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WEATHER (NOT) PERMITTING

Republican National Convention cancels Monday program due to tropical storm. A3



SUNNY

High 80s, low 60s See A2

THE SUNDAY



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MILITARY

Marines to launch study of suicides

By MARK WALKER mlwalker@nctimes.com

With active-duty Marines taking their own lives at a near-record pace this year, officials are launching a long-planned study of what troops who have committed suicide were doing in the days leading up to their deaths.

Officials are also taking a deep look at the service's "Never Leave a Marine

Behind" suicide prevention program to see whether it needs tailoring.

The two actions come as the Marine Corps reported eight suicides in July, the highest number recorded this year.

Those deaths raised this year's self-inflicted-death toll to 32, the same number recorded for all of 2011.

If the monthly trend continues, the Marine

Corps could match or exceed the record 52 active-duty troop suicides recorded in 2009.

The "forensic" study of recent suicides is designed as a detailed examination of what the troops were doing throughout each day leading to the event.

"We're really anxious to see what we can learn from reaching out to family members and friends and using (investigative

reports," said Todd Shuttleworth, who oversees the Marine Corps' suicide prevention program from the service's headquarters in Quantico, Va.

The wealth of information the study aims to generate will help guide officials in evaluating current efforts and shaping changes or new initiatives, he said.

See Suicides, A6



A Marine recruit takes a swig of water from his canteen during a training session at Camp Pendleton in 2002. HAYNE PALMOUR IV | North County Times file photo

REGION | FARMERS SCRAMBLE TO FIND WORKERS



Above, a farmworker carries a ladder into a grove of Valencia orange trees as he joins other laborers picking fruit Wednesday in Pauma Valley. Below, Jesus Cruz picks oranges. DON BOOMER | dboomer@nctimes.com

LABOR SHORTAGE

Tougher border enforcement, sluggish economy blamed

By PAT MAIO North County Times

This broken record has been playing for years: Every spring, farmers begin to complain about a shortage of workers needed to harvest fruit, vegetables or flowers.

But this year, something happened that many local agricultural experts say they've never seen before — and feared was coming.

Mike A. Mellano, whose family has grown commercial flowers in Morro Hills, one of Oceanside's last large pockets of agricultural land, said he fell short by about 10 to 15 percent of his labor needs to cut more than 50 varieties of flowers on his 400-acre spread.

Consequently, some of the product at Mellano & Co., which was established in 1925, was left to die in the field, he said.

"It was significant," Mellano said of the losses. "We experienced a brief shortage (of farmworkers) about four or five years ago, but it wasn't as long-term as this one. That was for 30 days or so, but this one is pretty significant. "When the crop comes in, we need labor now, not two or three weeks down the road. By the time we can get the pieces of the puzzle together, the market is gone," he said.

Mellano said he has been in discussions with farm bureaus across California regarding the labor shortages, and the message has been the same.

"This is the first time anyone remembers significant and severe labor shortages reported up and down the state. In the past, they've been limited on a regional basis," Mellano said.

See Shortage, A5



NEIL ARMSTRONG 1930-2012

First man to walk on moon dies

Astronaut gave world 'giant leap for mankind'

By LISA CORNWELL and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Neil Armstrong was a soft-spoken engineer who became a global hero when as a steely nerved pilot he made "one giant leap for mankind" with a small step onto the moon.

The modest man, who had people on Earth entranced and awed from almost a quarter-million miles away, but credited others for the feat, died Saturday.

He was 82. Armstrong died following complications resulting from cardiovascular procedures, his family said in a statement.



Neil Armstrong Associated Press file photo

Armstrong had a bypass operation this month, according to NASA. His family didn't say where he died; he had lived in suburban Cincinnati.

Armstrong commanded the Apollo 11 spacecraft that landed on the moon July 20, 1969, capping the most daring of the 20th century's scientific expeditions. His first words after becoming the first person to set foot on the surface are etched in history books and the memories of those who heard them in a live broadcast.

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," Armstrong said.

Armstrong insisted later that he had said "a" before man, but said he, too, couldn't hear it in the version that went to the world.

In those first few moments on the moon, during the climax of a heated space race

See Armstrong, A9

Some senators voted to ban gifts, then accepted them

By WILL EVANS California Watch

Sometimes, free stuff is just too hard to give up.

Even after state senators overwhelmingly approved a ban on certain gifts to state lawmakers, some of the same legislators kept accepting them.

On May 31, Sen. Anthony Cannella, R-Modesto, and most of his colleagues voted to prevent themselves from receiving free concert, sports and theme park tickets from businesses that lobby the state. Yet in June, Cannella received tickets to the U.S. Open golf

championship from AT&T, worth \$420.

Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Van Nuys, also voted for the ban, then accepted \$340 in Walt Disney World tickets. Sen. Curren Price, D-Los Angeles, another supporter of the ban, picked up \$168 worth of Disneyland tickets courtesy of The Walt Disney Co.

Cannella wrote in an email that he supported the bill because "there is merit to restricting the types of gifts that can be given to the legislature."

"I can only speak for myself in that if I am given tickets to a sporting event, I

am not influenced by those who provide them to me," he said. "I make decisions based upon what is in the best interest of my constituents and the people of California."

Padilla and Price did not respond to requests for comment.

Sen. Joel Anderson cast the lone Senate vote against the legislation.

Anderson said Tuesday that he favors full public disclosure and that lawmakers would have found their way around an outright ban on all gifts.

See Senators, A7

REGION

Bill would help middle-class students squeezed by fee hikes



Palomar College student Justin Janich, 18, talks about his inability to qualify for financial aid. BILL WECHTER | bwechter@nctimes.com

By DEBORAH SULLIVAN BRENNAN dbrennan@nctimes.com

With good grades and a competitive SAT score, recent Rancho Bernardo High School graduate Justin Janich had aimed to attend a prestigious University of California campus.

He switched plans after completing financial aid paperwork, however, and instead enrolled at Palomar College in San Marcos to save money.

See Students, A6

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