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**MARKETING ENROLLMENT**  
Roman Catholic schools seeing a boost after years of decline. **D10**



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# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

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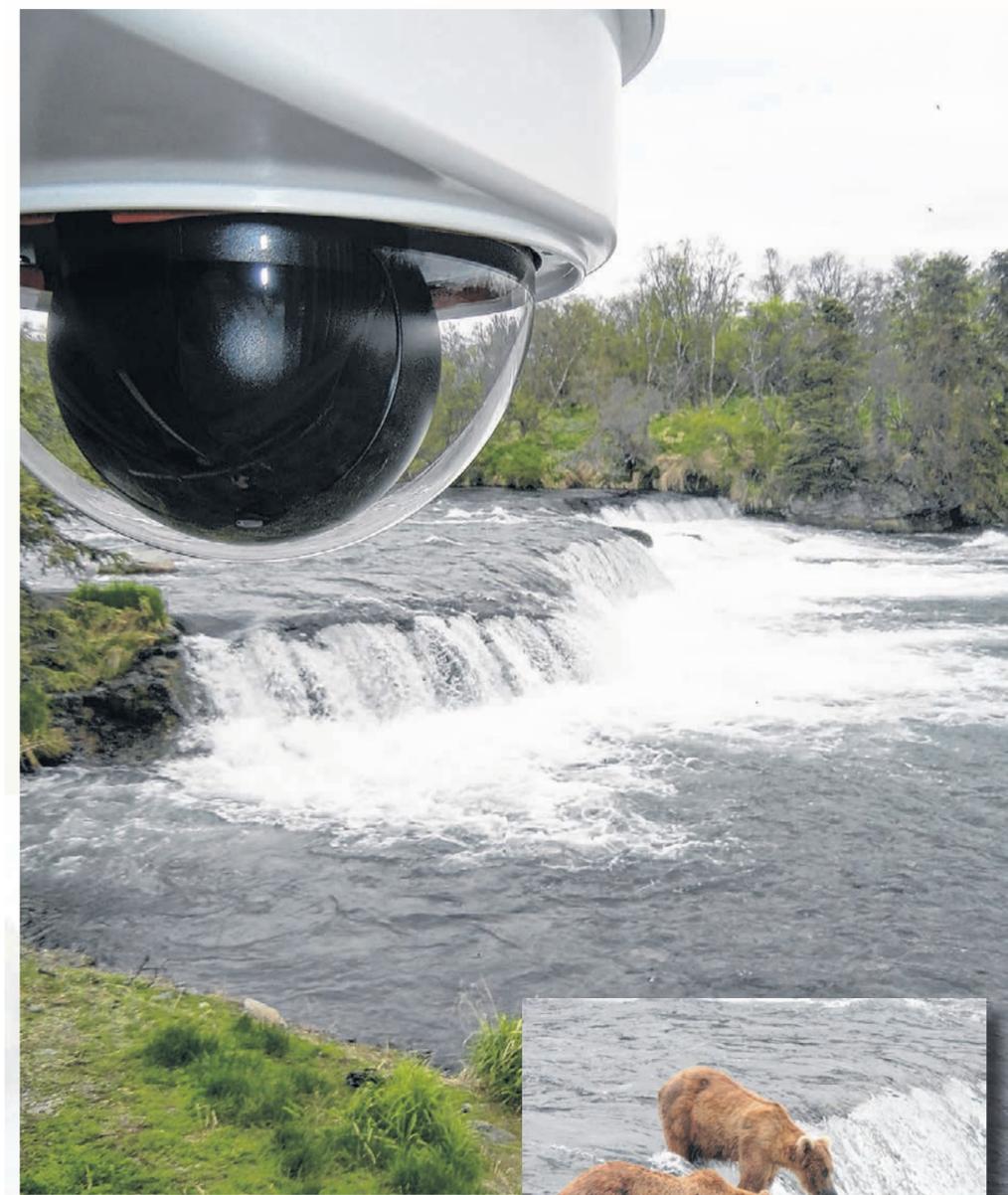
**'FLYING SQUIRREL'**  
Gabrielle Douglas wins gold during the gymnastics individual all-around. See **C1**.

## OLYMPIC GAMES XXX

Gold, silver and bronze are stacking up for team USA. See **C4** for the latest medal count.

■ Phelps wins over Lochte in his final Olympics.  
■ San Pasqual High graduate leads the U.S. swim team. **C1**

## SOLANA BEACH | COMPANY HAS ITS EYE ON ALASKAN PARK



Above, a remote digital camera sits in a weatherproof mount overlooking Brooks Falls in Katmai National Park in Alaska. At right, brown bears wait for salmon swimming upstream at the national park. Photos courtesy IP Video Specialists



# STREAMING BEARS

Solana Beach company behind popular cameras

By **TOM PFINGSTEN**  
For the North County Times

Every time someone logs on at [www.Explore.org](http://www.Explore.org) to watch brown bears fishing in Alaska — and more than 1 million viewers have since July 23 — the pixels of cascading water, lumbering bears and shimmering salmon are delivered through a network installed and maintained by Tim and Tiffany Sears

of Solana Beach. It is a network that, just a few years ago, would have been impossible. First there are the webcams — three of them, aimed in the general direction of the bears' favored fishing grounds around Brooks Falls in Katmai National Park. The cameras are powered by an array of solar panels and wind turbines, and feed images to the

