

GOOD MORNING

ONONDAGA COUNTY: OLD STORY

The familiar refrain about April showers probably will be heard a lot in Syracuse today and Wednesday as periods of rain dot the area. Some sunshine may break through the clouds at times.

Complete forecast, B-6

HIGH: 51 LOW: 33

Alliance buys Oswego County bank

Syracuse's Alliance Financial Corp. on Monday said it would buy Bridge Street Financial Group, parent of Oswego County National Bank, for \$55 million in cash and stock.

BUSINESS, PAGE C-1

Step 1 in case of bird flu: Don't panic

State health officials have prepared a media campaign to be launched upon the first reports of avian flu in New York to extinguish any flare-up of public panic. The ads stress that the appearance of a bird infected with the H5N1 virus does not mean an outbreak in humans.

NEW YORK, PAGE A-8

Bombings strike at Egyptian beach resort

Three nearly simultaneous bombings hit an Egyptian beach resort popular with foreigners Monday at the height of the tourist season, killing at least 23 people a day after Osama bin Laden issued a taped warning against Westerners.

STORY, PAGE A-4

Bush visits California to push immigration bill

With hundreds of protesters in Orange County, Calif., waving "secure our borders" signs, President Bush called for Congress to act quickly on comprehensive immigration reform. "I know this is an emotional debate," he told a business council. "But one thing you must not lose sight of is we are talking about human beings, decent human beings."

STORY, PAGE A-9

The Moose get back in playoffs against Crunch

The Manitoba Moose defeated the Syracuse Crunch 2-1 on Monday putting the best-of-seven AHL playoff series at 2-1 in favor of Syracuse. Game four is 8:30 p.m. Wednesday in Manitoba.

SPORTS, PAGE D-1

Online news updates

The Post-Standard's reporters update the news of Central New York from morning until night seven days a week. Get the latest news when you want it at: www.syracuse.com/news/updates

Corrections

- David Lobbell not an employee of Lenny's Place/A-2
- Todeschini was a former member of the Taunton Fire Department/A-2
- Call Deputy Executive Editor Tim Bunn at 470-2240 to discuss a correction on a news story. Subscription questions? Call 470-NEWS (470-6397).

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THE POST-STANDARD



Sinking boater saved: 'I just knew that this was my time' Daring Rescue on Oneida Lake

By Suzanne M. Ellis Staff writer

As Ed Podolak clung to a flotation cushion and the small chunk of his capsized boat that was still above water, he thought about his wife and son and wondered what their lives would be like without him.



Podolak

Numbness had set into his arms and legs, and the bitter-cold waves and wind in the middle of Oneida Lake battered his body.

"I didn't really feel any pain or anything. I just knew that this was my time and that I was going to die," said Podolak, 47, of Wampsville. "Facing death like that, knowing that it's all going to end right there, it was absolutely terrifying."

Just as Podolak began to slip into unconsciousness Sunday night, he heard the roar of a state police helicopter. Its crew had been dispatched from the scene of the accident in Onondaga County that killed state Trooper Craig Todeschini, said Cleveland Volunteer Fire Chief Jack Cottet.

"That was probably the most beautiful, unbelievable feeling I've ever felt in my life," Podolak said. "I saw that helicopter, and I knew I was going to live."

As the state police helicopter hovered, pinpointing the location of the sinking boat for rescuers, Cleveland Deputy Fire Chief David Hinds, Rick Sorensen, of Cleveland, and David Hall, of Ogdensburg, were racing to the center of the lake in Sorensen's 20-foot fiberglass boat.

Sorensen and Hall are civilians who happened to be in the right place, App's Landing in Cleveland, at the right time, 6:30 p.m. Sunday, and volunteered to help with the rescue.

"The waves were four to five feet high, and the water was very, very cold," Cottet said. "They found (Podolak) barely able to speak or move, and he was just at the point of dropping into unconsciousness."

Podolak had been in the water for more than half an hour.

As Sorensen piloted the rescue boat, Hinds was able to snag Podolak by his belt and drag him out of the water.

COLD, SINKING, PAGE A-7

FAMILY, FRIENDS, COMMUNITY REACT TO TROOPER'S DEATH



COURTESY OF JIM TODESCHINI CRAIG TODESCHINI and his wife, the former Kristi Palmer, were married two years ago.

Trooper's father loses the son who followed him

By Dick Clarke Staff writer

Jim Todeschini, a retired town of Geddes police officer, tried to remember when his son, Craig, first wanted to be a trooper.

"I think it goes back to seeing me work for the town," Jim Todeschini said. "I was a volunteer firefighter in Solvay, too, and used to take him to the fireburn all the time."

"It's a nice feeling when your son wants to be like you, but maybe if he didn't..."

