FOIA Marker

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Records Management, White House Office of
Subject Files - PP (Presidential Personal)

Stack: Row: Sect.: Shelf: Pos.: FRC ID: Location or Hollinger ID: NARA Number: OA Number:
W 12 14 5 1 12474 25337 12377 12211

Folder Title:

720329 [1]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOCUMENT NO.</th>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>SUBJECT/TITLE</th>
<th>PAGES</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>RESTRICTION(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td>Card</td>
<td>[Thank You] - To: POTUS and FLOTUS - From: Sarah and Alex</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>02/10/2007</td>
<td>PRM;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>Handwritten Note</td>
<td>[Thank You] - To: POTUS and FLOTUS - From: Ray LaHood</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>02/12/2007</td>
<td>PRM;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td>Card</td>
<td>2007 Standings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>02/12/2007</td>
<td>PRM;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004</td>
<td>Handwritten Note</td>
<td>The White House - From: Steve Hadley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>02/12/2007</td>
<td>P1/b1; P5;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Members of Congress... - To: Anita McBride, et al. - From: Janet L. Berman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>02/13/2007</td>
<td>P5; P6/b6;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
<td>Card</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>01/27/2007</td>
<td>P6/b6;</td>
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</table>

COLLECTION TITLE:
Records Management, White House Office of

SERIES:
Subject Files - PP (Presidential Personal)

FOLDER TITLE:
720329 [1]

FRC ID:
12474

RESTRICTION CODES

- Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]
- Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]

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P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]

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- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

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b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]

b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Records Not Subject to FOIA

Court Sealed - The document is withheld under a court seal and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
ROACH_CL

Barcode Scanning Sheet

Collection Code: SECLOG

Staff Name: Raul Yanes

Document Date:

Correspondent: Raul Yanes

Subject/Description: MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN FEB 10 07 THROUGH FEB 20 07: FEB 08 07 -- THANK YOU FOR KIND BIRTHDAY WISHES FROM JOHN WALTERS (OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY) FEB 09 07 -- MOVIES OF THE WEEK AVAILABLE FEB 09 07 THROUGH FEB 13 07 FEB 10 07 -- HOURLY WEATHER FORECAST...
MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

Feb 10 07 THROUGH Feb 20 07
February 8, 2007

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your kind Birthday wishes. With so many critical demands on your attention, I am honored you would think of me.

I am also very grateful for the kind gift which I will treasure and will be passed by my family always.

Respectfully,

John

John Walters
Director
Movies of the Week

Movies Available as of February 9, 2007
This List Is Void after February 13, 2007

PAN’S LABYRINTH  Not yet rated  112 Min.
Supernatural horror
Starring Sergi Lopez, Maribel Verdu, Ariadna Gil, Doug Jones
*A PICTUR HOUSE RELEASE

BECAUSE I SAID SO  PG-13  102 Min.
Romantic Comedy  (Rated PG-13 for sexual content including dialogue, some mature thematic material and partial nudity.)
Starring Diane Keaton, Mandy Moore, Gabriel Macht  *UNIVERSAL

FREEDOM WRITERS  PG-13  123 Min.
Drama  (Rated PG-13 for some violent content, some thematic material and language.)
Starring Hilary Swank, Patrick Dempsey, Imelda Staunton  *PARAMOUNT

CATCH AND RELEASE  PG-13  124 Min.
Romantic Comedy / Drama  (Rated PG-13 for sexual content, language and some drug use.)
Starring Jennifer Garner, Timothy Olyphant, Juliette Lewis  *COLUMBIA
Set in 1940s Spain against the postwar repression of Franco's Spain, a fairy tale that centers on Ofelia, a lonely and dreamy child living with her mother and adoptive father, who is a military officer tasked with 'ridding the area' of rebels. In her loneliness, Ofelia creates a world filled with fantastical creatures and secret destinies. With Fascism at its height, Ofelia must come to terms with her world through a fable of her own creation.
Daphne Wilder is a mother whose love knows no bounds or boundaries. As a single parent, she has raised three fantastic girls--klutzy, adorable Milly, stable psychologist Maggie and sexy and irreverent Mae--to become the kind of women any mom would die to have. The only problem is they're about to strangle her. In order to prevent her youngest, Milly, from making the same romantic mistakes she did, Daphne decides to set her up with the perfect man. The one thing Daphne decides not to tell Milly, however, is that she placed an ad in the online personals to find him. If anyone knows exactly what her daughter does and doesn't need out of a long-term relationship (or clothes or her career), it's Daphne. Comic mayhem unfolds as the well-intended mom continues to do the wrong thing for the right reasons--all in the name of love for her beloved daughter. Is the man of Daphne's (er, um--Milly's) dreams the responsible architect Jason, or is he the free-spirited rocker Johnny? Daphne will continue to push, cajole, suggest and nudge her way into Milly's smallest of decisions until she rights the wrongs of her own life choices or drives her girl nuts. But once Johnny's own father, Joe, catches a buried spark within Daphne, things really start to heat up for the Wilder matriarch. Finally letting herself begin to fall, Daphne begins to wonder if she is just pushing her girls as a way of ignoring her own issues.
FREEDOM WRITERS

**1/2


Fresh-faced, idealistic twenty-three-year-old Erin Gruwell is ready to take on the world as she steps inside Wilson High School for her first day of teaching. Her class, a diverse group of racially charged teenagers from different walks of life--African Americans, Latinos, Asians, juvenile delinquents, gang members, and underprivileged students from poor neighborhoods--hope for nothing more than to make it through the day. On the surface, the only thing they share is their hatred for each other and the understanding that they are simply being warehoused in the educational system until they are old enough to disappear. Despite her students' obstinate refusal to participate during class, Erin tries various means to engage them on a daily basis. But then ghetto reality steps in to focus the picture. A racially motivated gang shooting witnessed by a Latina gang member in Erin's class, and an ugly racial cartoon that Erin intercepts during class, become the most unwittingly dynamic teaching aids. They spark a transformation in the classroom, compel them to listen and force her to take off her idealistic blinders and take in the kids' survival stories of their undeclared war on the streets. Erin begins to connect with them. She brings in music from the 'Hood, and literature from another kind of ghetto, The Diary of Anne Frank, and with these simple tools she opens her students' eyes to the experiences of those suffering intolerance throughout the world and the struggles of those outside their own communities. Knowing that every one of her students has a story to tell, Erin encourages them to keep a daily journal of their thoughts and experiences. After sharing their stories with one another, the students see their shared experience for the first time and open up to the idea that there are possibilities in life outside of making it to the age of eighteen.
CATCH AND RELEASE


