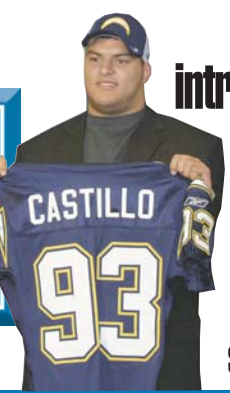




THE COASTAL NORTH COUNTY TIMES

NEWS FROM OCEANSIDE, VISTA, CARLSBAD, CAMP PENDLETON, ENCINITAS, SOLANA BEACH, DEL MAR AND ALL NORTH COUNTY



Now introducing...
Luis Castillo, left, and fellow Charger draft picks Shawne Merriman and Vincent Jackson were introduced at a press conference in San Diego on Sunday.
Sports, Page C-1

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2005 Vol. 121, No. 115 AN EDITION OF THE NORTH COUNTY TIMES 35 CENTS TAX INCLUDED

Immigration program enlists police agencies

BEN FOX
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANTA ANA — Frustrated by illegal immigrant criminals who slip their grasp, a growing number of state and county police agencies nationwide are moving to join a federal program that enlists local officers to enforce immigration laws.
The U.S. government has already granted that authori-

ty in Florida and Alabama, and the program is under consideration in Connecticut, Oklahoma and Arkansas.
To the dismay of immigrant advocates, it's also in the works in Southern California — one of the nation's most ethnically diverse regions, where it would reverse a long-standing policy of avoiding questions about immigration status during local

► **LAW, A-6**

Pope formally installed at Mass

Pontiff will listen to followers, study pressing issues

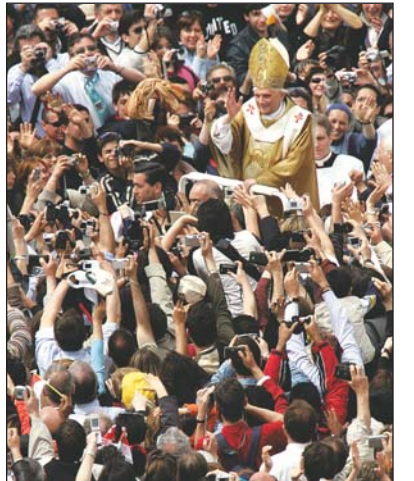
BRIAN MURPHY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

VATICAN CITY — In a broad message of outreach to formally begin his papacy, Pope Benedict XVI stressed his church's shared bonds with Jews and other Christians and

promised followers Sunday he would not ignore their voices in leading the world's 1.1 billion Roman Catholics.
The pope's first major homily in St. Peter's Square also was noteworthy for what it left out: no mention of any current political issues or direct over-

tures toward Muslims although he paid respects "to believers and nonbelievers alike."
"My real program of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen, together with the whole

► **POPE, A-4**



Pope Benedict XVI waves to the crowd as he rides through St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Sunday following his installment Mass. (DOMENICO STINELLIS /AP)

Panel: Excessive tax breaks a problem

■ **Businesses that offer health insurance account for biggest deduction**

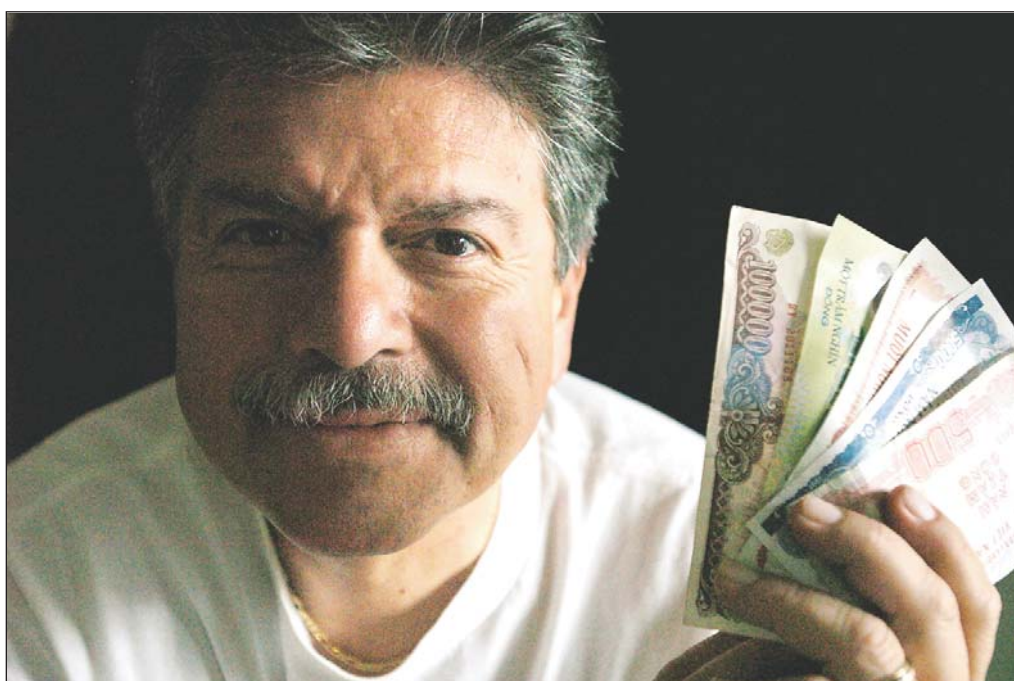
MARY DALRYMPLE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — As taxpayers recover from finishing their annual filing chores, a presidential commission studying the tax laws has reached the conclusion that there are just too many deductions and credits.
To help taxpayers deal with college costs there are — depending on which applies to a particular individual — two different kinds of tax credits, a deduction for student loan interest and special tax-advantaged savings plans. Special urban and rural tax zones encourage investment and job creation. Dozens of other tax benefits help families raise children and save for retirement, encourage adoption, nudge drivers toward hybrid cars and push businesses to invest in new equipment.
"We have lost sight of the fact that the fundamental purpose of our tax system is to raise revenues to fund government," according to President Bush's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform.
The commission's chairman, former Florida Sen. Connie Mack, said its nine members have been surprised at the number of tax

► **TAX, A-7**

'One of the reasons I wanted to go back was to get a chance with the Vietnamese people on a better level.'

