of Obama could spur payback. **A19**

ONLINE

Read our convention coverage from St. Paul online at nwi.com/blogs/rnc.

NIPSCO cost shift alarms activists

Utility company: Plan will simplify bills for customers

BY KEITH BENMAN kbenman@nwi.com 219.933.3326

In its proposed 16 percent rate increase, NIPSCO is telling state regulators it wants customers to shoulder a larger burden for everything from power plant coal to energy efficiency.



That has alarmed consumer groups, who say the utility is shifting risk onto the backs of customers already burdened by high energy costs. "The affordability issue is just crucial in Northwest Indiana," said Grant Smith, of the Citizens Action Coalition. "The people up there are paying much too much for the service now."

INSIDE

Find out how a typical bill stacks up under the current plan and how it would look under the proposed plan. **A11**

The biggest shift under NIPSCO's rate plan would come in its fuel charge, which adjusts customer charges monthly to reflect the cost of fuel for power plants.

The company wants to shift all fuel costs now contained in its fixed base rate into its variable fuel charge.

NIPSCO calculates that the fuel surcharge that made up 7 percent of a customer's bill based on fuel costs in December would make up almost 25 percent of a customer's bill under its rate proposal.

See **NIPSCO, A11**

S'ville tot to be featured on 'Stand Up to Cancer'

Family says 'A-list' celebrity will talk of little boy's battle

BY LUANN FRANKLN Times Correspondent

SCHERERVILLE | It started with a black eye that appeared out of nowhere and wouldn't go away. In the year since his worried

parents took him to an ophthalmologist for that black eye, little Drew Perschon has endured surgeries, chemotherapy, three stem cell transplants and radiation treatments to fight a little-known childhood cancer called neuroblastoma.

Drew's story has inspired many who know the 2-year-old through

See **DREW, A8**

Captain guides cruises that offer unique views of Chicago | **C1**

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Charges filed in attack on pizza delivery driver

Cops: Son says mom devised plan, but boyfriend denies it

BY DEBORAH LAVERTY dlaverty@nwi.com 219.762.1397, ext. 2223

LAKE STATION | Three Lake Station residents accused in the brutal attack of a pizza delivery driver

were charged Thursday with robbery and aggravated battery, Police Chief Mike Stills said.

Keith Orman Hawkins, 18; his mother, Tammy Lynn Hawkins, 38; and her boyfriend, Joseph John Forbes Zeld, 30, were charged in Lake County Superior Court.

The delivery driver, Samantha

See **CHARGES, A11**