After the sudden death of her fiancé, Gray Wheeler finds comfort in the company of his friends: lighthearted and comic Sam, hyper-responsible Dennis, and, oddly enough, his old childhood buddy Fritz, an irresponsible playboy whom she’d previously pegged as one of the least reliable people in the world. As secrets about her supposedly perfect fiancé emerge, Gray comes to see new sides of the men she thought she knew, and at the same time, finds herself drawn to the last man she ever expected to fall for.
Saturday, February 10 at 9am
Temperature: 22°F Wind Chill: 9°F Wind: WNW 14mph
Precipitation Potential: 6% Sky Cover: 40% Relative Humidity: 48%
Rain: <10% Thunder: <10% Snow: <10% Freezing Rain: <10%

http://www.erh.noaa.gov/forecast/MapClick.php?TempBox=1&ExtraBox=1&HumidBox=1&RainBox=1&SnowBox=1&PoPB... 2/10/2007
Saturday, February 10 at 5am
Temperature: 37°F   Wind Chill: 32°F   Wind: N 7 mph
Precipitation Potential: 4%   Sky Cover: 100%   Relative Humidity: 75%
Rain: <10%   Thunder: <10%   Snow: <10%   Freezing Rain: <10%
Tuesday, February 13 at 1am
Temperature: 48°F   Wind Chill: N/A   Wind: NNW 20G26mph
Precipitation Potential: 20%   Sky Cover: 38%   Relative Humidity: 83%
Rain: Slight Chance (10%-20%)   Thunder: Slight Chance (10%-20%)   Snow: <10%   Freezing Rain: <10%

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/forecast/MapClick.php?TempBox=1&ExtraBox=1&HumidBox=1&RainBox=1&SnowBox=1&PoPB... 2/10/2007
5 DAY WEATHER FORECAST
PROVIDED BY THE JOINT PRESIDENTIAL WEATHER SUPPORT UNIT

Saturday, 10 February 2007

WASHINGTON, DC

Saturday: Partly cloudy. Winds northwest at 10 to 15 knots. Low 20°F. High 37°F. Morning wind chill: 5°F.

Sunday: Partly cloudy. Winds southwest at 5 to 10 knots turning northwest at 3 to 8 knots overnight. Low 21°F. High 38°F. Morning wind chill: 9°F.

Monday: Cloudy with isolated afternoon and evening snow showers. Winds southwest at 3 to 8 knots turning northeast at 10 to 15 knots overnight. Low 25°F. High 41°F.

Tuesday: Cloudy with snow. Winds northeast at 13 to 18 knots. Low 21°F. High 29°F.

Wednesday: Cloudy with morning and afternoon snow showers becoming mostly cloudy overnight. Winds north at 13 to 18 knots turning northwest in the evening. Low 19°F. High 28°F.

2/10/07
THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
**Withdrawal Marker**
The George W. Bush Library

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**FRC ID:**
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**OA Num.:**
12211

**NARA Num.:**
12377

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Putin Provokes
By Roger McShane
Posted Sunday, Feb. 11, 2007, at 6:06 AM ET

The Los Angeles Times and Washington Post lead with, while the New York Times fronts, Vladimir Putin's harsh criticism of American foreign policy at an international security conference in Munich. Speaking in front of dozens of American and European officials, including Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Putin said the U.S. "has overstepped its national borders in every way," causing global instability and setting off a nuclear arms race. According to the LAT, which has the best coverage, "one German questioner jokingly told Putin he hoped the president had not set off 'another world war.'"

The WP describes the tone of the speech as "more a considered lecture than a Khrushchevian dais-thumper." Nevertheless, in 32 minutes Putin reeled off a laundry list of complaints that touched on America's "hyper-use of military force", the West's support of reform movements in eastern Europe, American work on antimissile systems, NATO expansion, and Russian access to Western markets. An American congressional delegation that included John McCain and Joe Lieberman sat stone-faced in the audience.

The papers do a good job of describing the scene in Munich, but the analysis is pretty thin. The WP says Putin's remarks "seemingly were not prompted by any particular provocation" and the LAT quotes analysts saying they "appeared timed to take advantage of the Bush administration's weakness." Only brief mention is given to how Russia's energy resources have allowed Putin to adopt a more assertive foreign policy, and how many Russians are fed up with criticism from the West.

In its lead story, the NYT shows how members of Congress have already found a way around pesky new ethics rules, passed just a month ago. It's now illegal for lobbyists to pay directly for lawmakers' lavish vacations and expensive dinners. But they can still donate money to members' political action committees, which, in turn, can pay for these outings as fundraising events. The NYT compiles a nifty little list of PAC fundraising events that would make Jack Abramoff jealous (though Rep. Eric Cantor really needs to get more creative).

In another political fundraising story, the WP says John McCain is embracing "some of the same political-money figures, forces and tactics" that he has made a career railing against. There seems to be an effort here to paint McCain as a hypocrite and his presidential campaign and reform efforts as mutually exclusive. But even his campaign finance reform allies understand the bind he is in. "It is apparent to us that to run a competitive presidential campaign inside a system that is still broken, that is what he has to do," said Mary Boyle of Common Cause. Unfortunately, that quote appears in the last sentence of the story.

In other campaign news, Barack Obama shows us why presidential candidates form exploratory committees first—two days of headlines for the price of one. The NYT and WP both front (with photo) the formal announcement by Obama that he will be running for president. Speaking in frigid weather at the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois, where Abraham Lincoln delivered his famous "House Divided" speech, Obama laid out "an ambitious agenda that includes bringing an end to the Iraq war, eliminating poverty, ensuring universal health care and creating energy independence." But he again emphasized that his leadership ability was more important than specific ideas. In a sober assessment, the
NYT says "it seems evident that Mr. Obama's easier days as a candidate have passed. Unlike Mrs. Clinton, or to a lesser extent Mr. Edwards, Mr. Obama has not gone through a full-scale audit."

Elsewhere in the world, the LAT reports that Iran's reformists believe they are being undercut by the Bush administration's saber rattling, which only helps to prop up the faltering president. The administration may or may not agree with that assessment, but it has distributed new talking points that play down any suggestion of war planning, according to the WP. This comes amid signs that multilateral pressure on Iran might be working. That pressure got a bit more multilateral yesterday, when Vladimir Putin criticized Iran for not answering questions posed by the I.A.E.A. about its nuclear program.