— RUBEN ROJAS, Veteran who recently took a trip to Vietnam



DON BOOMER / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ruben Rojas, who earned a Purple Heart while serving in the Army during Vietnam, just finished a goodwill tour of Vietnam sponsored by the national Veterans of Foreign Wars. He brought back mementos of his trip, which included this Vietnamese currency.

Veteran returns to Vietnam for healing

30 years later, Escondido man tours area that scarred him

STORY BY **ANDREW PHELPS** • FOR THE NORTH COUNTY TIMES

Ruben Rojas couldn't wait to revisit Vietnam, the place that had scarred him.
In 1970, he had returned home from his tour of duty, a 21-year-old with a Purple Heart and a lot of rage.
"As I saw my friends either being killed or wounded, I had this tremendous hate for those people," Rojas said. "I hated that country and I hated the people."
Those feelings have finally evaporated, he said

last week.
Rojas, now 55, returned April 17 from a seven-day tour of Vietnam and its historic cities. He joined 11 other Purple Heart vets, who were selected by the Veterans of Foreign Wars in a nationwide lottery. Rojas, an Army veteran, was the only member of the group from California.
He said he got news of his selection on Dec. 1, the anniversary date of his original return from Vietnam.
Like so many other

young people in 1970, Rojas had been a student and anti-war protester. He said he took off a semester from Mesa College in San Diego to earn enough money for a car — and was immediately drafted and sent to Vietnam.
Thirty-five years later, he says he was eager to join the VFW trip.
"The fact that I could hate that much always bothered me. One of the

► **VIETNAM, A-4**

Insurgent attacks kill at least 21

Iraqi lawmakers say prime minister ready to announce Cabinet

THOMAS WAGNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — An emboldened Iraqi insurgency staged carefully coordinated dual bombings in Saddam Hussein's hometown and a Shiite neighborhood of the capital Sunday, killing at least 21 people.
An American soldier was killed in a separate attack.
On the political front, lawmakers loyal to the new prime minister said he was ready to announce a Cabinet that would exclude his interim predecessor, Ayad Allawi.
Prime Minister-designate Ibrahim al-Jaafari had decided, some members of his political bloc said, to shun further attempts to include members of the party headed by Allawi, the secular Shiite politician who had served as prime minister as the country prepared for its election Jan. 30.
Members of Allawi's Iraqi List, which controls 40 seats in the National Assembly, said his party had not been officially informed of the development. Allawi loyalists were bidding for at least four ministries, including a senior government post and a

► **ATTACKS, A-5**

Marines sound off about want of armor, men

MICHAEL MOSS
THE NEW YORK TIMES

On May 29, 2004, a station wagon that Iraqi insurgents had packed with C-4 explosives blew up on a highway in Ramadi, killing four Marines who died for lack of a few inches of steel.
The four were returning to camp in an unarmored Humvee that their unit had rigged with scrap metal, but the makeshift shields rose only as high as the Marines' shoulders, photographs of the stricken Humvee show, and the shrapnel from the bomb shot over the top.
"The steel was not high enough," said Staff Sgt. Jose S. Valerio, their motor transport chief, who along with the unit's commanding officers said the men would have lived had their vehicle been properly armored. "Most of the shrapnel wounds were to their heads."
Among those killed were Rafael Reynosa, a 28-year-old

► **MARINES, A-5**

Frist defends anti-filibuster effort, says judges deserve 'respect, not retaliation'

DAVID ESPO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Majority Leader Bill Frist said Sunday it was not "radical" to ask senators to vote on judicial nominees as he hardened his effort to strip Democrats of their power to stall

President Bush's picks for the federal court.
Frist, speaking at an event organized by Christian groups trying to rally churchgoers to support an end to judicial filibusters, also said judges deserve "respect, not retaliation," no matter how they rule.
A potential candidate for the

White House in 2008, the Tennessee Republican made no overt mention of religion in the brief address, according to his videotaped remarks played on giant television screens to an audience estimated at 1,700 in Louisville, Ky.
Instead, Frist seemed intent on steering clear of the views ex-

pressed by House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, and other conservatives in and out of Congress who have urged investigations and even possible impeachment of judges they describe as activists.
"Our judiciary must be independent, impartial and fair," said Frist, who was not present

at the event.
"When we think judicial decisions are outside mainstream American values, we will say so. But we must also be clear that the balance of power among all three branches requires respect — not retaliation. I won't go

► **FRIST, A-7**



Bill Frist

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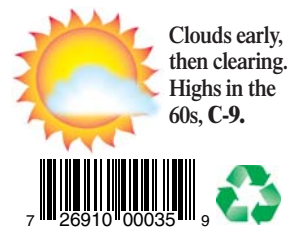
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Working to fix Medicaid

Governors across the nation are gathering information for Congress on what they want from Medicaid reform.
See Page A-3

THE WEATHER



Clouds early, then clearing. Highs in the 60s. C-9.



'Get results' with NCT classifieds

'I got 12 applications for my help wanted ad.'
— B. Berry, SMAC Carlsbad



Creativity ABOUNDS
Rain didn't dampen spirits during the Arts in the Park in Fallbrook on Sunday.
See B-1