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PAY CZAR CUTS SALARIES

Feinberg says the top 25 earners at five bailout companies will be paid 15 percent less.

AN EDITION OF THE SUN
VOL. 118 NO. 83

AMERICA'S BEST COMMUNITY DAILY

WEDNESDAY MARCH 24, 2010

www.sunnewspapers.net

75 cents



NCAA TOURNAMENT
THE GLUE GUYS

SPORTS PAGE 7

They might not be the biggest stars, but these guys play important roles for their teams.

Charlotte looks to replace taxing units

By **JOSH SALMAN**
STAFF WRITER

MURDOCK — Charlotte County has proposed replacing its current Municipal Service Benefit Unit system with one county-wide taxing unit, changing the way all of

Charlotte's unincorporated residents pay for their roads and infrastructure maintenance.

Charlotte has 31 street and drainage MSBUs that tax residents in a community for only their specified service projects. County staff presented a

plan to commissioners Tuesday that would replace the neighborhood-based assessment system with one uniform Municipal Service Taxing Unit.

With some MSBUs outperforming others, the county has fallen behind

on its road maintenance. The MSTU proposal would allow Charlotte to catch up by subsidizing the weaker neighborhoods and giving public works more control, Assistant County Administrator Ray Sandrock said.

"It's a dramatic change to the more traditional system we see across the country," Sandrock said. "We're in a situation where what we have now just isn't working."

County staff presented two options to commissioners Tuesday regarding

how the MSTU could be funded, including a set 2.3874 millage rate or using other sources such as the Capital Projects fund and gas tax to craft a 1.9173 millage rate.

The county anticipates

UNITS | P6

Distemper affecting raccoons in Charlotte

By **STEVE REILLY**
STAFF WRITER

Charlotte County Animal Control officials have been receiving reports of ill raccoons from concerned residents worried that either they or their pets may be in danger.

Based on recent calls, Lt. Brian Jones, the county's animal control division manager, said an outbreak of a distemper virus strain appears to be infecting raccoons throughout Charlotte. The raccoons, he said, can be infected through contact with an infected animal's bodily fluids or droppings.

"This is a concern for us about (dogs) that are kept outside," Jones said.

But while pets, such as dogs, are at risk — humans are not, Jones said.

"It can't be transferred to humans," he said.

Sarasota County Animal Control officials reported no similar increases in the number of ill raccoons.

The infected raccoons generally aren't aggressive, but display behaviors that make them appear disorientated or lethargic, sometimes appearing as if the animal is intoxicated. The animals can have runny noses and eyes. However, Jones cautioned against direct contact with an ill raccoon since the symptoms can be similar to an animal infected with rabies.

He encourages Charlotte County residents to call Animal Control at 941-833-5690. Animal Control will evaluate its response on a case-by-case basis.

"Most raccoons won't survive (distemper)," Jones said. Dogs and ferrets can be infected with the same strains of distemper that affect raccoons, but cats cannot.

RACCOONS | P6

Hour workout spelled out for older women

By **LINDSEY TANNER**
AP MEDICAL WRITER

CHICAGO — Rev up the treadmill: Sobering new research spells out just how much exercise women need to keep the flab off as they age — and it's a lot.

At least an hour of moderate activity a day is needed for older women at a healthy weight who aren't dieting. For those who are already overweight — and that's most American women — even more exercise is called for to avoid gaining weight without eating less, the study results suggest.

"We all have to work at it. If it were easy to be skinny, we would all be skinny," said John Foreyt, a behavioral medicine expert who reviewed the study but wasn't involved in the research.

Brisk walking, leisurely bicycling and golfing are all examples of moderate exercise. But don't throw in the towel if you can't do those things for at least an hour a day. Even a little exercise is good for your health even if it won't make you thin, the researchers said.

Their findings are based on 34,079 middle-aged

WORKOUT | P6

HEALTH CARE OVERHAUL

Law of the land



AP PHOTOS

Marcelas Owens of Seattle, left, Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., right, and others, look on as President Barack Obama signs the health care bill in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Tuesday.

President Obama signs health care bill

By **JENNIFER LOVEN**
AP WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON — Claiming a historic triumph that could define his presidency, a jubilant Barack Obama signed a massive, nearly \$1 trillion health care overhaul on Tuesday that will for the first time cement insurance coverage as the right of every U.S. citizen and begin to reshape the way virtually all Americans receive and pay for treatment.

After more than a year of hyperpartisan struggle — and numerous near-death moments for the measure — Obama declared "a new season in



President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden smile in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Tuesday, before the president signed the health care bill.

America" as he sealed a victory denied to a line of presidents stretching back more than half a century. Democratic lawmakers cheered him on, giving the White

House signing ceremony a rally-like atmosphere as they shouted and snapped photos with pocket cameras or cell phones.

Not everyone was

cheering. The Democrats pushed the bill through Congress without GOP support, and the Republicans said Tuesday that those Democratic lawmakers would pay dearly in this November's elections. Opinion polls show the public remains skeptical, too, and Obama will fly to Iowa on Thursday for the first of a number of appearances that will be more like a continuing sales job than a victory lap.

Aside from the huge, real-life changes in store for many Americans, the White House hopes the victory — even as a

LAW | P6

13 attorneys general sue Washington

By **BRENDAN FARRINGTON**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

TALLAHASSEE — The White House says it isn't worried that 13 state attorneys general are suing to overturn the massive health care overhaul, and many legal experts agree the effort is futile.

But the lawsuit, filed in federal court seven minutes after President Barack Obama signed the 10-year, \$938 billion health care bill, underscores the divisiveness of the issue and the political rancor that has surrounded it.

Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum led the effort to file the suit that claims Congress doesn't have the constitutional right to force people to get health coverage. It also says the federal government is violating the Constitution by forcing a mandate on the states without providing resources to pay for it.

"To that I say, 'Bring it on,'" said White House domestic policy chief Melody Barnes, who cited similar suits filed over



AP PHOTO

Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum announces that he has filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Treasury, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

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CHARLIE SAYS...
I wonder if she knits gator sweaters.
These nights get awfully chilly.