On the other axis of evil front, talks with North Korea have been extended after negotiators failed to reach an agreement over the energy aid North Korea would receive as compensation for closing its main nuclear reactor.

The NYT's "Week in Review" section is chock-full of good stuff this Sunday, including a rundown of who's blaming who for the problems in Iraq. Also worth a look are Dick Cheney's notes from 1975 as he considered how the Ford White House should handle an article by Seymour Hersh about a secret espionage program. The Times says the notes show Cheney "is hostile to the press and to Congress, insistent on the prerogatives of the executive branch and adamant about the importance of national security secrets." It seems not much has changed.

Roger McShane writes for the Economist online.

Article URL: http://www.slate.com/id/2159553/
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The Washington Post and Los Angeles Times lead, and the Wall Street Journal tops its worldwide newsbox, with the long-awaited briefing by military officials in Baghdad where they presented what they described as convincing evidence that Iran is providing weapons to Shiite militias in Iraq. The officials displayed a variety of different weapons, including the "explosively formed penetrator," which is one of the deadliest weapons because of its ability to go through armor. These explosives have allegedly been responsible for at least 170 American deaths in the past three years.

The New York Times front the presentation, but leads with the apparent collapse of the North Korea talks. The main stumbling point appears to be North Korea's demands for large amounts of aid before it agrees to anything. The NYT also got a summary of the proposed agreement and says it would pretty much prevent North Korea from producing new weapons, but it does not specify any deadlines for giving up existing nuclear weapons or weapons fuel. USA Today leads with a look at how Arab states "are making some of their most public overtures ever to Israel and American Jews" in an effort to limit Iran's influence and solve regional problems. This comes at a time when Saudi Arabia has tried to position itself as a leader in trying to solve Palestinian issues and will need Israel's cooperation if it intends to try and broker a peace deal.

Reporters at the briefing in Baghdad appear to have been quite skeptical of the information, and that feeling carries through to most of the stories. There were questions surrounding the timing as well as the unusually secretive circumstances of the briefing. The military officials insisted on anonymity and reporters were not allowed to record or photograph anything. The Post manages to get a comment from the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad who said that if Americans are so sure of their evidence, they should display it publicly.

The briefing had been delayed by more than two weeks at least partly due to concerns that the initial report overstated the case against Iran. The military officials did not provide any evidence to support claims that top officials in Iran had authorized attacks against U.S. troops in Iraq and the Post also notes there were no CIA officers or diplomats present at the briefing. An Iraqi official tells the Post the U.S. military hasn't shared all the information it claims to have against Iran.

The NYT says the Bush administration was optimistic about the North Korea talks but the "failure to reach even a preliminary agreement could cast doubt on the prospects of disarming North Korea in the administration's last two years. Some believe North Korea may have sensed Bush's current weakness and is trying to "run out the clock" until there's someone new in the White House.

As U.S. troops in Iraq face an increasing threat from roadside bombs, which are now responsible for 70 percent of American deaths, the Army is still lacking a significant number of armor kits, says the WP on Page One. Although the Army has increased production, they are not scheduled to get all they need until at least this summer, which means it is possible the extra troops that are sent to Iraq will not have adequate protection. The Post makes sure to remind readers that the lack of equipment is nothing new and has been present since the beginning of the Iraq war.
The LAT fronts an interesting look at some of the hidden consequences of having approximately 125,000 private contractors working in Iraq. So far, more than 750 contractors have been killed in Iraq and almost 8,000 injured. "Contractors' surviving relatives and wounded contractors have many of the same problems as military members and their families" but they often lack the same sort of support system. Many wounded contractors have also been forced to fight for medical help and psychological counseling.

The NYT notes that Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki announced he has ordered more Iraqi soldiers and police officers to problem areas, but it is unclear how he plans to make this happen. Yesterday, the U.S. military announced the deaths of two soldiers.

The NYT referees and the rest of the papers mention that Defense Secretary Robert Gates decided to use "words of velvet, not steel" in responding to Russian President Vladimir Putin's critique of the United States. "One cold war was quite enough," Gates said.

The LAT fronts, and the rest of the papers go inside with, the weekend campaigning by Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. Hillary Clinton, where Iraq was the central issue. Clinton was questioned about her vote to authorize the war, while Obama said his rivals for the White House should put forward specific plans to get U.S. troops out of Iraq. At one point, Obama said that thousands of lives had been "wasted" on the war but later said he regretted using those words. As could be expected, Obama drew large crowds but the LAT wasn't impressed saying "there was little that was really new or different" about the issues he raised and he offered "little in the way of concrete solutions."

The LAT fronts, and everyone else mentions yesterday's Grammy Awards, where the Dixie Chicks won five awards, including song, record, and album of the year. It was the first time in 13 years that one act got those three awards. The country music establishment snubbed the Dixie Chicks at their awards ceremony but yesterday "the trio found blue-state redemption," says the LAT. Many in the country music community have not forgiven the Dixie Chicks for the anti-Bush comments they made during a concert. Other big winners were the Red Hot Chili Peppers, who received four awards, and Mary J. Blige, who got three.

Daniel Politi writes "Today's Papers" for Slate. He can be reached at todayspapers@slate.com.

Article URL: http://www.slate.com/id/2159558/

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Saturday, February 17 at 2am
Temperature: 18°F  Wind Chill: N/A  Wind: W 14mph
Precipitation Potential: 10%  Sky Cover: 38%  Relative Humidity: 53%
Rain: <10%  Thunder: <10%  Snow: <10%  Freezing Rain: <10%

http://www.erh.noaa.gov/forecast/MapClick.php?TempBox=1&ExtraBox=1&HumidBox=1&RaidBox=1&SnowBox=1&PoPB...
Hourly Weather Forecast for 39.06N -76.94W

BETTSCVILLE (SAT-SUN)

Hourly Weather Chart

7-Day Forecast

Radar and Satellite Images

Additional Forecasts & Information

http://www.erh.noaa.gov/forecast/MapClick.php?TempBox=1&ExtraBox=1&HumidBox=1&RainBox=1&SnowBox=1&PoPB... 2/12/2007
Monday, February 12 at 8am
Temperature: 27°F Wind Chill: 22°F Wind: SW 5mph
Precipitation Potential: 7% Sky Cover: 60% Relative Humidity: 60%
Rain: <10% Thunder: <10% Snow: <10% Freezing Rain: <10%
Hourly Weather Forecast for 38.89N -77.02W

