

NCAA brackets inside!



Roddick batters Blake, eyes Isner



mydesert.com/bnp

■ Photo galleries from the men's and women's matches

■ Live blogs and tweets from our staff writers and tennis tournament players

■ Ticket information, daily schedule, key matches of day

The Desert Sun

MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2011 • SERVING THE COACHELLA VALLEY SINCE 1927 • BREAKING NEWS AT MYDESERT.COM • 75¢ A GANNETT COMPANY

CENSUS 2010

Population changing, leadership looks same

City halls soon may see more Latinos, say experts

BY ERICA FELCI

The Desert Sun

An influx of Latinos in Riverside County over the past decade is not reflected in the desert's political landscape, though some expect that transformation is on the horizon.

Census data released last week show Latinos have become the county's largest ethnic group, replacing whites for the first time.

Yet with the exception of the eastern Coachella Valley, Latinos are largely unrepresented in the leadership of local city halls and in Riverside County's elected administration.

Community leaders and experts say that's a disparity that's likely to change.

Political clubs and candidates are increasingly targeting the Latino community with their voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts.

And that increased engagement ultimately could bring out potential candidates for political office.

"It definitely sets up the potential for the political landscape to change and become more reflective of our community," Coachella Mayor Eduardo Garcia said.

The explosion of the Latino population helped drive growth in Riverside County, which outpaced every other county in California in the last decade.

The number of Latinos countywide jumped nearly 78 percent since 2000. They now comprise 45.5 percent of the county's total population.

The demographic shift is especially notable in the Coachella Valley, where both sides of the political aisle have eyed Latinos as an attractive voting bloc.

Latinos tend to align themselves with the Democratic party, especially when it comes to issues like education and immigration.

But they tend to be more conservative on social issues — in 2008, Latinos were credited with helping ban same-sex marriage in California — which appeals to Republican candidates.

"Electoral change is a little bit slower than population change," said Louis DeSipio, an associate political science professor and chairman of Chicano/Latino studies at the University of California, Irvine.

"Just becoming the numerical majority doesn't change representation in an area. ... It's up to the parties and other political institutions to reach out to communities and encourage them to participate."

In local campaigns where not much information is known about the candidates, DeSipio said research indicates that ethnicity can play a role with voters.

But in larger campaigns, voters base their decisions on the issues and not ethnic background.

Please see CENSUS, A10

DISASTER IN JAPAN



KYODO NEWS

People walk amid the rubble Sunday in Rikuzentakata, Iwate prefecture, northern Japan, two days after the powerful earthquake-triggered tsunami hit the country's east coast.

Death toll at 10K, rising

Prime minister: nation in worst crisis since WWII

BY ERIC TALMADGE AND TODD PITMAN

The Associated Press

SOMA, JAPAN — Rescue workers used chain saws and hand picks today to dig out bodies in Japan's devastated coastal towns, as Asia's richest nation faced a growing humanitarian, nuclear and economic crisis in the aftermath of a massive earthquake and tsunami.

Millions of people spent a third night without water, food or heating in near-freezing temperatures along the devastated northeastern coast. Also, the containment building of a second nuclear reactor exploded because of hydrogen buildup while the stock market plunged over the likelihood of huge losses by Japanese industries including big names such as Toyota and Honda.

More than 10,000 people are estimated to have died.

Please see JAPAN, A10

Second blast at stricken nuke plant

BY ERIC TALMADGE AND MARI YAMAGUCHI

The Associated Press

SOMA, JAPAN — The second hydrogen explosion in three days rocked Japan's stricken Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant today, sending a massive column of smoke into the air and wounding six workers. It was not immediately clear how much — if any — radiation had been released.

The explosion at the plant's Unit 3, which authorities have been frantically trying to cool following a system failure in the wake of a massive earthquake and tsunami, triggered an order for hundreds of people to stay indoors, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano said.

The blast follows a similar explosion Saturday that took place at the

Please see NUCLEAR, A10



DAISUKE TOMITA THE YOMIURI SHIMBUN

Hospital patients who might have been exposed to radiation are carried into the compound of Fukushima Gender Equality Centre in Nihonmatsu, Japan, on Sunday morning after being evacuated from the hospital in Futaba town near the troubled Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power station.

MORE NEWS INSIDE

■ International assistance efforts mobilize quickly to help Japan. U.S., U.N. and even Japan's rival China offer aid. **A10**

■ In the United States, harbors and marinas in California and Oregon bore the brunt of the tsunami damage, estimated by authorities to be in the millions of dollars. **A6**

■ A Palm Springs woman has learned that her son stationed with the U.S. Navy in Japan is safe, although she's been able to talk to him only once since the disastrous earthquake Friday. **B2**

Follow the story

Check in with us online today at mydesert.com to read updates on the crisis as it develops.

INTODAY'S PAPER

Sex sting pleas today

14 defendants in Palm Springs case expected to avoid jail time; most may not have to register as offenders. **B1**

Advice	B11	Movies	B8
Bridge	B11	Obituaries	B6
Comics	B10	Opinion	B7
Crossword	B11	Sudoku	B11
Entertainment	B8	TV	B8
Lottery	B6	Weather	B12



The Desert Sun is printed using recycled paper



0 40901 08201 9



Monday Newsmaker

Author Tod Goldberg, director of the master of fine arts in creative writing program at the UCR Graduate Center in Palm Desert, has seen the future, and it'll change the way you read books. Hint: Might not be on paper. **B7**

GOODMORNING!

Don't forget the sunblock

87° **58°**
high low

Libyan rebels pounded

Gadhafi forces shell oil town as troops advance. **A3**

Reverse mortgage loans

WELLS FARGO HOME MORTGAGE

The reverse mortgage loan program allows homeowners at least 62 years of age to tap into the equity in their home.

- Convert your home equity into tax-free funds¹
- This program helps senior homeowners maintain their current lifestyle and helps keep them in their home



For more information, call today!

Carol J. Buzzard
760-564-1287

1. Consult a tax advisor. Call for more detailed program information. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is a division of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. © 2011 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. AS421483 2/11-5/11

To subscribe or report a delivery problem, call (800) 834-6052 or subscribe@mydesert.com

