

Herald-Tribune

MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2011 | 75¢

HERALDTRIBUNE.COM



Seeing Sarasota's sights, by foot



Runners participating in the 6th Annual First Watch Sarasota Half Marathon travel over the John Ringling Causeway in Sarasota on Sunday morning. **STAFF PHOTO / DAN WAGNER**

DIAMOND GIRL
One runner wins a ring, not a medal. **1B**

TOP FINISHERS
North Port runner was fastest woman. **1C**

ONLINE: For a gallery of photos, go to heraldtribune.com/photos.

WRECK CLAIMS 4 YOUNG LIVES



From top left: Andrew Monroe, Sean Leonard, and Kelly Janis were killed, as well as Sean's sister, Jessica.



PRE-DAWN ACCIDENT: Two Riverview alumni and two SMA students are killed

By **JASON WITZ** and **CHRISTOPHER O'DONNELL**
chris.odonnell@heraldtribune.com

SARASOTA COUNTY — Best friends Sean Leonard and Andrew Monroe spent Saturday night in Tampa celebrating Sean's 19th birthday.

After they returned to Sarasota, they picked up Sean's 14-year-old sister Jessica and her 15-year-old

friend, Kelly Janis, both students at Sarasota Military Academy.

None of them returned home alive.

Sean Leonard lost control of a 2007 Chevy Trailblazer on Wilkinson Road near Cattlemen Road at about 5:30 a.m. Sunday, a Florida Highway Patrol report states.

The SUV spun across the road and smashed into a cinderblock sound barrier wall before tipping onto its side.

All four died at the scene.

An initial FHP investigation showed alcohol was not involved in the crash. Kelly was the only one not wearing a seatbelt.

Friends and teachers expressed shock and grief as news of the tragedy spread by word of mouth and also through cyberspace. Friends of the teenagers visited the scene of the accident to leave flowers. Many learned about the tragedy via the social networking site Facebook.

"Sean was almost like a brother to me," said friend Jesse Wynn, 18. "He got to be 19 for about five hours."

Andrew and Sean both graduated from Riverview High in Sarasota in 2010, and both played for the Rams soccer team.

Members of the Riverview soccer team gathered at Andrew's house Sunday to support the family.

Sarasota Military Academy is planning a memorial for Jessica and Kelly this morning before classes begin. A lone bagpiper will play "Amazing Grace."

Andrew, who played goalkeeper, was especially devoted to soccer.

The Florida Youth Soccer Association named Andrew, a goalkeeper for Riverview, a 2010 Hackworth Scholar. He was attending

See ACCIDENT on 5A

Japan's crisis not contained

TOLL CLIMBS

A police chief says 10,000 may be dead in just one hard-hit district.

NUCLEAR RISK

Using seawater, workers try to cool overheating reactors.

RESCUE EFFORTS

Nation mobilizes 100,000 troops to help rescue trapped victims.

SAVING POWER

Utility calls on citizens to limit their use of electricity.



A woman reacts Sunday to the damage caused by the earthquake and the ensuing tsunami, in Natori, Japan.

ASAHI SHIMBUN / TOSHIUKI TSUNENARI

INSIDE

RECOVERING

In one Japanese city, hints of a return to normalcy in some parts of town, but scenes of devastation along the coast. **2A**

A REAL DANGER

In a country with plenty of nuclear plants, experts are fighting a battle to prevent nightmare scenarios, including one described as "Chernobyl on steroids." **7A**

QUAKE AFTERMATH: Nuclear and humanitarian emergencies continue

By **CHICO HARLAN**
The Washington Post

TOKYO — Overwhelmed by a still-growing catastrophe, Japanese authorities today struggled to reach buried survivors and the missing, faced roadblocks in delivering aid and raced to contain an expanding nuclear emergency.

Prime Minister Naoto Kan called the crisis the country's toughest challenge since World War II, and said that decimated towns along the northeastern coastline were not yet getting the food and supplies they needed.

A series of unstable nuclear plants across the country threatened to compound the nation's difficulties, which started with Friday's double-barreled disasters — first an 8.9-magnitude earthquake, then a tsunami.

At the Fukushima Daiichi nu-

clear plant, a containment building housing an overheated reactor exploded Saturday. And a second explosion rocked the nuclear complex today, this time destroying an outer building at unit 3. But officials asserted that the essential containment structures of the 37-year-old reactor

See JAPAN on 6A

ONLINE: Get the latest news from Japan at heraldtribune.com and find a gallery of additional photos at heraldtribune.com/photos.

State pension system more generous to some

RETIREMENT: Guess whom state leaders have given the best benefits to

By **SALLY KESTIN**
Sun Sentinel

For the hundreds of thousands of public workers in Florida's statewide pension plan, not everyone is treated equally — the best benefits go not to teachers or rank-and-file office workers, but to a small minority of high earners including judges and elected officials.

State and local officeholders are entitled by law to special treatment that allows them to accrue benefits faster and retire with bigger payments than most

other workers. The separate class was created and modified over the years by the Florida Legislature, whose 160 members are also covered by it.

Some lawmakers now think the inequalities are wrong.

"We, as elected officials and judges, should be looked at no differently than any other state employee or county or city employee," said state Sen. Mike Fasano, a Republican from New Port Richey, who has proposed legislation to scale back the benefits given to elected officials and judges. "It's not fair."

Among retirees in the state retirement system, former elected officers collected an average pension of \$42,414 last year, nearly three times more than general

employees. And some do far better.

Rich Crotty, a former state legislator, property appraiser and mayor of Orange County, left office in January with a lump sum of \$365,584 and an annual pension of nearly \$127,000. Crotty, 62, quickly found another job, working for Crossman & Co., an Orlando-based retail leasing and management firm.

He could not be reached for comment, despite messages.

Frederica Wilson earned pension benefits as a teacher, principal, school board member and state legislator before being elected last fall to Congress, representing parts of Broward and Miami-Dade counties. In October 2008, she got a lump sum of \$354,912 on

top of a state pension check.

Wilson, 68, now collects retirement benefits of nearly \$70,000 a year — plus her salary of \$174,000 as a Democratic member.

See PENSIONS on 2A

HOW SAFE IS YOUR BANK?

Fewer are expected to fail this year than last. **Business Weekly**



ONLINE: For the latest developments in this story, go to heraldtribune.com.

INSIDE

NATION
AMAZON UNDER PRESSURE
States struggling with budget shortfalls are trying to get the online retailer to collect sales taxes. **3A**

LOCAL
BUILDING UP SARASOTA
Stylish hotels helped transform Sarasota from a backwater town into a modern city. **1B**



HERALDTRIBUNE.COM/MUGSHOTS
ARREST PHOTOS ONLINE
View galleries of booking mugs from jails in Sarasota, Manatee and Charlotte counties.

SNN LOCAL NEWS 6
TRAGEDY IN SARASOTA
We'll have the latest developments in the tragic accident that took the lives of four teenagers on Sunday.

Classified12C
Comics10B
Lottery2A
Movie Log9B

Obituaries8B
Opinion8A
People9B
Sports1C



OUR 86TH YEAR
NUMBER 162 4 SECTIONS