Tuesday, February 13 at 5pm
Temperature: 29°F  Dewpoint: 23°F  Wind Chill: 17°F  Wind: ENE 17mph
Precipitation Potential: 90%  Sky Cover: 100%  Relative Humidity: 78%
Rain: <10%  Thunder: <10%  Snow: <10%  Freezing Rain: Occasional (80%-100%)
Monday, February 12 at 6am
Temperature: 48°F  Wind Chill: N/A  Wind: SSE 11mph
Precipitation Potential: 49%  Sky Cover: 100%  Relative Humidity: 93%
Rain: Chance (30%-50%)  Thunder: <10%  Snow: <10%  Freezing Rain: <10%

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/forecast/MapClick.php?TempBox=1&ExtraBox=1&HumidBox=1&RainBox=1&SnowBox=1&PoPB...  2/12/2007
5 DAY WEATHER FORECAST
PROVIDED BY THE JOINT PRESIDENTIAL WEATHER SUPPORT UNIT

Monday, 12 February 2007

WASHINGTON, DC

Monday: Partly cloudy becoming cloudy overnight. Winds northwest at 4 to 8 knots turning southeast at 5 to 10 knots in the afternoon. Low 23°F. High 42°F.

Tuesday: Cloudy with snow turning to a mixture of sleet and freezing rain in the afternoon, then changing to rain overnight. Expect an accumulation of 2 to 3 inches of snow and less than 1/4 inch of ice. Winds northeast at 10 to 15 knots gusting to 20 knots in the evening. Low 27°F. (P.M.) High 30°F. (A.M.)

Wednesday: Cloudy with isolated rain showers ending by noon. Winds northwest at 15 to 20 knots gusting to 30 knots in the afternoon. Low 28°F. High 34°F.

Thursday: Mostly cloudy becoming partly cloudy in the evening. Winds northwest at 12 to 18 knots gusting to 25 knots in the afternoon. Low 18°F. High 31°F.

Friday: Partly cloudy. Winds west at 12 to 18 knots. Low 15°F. High 30°F.

CAMP DAVID, MARYLAND

Friday: Mostly cloudy. Winds west at 25 to 30 knots gusting to 35 knots. Low 10°F. High 24°F.
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RESTRICTION CODES

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**Records Not Subject to FOIA**

- Court Sealed - The document is withheld under a court seal and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
Tuesday, February 13 at 1pm
Temperature: 45°F Wind Chill: N/A Wind: N 25G34mph
Precipitation Potential: 8% Sky Cover: 55% Relative Humidity: 60%
Rain: <10% Thunder: <10% Snow: <10% Freezing Rain: <10%

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/forecast/MapClick.php?TempBox=1&ExtraBox=1&HumidBox=1&RainBox=1&SnowBox=1&PoPB... 2/13/2007
Tuesday, 13 February 2007

WASHINGTON, DC

**Tuesday:** Cloudy with snow turning to a mixture of sleet and freezing rain in the afternoon, then changing to rain in the evening. Expect an accumulation near 1 inch of snow and 1/4 inch or less of ice. Winds northeast at 12 to 18 knots. Low 28°F. (P.M.) High 34°F. (A.M.)

**Wednesday:** Cloudy with rain showers briefly turning to snow before ending altogether by noon. No additional snow accumulation. Winds northwest at 15 to 20 knots gusting to 28 knots in the afternoon. Low 29°F. High 33°F.

**Thursday:** Mostly cloudy becoming partly cloudy in the afternoon. Winds west at 12 to 18 knots. Low 19°F. High 29°F.

**Friday:** Partly cloudy. Winds west at 10 to 15 knots. Low 15°F. High 30°F.

**Saturday:** Partly cloudy becoming cloudy with isolated afternoon and evening snow flurries. Winds southwest at 5 to 10 knots. Low 19°F. High 38°F.

CAMP DAVID, MARYLAND

**Friday:** Mostly cloudy. Winds west at 25 to 30 knots gusting to 35 knots. Low 9°F. High 24°F.

**Saturday:** Partly cloudy becoming cloudy with snow flurries in the afternoon. Winds southwest at 10 to 15 knots. Low 12°F. High 30°F.
To: President
Date: 2/3
Time: 12:50 AM

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

Secretary Rice

Phone Numbers

Office: Relayed Verbally
Voicemail: Please call
Fax: 
Pages: 
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Message

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No New Nukes

By Daniel Politi

Posted Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2007, at 5:12 AM ET

The New York Times, Washington Post, and Los Angeles Times lead, while the Wall Street Journal tops its worldwide newsbox, with word that negotiators from six countries reached a tentative agreement that could be the first step in getting North Korea to dismantle its nuclear program. Under terms of the agreement, which wasn't released but the papers all have sources, North Korea would be given energy assistance and aid in exchange for the closing down of its nuclear reactor at Yongbyon and readmitting nuclear inspectors into the country. Discussions about North Korea's existing nuclear weapons and fuel would be left for a later date.

USA Today leads with a new poll that reveals 63 percent of Americans want troops to leave Iraq by the end of 2008. Also, 57 percent want Congress to put a cap on the number of troops that are sent to fight in Iraq but 58 percent oppose denying funding for these additional troops. By 51 percent-19 percent those surveyed place the blame on Republicans for the Senate stalemate. Lawmakers should take note, because approximately 70 percent of those surveyed said votes on the war will affect their choice in the next congressional election.

Everybody notes any agreement with North Korea should be met with some skepticism because the country has changed its mind in the past, and leader Kim Jong Il still has to give his blessing. While the LAT reports that most of the aid would come from South Korea and Japan, the NYT says South Korea, China, and the United States would be responsible, meaning President Bush would have to get Congressional approval.

Although negotiators in Beijing were optimistic, not everyone was happy. Republican hawks have never liked the idea of compromise with North Korea. Everyone quotes former U.N. ambassador John R. Bolton, who said, 'This is a very bad deal' because, among other things, "it makes the administration look very weak." The Post notes that Democrats in Washington are likely to criticize the administration for allowing North Korea to get nuclear weapons in the first place. The WSJ points out the agreement will almost certainly be criticized by those who will say "Bush is getting essentially the same deal Clinton got in 1994."

Yesterday, the NYT led with what it said was the apparent collapse of the North Korea talks. Everyone mentions the talks appeared to be at a standstill and the agreement was only reached after marathon talks (16 hours, according to some accounts). But doesn't the NYT owe its readers some sort of explanation, or at least acknowledgment, of how it got the main story in yesterday's paper wrong? Besides a brief mention of how "negotiations had appeared near collapse on Sunday," and mention of a "shift" in the headline, it's as if yesterday's story never happened. Regardless, the NYT has the most complete coverage of the intricacies in the agreement.

