

Journal Inquirer

Saturday-Sunday, October 2-3, 2004

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Guilty of murder plot

A Hartford Superior Court jury has found a former Enfield man guilty of plotting to kill a state prosecutor. Witnesses said the man was angry over the conviction of his son and his own prosecution on charges he attacked a man he thought had "snitched" on his son.

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Still doing good

Bud Moyer loved pediatrics because he was doing something good. So there was a vacuum in his life when he retired from his Manchester practice. To fill it, Moyer traded his stethoscope and tongue depressors for a screwdriver and a hammer and became a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity.

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Peeler faces death

The state Supreme Court has given prosecutors the chance to try again to win the death penalty against Russel Peeler Jr. for ordering the murders of an 8-year-old boy and his mother. When a jury couldn't reach a decision on his sentence, a judge imposed a life term. Prosecutors successfully argued the judge could have declared a mistrial, instead, and allowed a second hearing on imposing the death penalty on Peeler in the notorious case.

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Laslooy F. Alleyne Jr. / Journal Inquirer

Laura-Lee Carroll and her son, Ben, with some of his artwork.

Boy surmounts disability with art

By Christine McCluskey

Journal Inquirer

MANCHESTER — Ben Carroll enthusiastically shows off his colorful paintings of animals, one after the other — parrots, a panda, giraffes, zebras, more giraffes, and finally, his favorite animal of all, an elephant.

The 10-year-old boy started taking classes in painting just this summer, after years of drawing at home. These paintings were all done in the past few weeks.

But Ben is already getting ready for his first exhibition, opening later this month.

Ben has autism, which makes it difficult for him to sit still and concentrate. In addition, his speech development has been slow, says his mother, Laura-Lee Carroll.

"He didn't even speak until he was 3," Carroll says.

When she and her husband, Ed, met Ben, he was living in what she describes as a "terrible" orphanage in Bulgaria. He was never held in the orphanage and was severely underfed, she adds.

The Carrolls decided to adopt Ben and were able to take him home at age 18 months.

The Carrolls had to take Ben to a children's hospital twice a week for speech and occupational therapy until he was 7 years old, she says.

The family's strong faith helps them get through difficult times, she says, adding that she has seen Ben's condition improve greatly over the years.

"God is healing him," she says.

Ben has a 6-year-old brother, Marcus, whom the Carrolls adopted from a foster family in Romania. Unlike Ben, Marcus was well taken care of before his adoption, and he doesn't have disabilities.

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St. Helens erupts again

Washington volcano emits ash, smoke

By David Ammons

Associated Press

MOUNT ST. HELENS, Wash. — Mount St. Helens, the volcano that blew its top with cataclysmic force in 1980, erupted for the first time in 18 years Friday, belching a huge column of white steam and ash after days of rumblings under the mountain.

The noontime eruption cast a haze across the horizon as the roiling plume rose from the nearly 1,000-foot-tall lava dome, forcing Alaska Airlines to cancel flights and divert others around the ash.

"It was such a thrill!" said Faye Ray, a retired teacher who watched from an observatory near the mountain. "I just felt we would see something today, and we did."

Scientists had been predicting just such an eruption for days because of thousands of earthquakes and signs that the rock inside the crater was expanding rapidly.

The eruption was nowhere near what happened 24 years ago, when 57 people were killed and towns up to 250 miles away were showered with rock and ash.

About 20 minutes after Friday's eruption, the mountain calmed and the plume began to dissipate. The ash appeared to pose no threat to anyone, but scientists warned that people living southwest of the mountain might notice a fine film of ash on their cars. No evacuations were ordered, and there was no sign of any

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