

In the know



BACK TO SCHOOL SALES TAX BREAK IS THIS WEEKEND

The tax holiday that begins today and runs through Sunday offers savings of 6 to 7 percent on clothes, shoes and accessories. Get the details. **Business, 4B**

Ernesto grows into a tropical storm

The strengthening system is in the Atlantic and expected to become a hurricane next week, probably headed toward Mexico. **World, 2A**

St. Petersburg cops oust three

A board sends two officers and another employee out the door Thursday for violating various department policies in separate incidents. **Local, 1B**

Bad news from the power company

Duke Energy's CEO says the \$1.3 billion price to fix the crippled Crystal River nuclear plant is likely too low. **Local, 1B**

Annan quits as peace envoy

Frustrated by the stubborn Syrian conflict, Kofi Annan resigns his role, casting new doubts on a diplomatic solution. **World, 3A**

Controversy pays off for Chick-fil-A

The kerfuffle set off by the company executive's public stance against same-sex marriage results in a one-day sales record. **Nation, 7A**

Hillsborough to invite Rays to talk

County leaders vote to ask the team to discuss the future. St. Petersburg Mayor Bill Foster shakes his head. **Local, 1B**

Beautiful with just a bit of beastly

The stage rendition of the classic Disney tale is not perfect, but its high points are wondrous. **Etc, 2B**

Bucs have a hit man in Carl Nicks

"If I could maul somebody on every play, that's what I'd do," the 6-foot-5, 343-pound guard says. **Sports, 1C**

Correction

With 15 gold medals, two silver and two bronze, U.S. Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps broke the record for the most medals. The breakdown of his medals was reported incorrectly on 1A Wednesday.

TODAY'S WEATHER

A shower

8 a.m. 76° Noon 86° 4 p.m. 92° 8 p.m. 86°

30% chance of rain
More, back page of Sports

tampabay.com

All about the Bucs

The season hasn't started, but there's still lots of Bucs action on the field and off. Get all the latest news, photos and video at bucs.tampabay.com.

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COMING SUNDAY | RNC SPECIAL SECTION

Ready? The herd is coming!

Be prepared for the Republican National Convention, Aug. 27-30.



Tampa Bay Times

FLORIDA'S BEST NEWSPAPER

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 2012 | \$1

Public denied Pier vote

The City Council decides against a referendum on the future of the iconic pyramid.

BY WAVENEY ANN MOORE
Times Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG — Voters will not have a chance to save St. Petersburg's Pier.

There will be no question on the Nov. 6 ballot about whether the city should keep its iconic inverted pyramid. Nothing about

whether to replace it with the winning design from an international competition. And no suggestion that the city simply start from scratch, again.

In a 6-2 vote Thursday, the St. Petersburg City Council decided not to hold a public vote on the Pier after listening to pleas from

both sides. It had been something of a cliffhanger as council members vacillated over the issue in recent weeks, eventually deciding to put it to a vote and then getting mired in what the ballot question — or questions — should be.

Council members Wengay

Newton and Karl Nurse were the only ones who wanted residents to weigh in on whether to save the ailing Pier.

Before Thursday's meeting, Charlie Gerdes, Steve Kornell and Bill Dudley also supported the referendum while Jeff Daner, Leslie Curran and Jim Ken-

nedy wanted to move forward with the new Lens design.

A petition drive launched almost two years ago was the catalyst for the proposed referendum. VoteonthePier.com amassed more than 20,000 signatures from people seeking
» See PIER, 12A

london 2012

FLIP, FLY — FAME



Photos by Getty Images

U.S. gymnast Gabby Douglas appears to fly over the balance beam in the women's individual all-around final Thursday. **Story, 8C**

Gabby wins gold, which is just a start

LONDON — She was no longer leaping. She was flying.

Gabby Douglas was so high, impossibly high. She kept racing across the mat, and she would launch herself toward the top of the building, and she would spin and twist and flip. She was parachutist high, Flying Wallenda high, touch-the-sky high.