All the papers front or reframe the four bombs detonated at two predominantly Shiite markets in central Baghdad that killed approximately 70 people (the LAT fronts a particularly harrowing picture). The attack came on the same day the Iraqi government and Shiites across the country marked the one-year anniversary (according to the Islamic lunar calendar) of the bombing that destroyed one of the holiest sites for Shiites, the mosque in Samarra.

Both the *NYT* and *LAT* front stories of last year's bombing in Samarra. The *NYT* focuses on how the sacred Shiite shrine has not been rebuilt, and in fact, most of the rubble still remains. The *LAT* mentions the rubble but goes deeper and provides an interesting look at the bombing itself and the aftermath, describing in detail the great significance the event still holds for many Iraqis. The *LAT* says the bombing was "the dawn of Iraq's civil war." That echoes the views expressed by President Bush when he presented his plan to send more troops to Iraq, but is it the whole story? No one doubts the bombing was significant, but as McClatchy detailed in an analysis piece last month, "the president's account understates by at least 15 months when Shiite death squads began targeting Sunni politicians and clerics. It also ignores the role that Iranian-backed Shiite groups had in death squad activities before the Samarra bombing."

Several prominent Washington journalists testified yesterday that I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby never mentioned Valerie Plame to them even though they had conversations with him shortly before her identity was made public. Everyone notes the *Post's* Walter Pincus had a surprise revelation yesterday when he testified that Ari Fleischer told him about Plame. The statement contradicts the former White House press secretary's testimony. "It seems possible prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald would have had an easier time finding out who in the administration didn't leak Plame's identity," says the *Post's* Dana Milbank.

Most of the papers catch news out of Salt Lake City, where a man opened fire in a shopping mall last night, killing five people and injuring several more before he was killed.

In preparation for the debate that is scheduled to begin today in the House, Democrats unveiled a simple resolution that only has two clauses. The non-binding resolution declares opposition to President Bush's plan to send more troops to Iraq, while also expressing support for U.S. troops on the ground. There will be three days of debate on the war and a vote is expected on Friday.

**Funny 'cause it's true ...** In an editorial, about the Grammy sweep by the Dixie Chicks, the *NYT* focuses on the consequences the group faced after their lead singer, Natalie Maines, criticized Bush at a concert in London. "Had Ms. Maines been a senator at the time, she might be a shoo-in candidate for president," says the *NYT.*

*Daniel Politi writes "Today's Papers" for Slate. He can be reached at todayspapers@slate.com.*

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The 51 Coolest Things That Happened In 2006

By
Roger & Me

So Much For The Sophomore Jinx

Phillies first baseman Ryan Howard led the Major Leagues with 58 home runs and 149 RBIs. He blew past Mike Schmidt (48) to set a new franchise home run mark, and eclipsed Ralph Kiner (51) for the most by a second year player. Ryan walked 108 times and struck out 181 times yet still managed to hit .313 — just the second player ever (Bobby Bonds, 1970) to pull off the .300 – 180 trick. Thirty-seven of those walks were intentional. On August 11th, the Reds intentionally walked Howard three times. The third time was with runners on first and second and nobody out IN A TIE GAME! Then on Labor Day, in another tie game, the Astros intentionally walked him to LEAD OFF THE NINTH. But for all of his numbers, the best thing about Howard is the person behind the stats. Consider that in just two years, Ryan has won the Jackie Robinson Rookie of the Year Award, the NL MVP, the Hank Aaron Award, The Players Choice Player of the Year, The Sporting News Player of the Year, The Ted Williams Award and The Josh Gibson Award, given by the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum to the top home run hitter in the Major Leagues. And when asked which of them was the most special, Howard said the Josh Gibson Award — “because he never got a shot to play in the big leagues.”
Books and Rooks
The Florida Marlins payroll in 2006 was $14,998,550. There were 14 Major League players who individually made more than that in 2005 and 12 in 2006. Florida still finished with a better record than seven other National League teams. The Marlins were the first team since 1900 to start as many as six rookies in their Opening Day lineup. The record for this feat still remains the first game ever played.

Okay, We Got That Out of the Way Again
The Cubs beat the Reds 16 – 7 in their 2006 Opener. It was the second straight year they scored 16 runs in the first game of the season. No team has ever scored that many runs in back to back openers. At no time between the two openers did the Cubs score 16 runs. Incredibly, Carlos Zambrano started both games and didn’t win either one.

Rusch Limbo
Bronson Arroyo became the first pitcher to hit a home run and earn a victory in each of his first two starts of a season. Both home runs came off Glendon Rusch. Prior to that Bronson was 4-55 with two doubles.

Their Three Sons
In early April, the sons of three former Major Leaguers (Barry Bonds, Moises Alou and Lance Niekro) all scored on a double by Pedro Feliz. There have been times when three Major League sons were all on base at the same time, but this was the first time they all scored on a hit.
Coors Light

On April 16th, the Phillies became the first team ever to beat Colorado 1-0 at Coors Field. It was just the second 1-0 game at Coors since it opened in 1995. By year’s end, there would be two more 1-0 games at Coors.

Sabor a Beisbol

On April 18th, seven different pitchers from Venezuela started games on the same day: Tony Armas, Jr. (Washington), Gustavo Chacin (Toronto), Victor Zambrano (Mets), Carlos Silva (Twins), Kelvim Escobar (Angels), Carlos Zamrano (Dodgers), and Felix Hernandez (Mariners). They went 3-3 with one no decision.

He’s Still Going

At age 47, Julio Franco became the oldest player in baseball history to hit a home run. Jack Quinn (46) had held the record since 1930. Franco also is the oldest to hit a grand slam, a pinch hit home run and have a multi home run game. On September 10th, Julio made his first appearance at third base since October 2, 1982. And on September 30th he tied his career high with five RBIs in one game – a feat he has accomplished seven times – the first time on June 18, 1983 – the last time 12 years ago. Franco finished the September 30th game a triple short of the cycle.
Kaz-am!
When Kaz Matsui hit an inside the park home run in his first at bat of the season, he became the first player in baseball history to hit a home run in his first at bat of the year in each of his first three years in the Major Leagues.

So There!
One day after Milwaukee beat Cincinnati 11-0, Cincinnati beat Milwaukee, 11-0.

The Big Interlocking NY Machine
When the Yankees beat Toronto 17-6 on April 29th, they scored in every inning. It marked the first time the Yankees had scored in every inning since 1939. On June 5th, the Yankees set a franchise record by getting at least 10 hits in 12 straight games. The old record of 11 straight was held by the 1937 Yanks.