Internet via a fixed wireless network that relays data to the nearest town. In late June, the Searses, who own IP Video Specialists, traveled to the Alaskan peninsula and spent two weeks in Katmai National Park with two employees, establishing a system that could be relied upon to send images around the world all summer long. The first step, Tiffany Sears explained this week,

was to bring Internet access to the community of King Salmon, home to 374 people as of the 2010 Census. Explore.org, an arm of the Annenberg Foundation, paid an Alaska telecommunications company to connect the town, she said. "It was a complicated project because there're no roads to get to this national park," Sears said. "We had

See **Bears, A5**

## SAN ONOFRE

# Vote on nuke plant probe postponed

State utility commission pressed to open investigation

By **MICHAEL R. BLOOD**  
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The head of the California Public Utilities Commission recommended Thursday that the agency delay for several months an investigation into soaring costs tied to the damaged San Onofre nuclear power plant. At issue is who is going to pay a bill that has reached \$165 million so far for repairs, inspections and replacement electricity for a plant with crippled steam generators. San Onofre hasn't produced power since Jan. 31 and it's not clear when, or if, the twin

reactors will return to service. Meeting in San Francisco, the commission postponed for the second time voting on a proposed order requiring owners Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas & Electric Co. to disclose the potential economic hit for ratepayers from the long-running shutdown. According to a statement, commission President Michael R. Peevey recommended that the panel wait until November to initiate an investigation, after Edison is required to notify the agency if a plant has been out of service for nine months. He said the agency is working on options for power supplies for 2013, in the event the plant remains offline into next summer. As costs and questions about the plant's future

See **Nuke, A7**

## CARLSBAD

# New crosswalk slashes wait time for pedestrians

By **BARBARA HENRY**  
[bhenry@nctimes.com](mailto:bhenry@nctimes.com)

A walk to the beach from downtown Carlsbad got a little bit quicker this week as the city's first diagonal crosswalk was installed at the busy intersection of Carlsbad Boulevard and Carlsbad Village Drive. City workers restriped the pavement and reprogrammed the intersection's traffic signals Wednesday afternoon. On Thursday, many pedestrians appeared baffled and then thrilled by the changes. "I've never seen a diagonal before," a man from Missouri told his wife as they watched people walk directly across the center of the intersection while all

vehicle traffic paused. Another guy said he was eager to give it a try. When the pedestrian crossing sign changed from the "wait" red hand to the white "walk" pedestrian symbol, he told his companion, "Let's go!" and charged across the center. "I like this better, actually," one woman said as she made the crossing. City Deputy Transportation Director Bryan Jones said the crosswalk "separates the conflicts (between motorists and pedestrians)." And this is a place where there is plenty of potential for conflict. City traffic studies show that 30,000 to 35,000 vehicles and up to 6,000

See **Crosswalk, A8**

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## REGION

# SD museum had hand in drug hoax

## It helped fund, facilitate group

By **MORGAN COOK**  
[mcook@nctimes.com](mailto:mcook@nctimes.com)

The San Diego Museum of Art said Thursday that it helped fund and facilitate an elaborate hoax by activist groups that earlier this week sent various media organizations fraudulent news releases that appeared to be from the U.S. attorney in San Diego. Americans for Safe Access, a medical marijuana advocacy group that is active in San

Diego County, eventually claimed responsibility for the hoax, which involved an actor, a made-up government watchdog group and two phony news releases purportedly from U.S. Attorney Laura Duffy. The first fake release announced that Duffy's office intended to close local pharmacies where there were high rates of prescription drug abuse. At a Tuesday conference, Duffy appeared

See **Hoax, A7**

# IRS missing billions in ID theft

## Treasury audit: IRS failed to detect fraudulent claims

By **JOSH LEDERMAN**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service may have delivered more than \$5 billion in refund checks to identity thieves who filed fraudulent tax returns for 2011, Treasury Department investigators said Thursday. They estimate an additional \$21 billion could make its way to ID thieves' pockets over the next five years. The IRS is detecting far fewer fraudulent refund claims than actually occur, according to a government audit that warned the widespread problem could undermine public trust in the U.S. tax system. Although the

IRS detected about 940,000 fraudulent returns for last year claiming \$6.5 billion in refunds, there were potentially an additional 1.5 million undetected cases of thieves seeking refunds after assuming the identity of a dead person, child or someone else who normally wouldn't file a tax return. In one example, investigators found a single address in Lansing, Mich., that was used to file 2,137 separate tax returns. The IRS issued more than \$3.3 billion in refunds to that address. Three addresses in Florida, the epicenter of the identity theft crisis, filed more than 500 returns totaling more than \$1 million in refunds for each address.



**Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Douglas Shulman testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington on Thursday before the House Oversight Committee.**  
J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE | AP  
In another troubling scenario, hundreds of refunds were deposited into the same

See **IRS, A7**