His voice faltered and he couldn't hold back tears.

Craig, 25, died Sunday when, on duty as a state trooper, he crashed into a tree in the hamlet of Pompey Hills while chasing a speeding motorcyclist.

A trooper for 3½ years, he was stationed with Troop D in LaFayette.



FLOWERS SURROUND the site Monday of the accident that killed Trooper Craig Todeschini at Route 91 and Cherry Street in the hamlet of Pompey Hill.

MIKE GREENLAR / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Todeschini funeral arrangements

Calling hours: 4-8 p.m. Wednesday at Holy Family Church, 127 Chapel Drive, Camillus

Services: A funeral Mass will be at 11 a.m. Thursday at the church. Capacity of the church is 1,000. News 10 Now will broadcast the service

Burial: Private burial services will be in St. Mary's Cemetery Mausoleum, DeWitt.

Arrangements by: Bagozzi Twins Funeral Home, Solvay

Contributions: Todeschini Children's Fund, c/o NYSPBA, 120 State St., Albany, NY 12207

"It's one of those dreams you wished you'd wake up from," Jim Todeschini said from his Fairmount home. "You can't prepare for it."

"It's like taking half your heart."

TODESCHINI, PAGE A-6

Motorcyclist still at large; state police seek information

By Jim Read Staff writer

State police want someone to drop a dime on the rider of the motorcycle being pursued Sunday by state Trooper Craig Todeschini.

"There are people there who know who this individual is," said Maj. Gerard Kroppf, commander of state police Troop D at a news conference Monday. "We're asking them to make a phone call."

Todeschini, 25, died when he lost control of his Chevrolet Tahoe patrol vehicle in the pursuit and crashed into a tree in the hamlet of Pompey Hill.

State police continued Monday to

What they're saying

Many Central New Yorkers are leaving thoughts for Trooper Craig J. Todeschini and his family in the Crime and Safety Forum at Syracuse.com. Many are debating the dangers of police pursuits. Join the discussion at www.syracuse.com/forums/crime/

search for the motorcyclist.

"We have a lot of leads we have to work on," Kroppf said.

Kroppf said tracking down high-speed motorcyclists is difficult because their

TROOPERS GOT, PAGE A-6

State taxpayers help pay for groups that lobby

Advocacy groups: we use the grants to educate the public, not to influence legislators.

By Michelle Breidenbach Staff writer

NARAL Pro-Choice New York lobbyists invested almost \$200,000 last year to persuade state legislators to, among other issues, allow pharmacies to dispense the morning-after pill to women without prescriptions.

At the same time, New York's lawmakers directed \$111,000 in state grants to fund NARAL's

programs. Both Republican and Democratic legislators designated pork barrel grants for the group to train doctors to help their teenage patients open up about their sex lives.

The exchange of money is a strange give-and-take between lobbyists and lawmakers in Albany. Hundreds of thousands of state dollars are funneled into the budgets of political advocacy groups that exist only to promote their views on such hot-button issues as abortion, crime and school funding.

STATE IS, PAGE A-6

Pork and advocacy

Political activists are lobbying state legislators to change laws to suit their causes. At the same time, lawmakers are awarding these groups pork barrel grants. Here are some of the groups for which the state approved grants in 2005:

- NARAL Pro-Choice NY: \$111,612
- Parents for Megan's Law: \$96,769
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving: \$30,000
- Campaign for Fiscal Equity: \$5,000
- AARP: \$3,000
- National Organization for Women: \$2,000

Updates on the budget compromise in Albany/A-8

B'ville Jesus poster case headed to federal trial

By Michele Reaves Staff writer

After seven years, a court case involving a kindergarten's drawing of Jesus for a class assignment in the Baldwinsville school district will go to trial in federal court in Syracuse.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused Monday to hear the Baldwinsville school district's request to have the case thrown out.

Now a federal judge in Syracuse will have to decide whether the district censored a Christian

perspective, said Mathew Staver, attorney for the now sixth-grader Antonio Peck and his mother, JoAnne. He called it good news for Peck and other children in the nation.

"It's huge because if (the decision) had gone the other way it would allow teachers and school officials to treat religious perspectives like they're unwelcome," Staver said.

The Peck family, who live in Van Buren, could not be reached for comment.

COURT'S, PAGE A-7

Inside: Mexico district to put Christian bricks back in/A-7

THE VALUE OF HARD WORK Could help end welfare, writes C-NS senior Zack Stasko. VOICES, PAGE B-2



HOOKED ON POETRY It's easy if you try. THE DAILY DOSE, PAGE E-8



INSIDE GET READY TO RUN Seven Central New Yorkers give tips on preparing for a race. CNY, PAGE E-1



THE SALT AWARDS Find out who won in local theater. CNY, PAGE E-4