On the Other Hand
On April 26th, the Yankees waited out 14 walks by the Devil Rays and still lost the game, 4-2. Not one of the 14 Yankees who walked, scored.

You Call This a Holiday?
The Cardinals finally won a game on Cinco de Mayo. Dating back to 1993, they had lost 13 straight games on May 5th.
A No Home Run Bonds Stat
The Giants scored 34 runs in a three game series in May against Houston and Barry Bonds did not hit a home run in any of the three games. The last time the Giants scored that many runs in a three game series and Bonds did not hit a home run was in 1923.

The Exclusive Two T Club
On May 20th, Josh Beckett became the first Red Sox pitcher to hit a home run since Marty Pattin did so in 1972. It was the 10th home run hit by an AL pitcher since inter-league play began in 1997. The last Red Sox pitcher to hit a home run whose name does not include two “t’s” was Bill Lee on September 11, 1972.

Making Mom Happy
We’re not saying the family fix was in, but on May 16th, brothers Bengie and Jose Molina both stole bases in the same game – off each other.

Way To Hang in There, Dude
On May 14th, Mark Buehrle became the first pitcher to give up seven runs in the first inning and still get the win since Jack Powell got the victory for the 1900 St. Louis Cardinals.
A Calendar Cycle
On May 1st Travis Hafner hit a Grand Slam Home Run. On May 2nd he hit a three run blast. On May 3rd he hit a two run home. And on May 4th he hit a solo shot. Travis is now the first man ever to hit one homer per game, four games in a row, in descending order of men on base.

Craig’s List Update
On May 29th, Craig Biggio became the 24th player in history to amass 10,000 at bats. That left him just 4,053 at bats behind the all-time leader, Pete Rose.

Better Get Busy On That Plaque
Derek Jeter got his 2000th career hit in his 1,571st game. Only Joe DiMaggio (1,537 games) reached 2000 hits any faster in a Yankee uniform. Derek finished 2006 with his fifth 200 hit season – second most in Yankees history to Lou Gehrig’s eight. He is the first right-handed batter to have five 200 hit seasons since Kirby Puckett.

An Inexact Science
Nobody ever said drafting was easy. In 1999, St. Louis had three first-round draft picks and only one, Chris Duncan, has spent any time in the Major Leagues. That same year they also picked a junior college player in the 13th round with the 402nd overall pick – Albert Pujols.
Stomping on the Snakes
On June 11th, the Mets completed a four game sweep of Arizona in which they outscored them 37-9. Last year, the Mets also swept a four game series from the D-Backs in which they outscored them 39-7.

It’ll Get Easier, Won’t It?
Adam Loewen became the first pitcher in history to face a former Cy Young Award winner in each of his first four Major League starts. Adam faced Tom Glavine, Randy Johnson and Roy Halladay (twice). No pitcher ever faced the real Cy Young in his first four starts.

A Monster Turf Year
On June 30th the Red Sox set a Major League record with their 17th straight errorless game. The Sox would go on to set a Major League record with 108 errorless games in a season.

Early Bird Special Outfield
When Barry Bonds, Moises Alou and Steve Finley all started for the Giants on July 14th, they became the first trio of 40-year-olds in baseball history to start a game in the same outfield.
Details, Details

Just prior to the scheduled Brian Roberts Bobblehead Day, the Orioles received a shipment of 20,000 black Brian Roberts bobblehead dolls. Brian is white. The dolls were returned.

Save This Date

On July 15th, all 30 Major League clubs played games and not a single save was recorded. That’s the first time this has happened since the save stat was adopted in 1969.

Oh Wise One

Ichiro Suzuki was asked at the All-Star Game how Seattle might make a run at the playoffs. Through his interpreter, he said this:
“The problem usually isn’t on the cover. You need to look much deeper. For example, if we’re talking about a tree and the tree has a problem, you need to look at the root. But you cannot see the root. The mistake is to keep watering the fruit. That’s not going to solve anything.”

That’s My Boy

On July 19th, Tony Gwynn, Jr. got his first Major League hit — a double. It was exactly 24 years to the day after his dad got his first Major League hit — also a double.
Ah, Just Leave Him In There

In June, St. Louis pitcher Jason Marquis allowed 13 runs in five innings against the White Sox. In July, he allowed 12 runs in five innings against the Braves. The last pitcher to give up 12 runs in two games in the same season was Chubby Dean of the 1940 Philadelphia A’s.

Keystone Consistency

When Chase Utley’s consecutive game hitting streak reached 30 games on July 30th, it marked the first time ever that a team had players with 30 game hitting streaks in consecutive seasons (Jimmy Rollins had hits in his final 36 games in 2005). Chase would go on to hit in 35 straight games, tying Luis Castillo for the longest streak ever by a second baseman. In the course of his streak, Chase had 23 multi-hit games. In his 56 game hitting streak in 1941, Joe DiMaggio had 22 multi-hit games. By season’s end, the Phillies would become the first team in National League history to have a shortstop and second baseman with at least 25 home runs each. Bobby Doerr and Vern Stephens did it twice for the Red Sox.

Now Add a Dash of Taveras

Willy Taveras also had a 30 game hitting streak in 2006 – and on Labor Day, Willy, Chase and Jimmy all played in the same game – easily marking the first time ever that three men who had 30 game hitting streaks end in the same year all played in the same game. Whew!
Don’t Take the Stairs
In 2006, Matt Stairs was traded from Kansas City to Texas. In his last game as a Royal, Kansas City lost 15-2. In their first game after he was acquired, the Rangers lost, 15-2.

One For the Books
On September 2nd, the Devil Rays turned the first 2-6-2 triple play in Major League history. That would be a strikeout looking – a runner on first thrown out stealing – and a runner on third thrown out trying to sneak home.

One For the Telephone Books
On August 26th, Sean Casey hit into the first 5-7-3 out at first base in the last half century. Chicago third baseman Joe Crede started the play. Crede was born in Jefferson City, Mo., where the area code is 573. Doo doo doo doo...

Super Sub
Heading into September, Travis Hafner had tied the Major League record for most Grand Slams in a season with six. But then Travis got hurt and the Indians inserted Kevin Kouzmanoff in his place. And on the first pitch he ever saw in the Major Leagues, Kevin hit a grand slam. He is just the third man ever to hit a slam in his first ML at bat. It first happened in 1898. It didn’t happen again until 2005 – a 107 year span — and then again by Kouzmanoff just one year after that.
A Little Kernel of Revenge

On August 7, 1997, Anaheim Angels minor leaguer Ramon Ortiz pitched a no-hitter for the Single A Cedar Rapids Kernels against the Quad City River Bandits – an Astros affiliate – and he got Aaron Miles for the final out. Nine years later, Ortiz, now with the Washington Nationals, took a no-hitter into the ninth inning against St. Louis, where it was broken up by -- Aaron Miles.