In the end, that was the question. Of all the gymnasts who had competed before her, did any of them reach the heights Douglas did Thursday? Has any American gymnast ever had the potential to seed



GARY SHELTON
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head and every bit of joy in her soul. At that moment, you could
» See GABBY, 4A

the dreams of more young gymnasts?

She was no longer smiling. She had become a human spotlight.

She beamed so wide and so high, and you could see every tooth in her

Antitax group goes for gold in grandstanding

BY LOUIS JACOBSON
Times Staff Writer

It was probably inevitable, but even the Olympics has been swept into the national political debate.

The antitax crusading Americans for Tax Reform said this week that U.S. Olympic gold medalists like Gabby Douglas, Ryan Lochte and Missy Franklin will owe the Internal Revenue Service up to \$9,000 in taxes because of the value of the medal and the prize money that comes with it.



The claim quickly got the attention of U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., who on Wednesday introduced the Olympic Tax Elimination Act. The legislation would — as you expect — exempt U.S. Olympic medal winners from paying taxes on their hard-earned medals.

Will a big tax bill be waiting for America's superstars when they get home from London?
» See TAXES, 4A



A RECORD IN GOLD

Michael Phelps wins his 16th career gold medal and his 20th overall. **Sports, 1C**

AROUND THE GAMES

U.S. women's rowers take gold; men's basketball team sets a record. **Coverage, 8-9C**

SPECIAL REPORT

More coverage, Twitter feeds and TV schedule at tampabay.com/londonolympics.

A debate of sorts, just a few hours apart

The president and Marco Rubio, both in the Orlando area, each talk about what's at stake.

BY ADAM C. SMITH
Times Political Editor

WINTER PARK — For as much as they disagree on policy, Barack Obama and Marco Rubio have an awful lot in common.

Both rose from obscurity to become inspirational national superstars in their parties. Both have stories that make people feel good about America: the son of Cuban immigrants, a Kmart

stock clerk mother and bartender father, elected to the U.S. Senate; a black man, son of a single mother, elected president of the United States.

And each can exhilarate a crowd like few other American politicians. Imagine Obama, 50, and Rubio, 41, in a debate.

In a sense, they had one Thurs-

day as the president held a campaign rally laying out the stakes of the election at Rollins College in Winter Park, just hours after Rubio did the same in nearby Orlando as a surrogate for Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

"Never before in my lifetime
» See DEBATE, 13A



President Barack Obama spoke Thursday at Rollins College in Winter Park; Sen. Marco Rubio spoke for GOP candidate Mitt Romney earlier at an Orlando business.

Layoffs coming for 474 at TIA

An airplane maintenance company says it must cut its workforce.

BY JEFF HARRINGTON
AND JAMAL THALJI
Times Staff Writers

TAMPA — The bay area is about to get hit with one of the single-largest layoffs in the state this year: PEMCO World Air Services is planning to fire 474 workers at its aircraft maintenance complex at Tampa International Airport.

PEMCO is the largest airplane maintenance and repair company headquartered at Tampa International. But the company said it has no choice but to start gutting its local workforce within a matter of days after losing a major contract with United Airlines, according to a letter PEMCO sent to local and state officials on Thursday.

"We're saddened by this turn of events," said Tampa International CEO Joe Lopano in a prepared statement. "No one likes to see layoffs."

PEMCO blamed United's "recent sudden cancellation" of all its maintenance work for the "sizable workforce reduction" at its facilities at 4102 and 4202 N West Shore Blvd.

"While PEMCO would have preferred giving more notice, this loss of a key customer's business was not foreseen by the company, which has had a long relationship with UAL," company director of human resources Colleen Picard wrote. "Although PEMCO's Tampa facilities will continue operations, these layoff(s) are expected to be permanent."

The news comes just five months after PEMCO filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization, blaming a tough econ-
» See LAYOFFS, 11A

More bad news?

A defense contractor may have to lay off 200 workers at MacDill Air Force Base. **Business, 4B**