U Saw This Coming

When Dan Uggla and Chase Utley both hit home runs on September 9th, it marked the first time in Major League history that two players whose last names begin with the letter U had hit home runs in the same game.

Lighting the Candle

September 6th was Derrek Lee’s 31st birthday and he promptly went out and hit a grand slam home run. Can’t say he was surprised though, for Lee had also homered on his 28th, 29th and 30th birthdays.

In Sickness or in Health, Fair or Foul

In the ninth inning of a game against Minnesota on September 23rd, Baltimore’s Jay Gibbons fouled a ball straight back over the screen and into the rib cage of his wife. “She’s just a little bruised,” he said, “but she’s going to be okay.”
Not Quite Francoesque, But...
On September 12th, Luis Gonzalez (39 years, 9 days) became the oldest player to hit 50 doubles in a season, eclipsing Tris Speaker, who did it in 1926 at the age of 38 years, 107 days.

Still Watering the Root
Ichiro Suzuki stole his 33rd straight base on September 16th to establish a new American League single season record. Willie Wilson stole 32 straight in 1980. Vince Coleman holds the Major League record with 44 straight in 1989. Ichiro also extended his Major League record of six straight 200 hit seasons to start off a career. Wade Boggs had seven straight 200 hit seasons and Wee Willie Keeler had eight straight -- but neither of those streaks was at the start of their career.

Serious Numbers
Alfonso Soriano became the first player ever to have 40 doubles, 40 home runs, and 40 stolen bases in a season.

Odds Anyone?
Pitcher Perfect

On August 2, the Marlins used a pitcher (Brian Moehler) to pinch hit for pitcher Joe Borowski. Moehler got hit by a pitch and they sent pitcher Scott Olsen in to pinch run for Moehler. Two outs later, they called on pitcher Logan Kensing to pinch run for Olsen. So that’s a pitcher pinch running for a pitcher who pinch-ran for a pitcher who pinch-hit for a pitcher.

Devil of a Time On The Road

Tampa Bay became the first team in history to lose 100 games despite having a winning record (41-40) at home.

Still Chasing Legends

Chase Utley joined Rogers Hornsby as the only second basemen ever to have 200 hits, 30 home runs, 100 RBIs and 130 runs scored in one season.

It’s All About Finishing Strong

The Yankees set a record for most consecutive post-season series in which they led the series at some point – 28 in a row starting in 1981. But they also became the first team ever to lose post-season series in which they were ahead in six straight seasons.
World Series Woes

In the last 50 regular seasons – covering nearly 8,000 games – Detroit pitchers never committed an error in four straight games. Then, in the 2006 World Series, Tigers pitchers made errors in five straight games. That’s two more errors than Trevor Hoffman has committed in his entire career – and one more than the entire 29 man Reds pitching staff committed in all of 2006.

Wild Stuff

We’ve now had five straight World Series that included at least one wild card team. It should be noted, however, that the wild card teams that reached the World Series averaged 94.5 wins per season – and not one of them had the worst record in the playoff field during those years.

That’s Why They Play the Game

Finally, if you needed any more proof that in baseball, anything can happen, consider that the St. Louis Cardinals finished more games over .500 in the post-season (six) than they did during the regular season (five). And that, my friends, is a first. – Jeff Scott
* NOAA's GRAPHS ARE DOWN IN D.C. AREA

Your National Weather Service forecast

Washington, DC

Enter Your "City, ST" or zip code

New! Cell Phone Weather Page (wap) URL: www.srh.noaa.gov/wml

NWS Sterling, VA Homepage

Forecast as of: 8:55 PM EST TUE FEB 13 2007

Forecast at a Glance

OVERNIGHT WEDNESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY THURSDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SATURDAY NIGHT NIGHT NIGHT NIGHT NIGHT

Freezing Rain Freezing Rain Partly Cloudy Mostly Sunny Partly Cloudy Mostly Sunny Partly Cloudy Partly Sunny Chance Snow Showers


Pop: 100% Pop: 100%

Detailed 7-day Forecast

Hazardous weather condition(s):

Winter Storm Warning

WINTER STORM WARNING IN EFFECT UNTIL 2 PM EST WEDNESDAY
Overnight...Freezing rain. Additional ice accumulation around one half of an inch. Lows in the mid 20s. Temperatures steady or slowly rising after midnight. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of precipitation near 100 percent.

Wednesday...Freezing rain in the morning. Total ice accumulation between one half to three quarters of an inch. Brisk with highs in the mid 30s. North winds 10 to 15 mph. Increasing to northwest 20 to 25 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation near 100 percent.

Wednesday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 18. Northwest winds around 20 mph.

Thursday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 20s. Northwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Thursday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 13. West winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday...Mostly sunny. Highs around 30.

Friday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 20.

Saturday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 30s.

Saturday Night...Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow showers. Lows in the mid 20s.

Sunday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 30s.

Sunday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 20.

Current Conditions

Washington DC, Reagan National Airport

Last Update on Feb 14, 4:52 am EST

Humidity: 92%

Fog/Mist

Wind Speed: NW 14 MPH

Barometer: 29.54" (1000.2 mb)

Dewpoint: 23°F (-5°C)

Wind Chill: 13°F (-11°C)

Visibility: 2.00 mi.

More Local Wx: 3 Day History:

Radar and Satellite Images

Additional Forecasts & Information

Air Quality Forecasts
Forecast Discussion
Current VA/DC Weather
Yesterday's Weather
River Levels
Marine/Boating Forecast

Graphical Forecast Table
Local Climatology
Precip./Temp. Summary
River Forecast

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/zones/DCZ001.php?zo=1

2/14/2007
Your National Weather Service forecast

BOLTSVILLE
Prince Georges County, MD

Enter Your "City, ST" or zip code

New! Cell Phone Weather Page (wap) URL: www.srh.noaa.gov/wml

NWS Sterling, VA Homepage
Forecast as of: 855 PM EST TUE FEB 13 2007

Forecast at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
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<th>OVERNIGHT</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
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<td>Pop: 100%</td>
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Detailed 7-day Forecast

Hazardous weather condition(s):

**Winter Storm Warning**

WINTER STORM WARNING IN EFFECT UNTIL 2 PM EST WEDNESDAY

Overnight...Freezing rain. Additional ice accumulation around one half of an inch. Lows in the upper 20s. Temperatures steady or slowly rising after midnight. East winds 10 to 15 mph with gusts up to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation near 100 percent.

Wednesday...Freezing rain in the morning. Total ice accumulation of one half to three quarters of an inch. Breezy with highs in the mid 30s. Northwest winds 15 to 25 mph with gusts up to 40 mph. Chance of precipitation near 100 percent.

Wednesday Night...Partly cloudy and blustery. Lows around 17. Northwest winds 20 to 25 mph with gusts up to 30 mph.

Thursday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 20s. Northwest winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts up to 30 mph.

Thursday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 11. West winds 15 to 20 mph.

Friday...Mostly sunny. Highs around 30.

Friday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows 15 to 20.

Saturday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 30s.

Saturday Night...Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow showers. Lows in the mid 20s.

Sunday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 30s.

Sunday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 20.

Camp Springs / Andrews Air Force Base
Last Update on Feb 14, 4:55 am EST

| Humidity | 96% |
| Light Freezing | Wind Speed: NE 6 MPH |
| Rain Fog/Mist | Barometer: 29.51" (999.6 mb) |
| 30°F (-1°C) | Dewpoint: 29°F (-2°C) |
| More Local Wx: 3 Day History: | Wind Chill: 24°F (-4°C) |
| Visibility: 2.50 mi. |

Radar and Satellite Images

Additional Forecasts & Information

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River Levels
Precip./Temp. Summary


2/14/2007
5 DAY WEATHER FORECAST
PROVIDED BY THE JOINT PRESIDENTIAL WEATHER SUPPORT UNIT

Wednesday, 14 February 2007

WASHINGTON, DC

**Wednesday:** Cloudy with a mixture of sleet and freezing rain briefly turning to snow before ending altogether by noon. Expect an additional accumulation of 1 inch of sleet. Winds northwest at 15 to 20 knots gusting to 30 knots in the afternoon. Low 25°F. High 35°F.

**Thursday:** Mostly cloudy. Winds northwest at 15 to 20 knots. Low 17°F. High 29°F. Morning wind chill: 1°F.

**Friday:** Partly cloudy. Winds west at 8 to 12 knots. Low 16°F. High 27°F.

**Saturday:** Partly cloudy becoming cloudy with isolated afternoon and evening snow flurries. Winds southwest at 8 to 12 knots. Low 18°F. High 34°F.

**Sunday:** Partly cloudy. Winds west at 8 to 12 knots. Low 26°F. High 37°F.
Lift Liberia's Debt Burden

By Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
And Paul Wolfowitz

For more than two decades, the people of Liberia have known little but violence and armed conflict brought on by leaders who violated the public's trust. By the time peace was realized in 2003, 250,000 Liberians, out of a population of three million, had been killed and many more had been rendered homeless. The country had become a base for warlords to smuggle diamonds and traffic in arms and drugs, activities that brought chaos to the country and destabilized the West African region.

Thankfully, this is not the Liberia of today, nor of tomorrow, due to the will of its people and the support of the international community. This support must now be broadened and deepened, particularly through the granting of debt relief, to secure a peaceful and stable future in Liberia.

In the election of 2005, the people of Liberia courageously chose peace, reconciliation and development over ethnic divisions and violence. They spoke loudly and clearly that they wanted a better future for themselves and their children—a new, free and democratic Liberia where civil liberties, the rule of law, an accountable and transparent government, peace, security and economic development opportunities would be the norms.

Since that time, with the support of the international community, significant progress has been realized. The shattered infrastructure is slowly being rebuilt. Efforts are being made to repair roads, schools and clinics throughout the country that were almost all destroyed or damaged during Liberia's conflict. Water and electricity service has been restored to parts of Monrovia for the first time in 15 years. Economic reforms have increased government revenues by nearly 50% in the past year and the economy grew at 8%, with similar growth predicted for the coming year.

Critically, the foundations of an accountable government are in place and areas of past corruption are being reformed. The Public Procurement and Concessions Commission was established to review all contracts and concessions. The Liberia Reconstruction and Development Commission coordinates discussion with international partners on policy issues and program initiatives, and a code of conduct for public officials has been drafted. The government has taken sie-
significant steps to encourage trade and investment. In 2006, exports increased by 25%, and Liberia has been declared eligible for membership under the U.S. Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, facilitating U.S. investment and opening U.S. markets to Liberian exports. The National Investment Commission initiated a “one stop shop” approach to help reduce hurdles to investment and steps are underway to revise the investment and tax code to boost trade and investment.

But despite the progress, Liberia is a place of staggering hardship. Much of the population remains jobless, including many young excombatants outside the rehabilitation process that was designed to give them training and jobs. Three-quarters of the population continue to live on less than $1 per day and nearly half of Liberia’s children are out of school.

The next 18 months will be critical in determining whether the aspirations of millions of Liberians can be translated into tangible progress, and this is an opportunity that we all must recognize and seize. Reaching a peace accord, holding an election and funding immediate humanitarian needs together represent only the first stage of rebuilding a battered country. Studies of dozens of nations that emerge from civil conflict show that many slide back into violent chaos when a clear peace dividend fails to materialize.

Emergency funding established to meet urgent humanitarian needs after peace was established is running out, and this early investment in peace must be augmented if Liberia hopes to avoid a return to chaos. The longer-term challenge of building a functioning economy and a capable state urgently requires development assistance that has been slow in arriving. Debt relief is at the heart of future development assistance for Liberia. Debt relief is urgently needed to cut the staggering $3.7 billion in borrowings that has accumulated largely from the time of the 1980 military coup until the end of armed conflict. That is an unacceptable burden for a country of three million. Debt relief is a vital step in clearing the way for long-term development assistance and delivering results for Liberia’s people. Reaching agreement on a debt relief package is a complex but necessary step in Liberia’s economic recovery.

The stakes could hardly be higher. If Liberia succeeds, that success will bring hope to a region that has endured a contagion of war and displacement. If the expectations of two generations of Liberians who put their faith in a better future are not realized, the consequences for the Liberia and its neighbors could be dire. The moment to act is now, and the obligation falls to all of us—the government of Liberia, the international community, regional partners, civil society and the private sector—to meet the challenges ahead. Risks remain as we move forward, but the risks of not acting with conviction are far greater.

Ms. Johnson Sirleaf is president of Liberia. Mr. Wolfowitz is president of the World Bank.