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Some Sun

Partly sunny today, high in the mid 30s. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low around 20. Friday, mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of afternoon snow. High in the mid 30s.

50 CENTS

President Discusses Social Security With The Next Generation

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a satellite-linked address to college campuses across the country, President Clinton made his case for shoring up Social Security and Medicare to people who might be called the "sandwich" generation: today's college students who could get stuck supporting their baby boom parents while trying to raise families of their own.

Clinton drew sharp distinctions between his plan's use of federal budget surpluses to reinforce the retirement system before the aging of his generation overburdens it and the Republican idea of using the extra cash to slash taxes by 10 percent across the board.

"Their idea sounds simple, sounds good, even sounds fair — 10 percent for everybody," Clinton said Wednesday. "Our idea will give you a stronger economy, will save Social Security and Medicare, will stabilize families, will strengthen the ability

of the United States to lead the world."

The message came home to students watching at Philadelphia's Temple University.

"It sounds like I'm going to be retiring shortly after all these benefits run out," said John Chaump, 22, a junior. "It does make me think about what I'll do."

Anthony Gilbert, 22, a junior broadcast television major, said he hadn't considered himself "that old to really think about" Social Security until he listened to Clinton.

"We're not going to be young forever," he said. "It's something you should think about, for your parents and grandparents also."

Meanwhile, Republicans began picking apart details of Clinton's plan and said they had begun work on alternative legislation, particularly a measure to counter an administration proposal for creating 401(k)-style

See PRESIDENT page two

Key '93 Work at Roberts Grove, Myer Complex Slated for May

by Jon Sherman

Actual construction on Key '93 improvements to Roberts Grove and the Edward C. Myer Complex is expected to begin around May 1, according to Tim McGregor, a member of the committee.

On Wednesday, McGregor said an announcement would be made in the near future that the projects are to go out to bid.

Key '93 is a state program of improvements to parks and recreational facilities that matches dollar-for-dollar up to \$400,000 money raised locally for approved projects. After the maximum match has been received, the Key '93 program continues to review and approve local projects.

Since January 1993 when the city resolved to participate in Key '93, McGregor said, a total of \$1,071,818.15 has been raised, of which about \$400,000 is a state match.

It is estimated that the improvements to the two parks will

total about \$1,465,000, which McGregor said means an additional \$380,000 needs to be raised.

Within the next month, city residents will receive a mailing explaining the Key '93 program, along with pictures of the parks showing the new designs and equipment that will be featured. The letter asks for donations of money and adds an option of purchasing a plaque to be engraved and installed in the park of choice.

Improvements at Roberts Grove include all new sidewalks, with all new playground equipment. Older children's equipment is on the Monroe Street side of the park, with the younger children's on the First Street side, which is on the less traveled side of the park.

The basketball court, McGregor said, will be completely renovated and located in the same place. There also will be an area with smaller basketball hoops for

See KEY '93 page two



KEY '93 - Roberts Grove is one of the city's parks (along with Edward C. Myer Complex) targeted for improvements under the Key '93 program. Under Key '93, funds raised locally are matched dollar-for-dollar. Work on the improvements is expected to begin by early May. (Herald photo by Jon Sherman)

Medicare Proposals Could Save Billions

WASHINGTON (AP) — Medicare changes being considered by a reform commission could eventually save the health insurance program for the elderly and disabled up to \$850 billion dollars a year, according to preliminary estimates.

But reaching that level of savings would take 30 years and is dependent on the assumption that private-sector competition can help reduce Medicare costs, says a report prepared by the staff of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare.

The commission's chairman, Sen. John Breaux, D-La., released the report late Wednesday, under increasing pressure from commission members who want to know how Medicare's finances would be affected by a plan Breaux is trying to rally the panel around.

The commission has less than two weeks until March 1, when it must make recommendations to Congress and President Clinton. Without changes, Medicare is expected to be financially overwhelmed in coming decades by millions of aging baby boomers.

Under Breaux's plan, Medicare would help the elderly and disabled buy private health insurance so the government could begin shifting away from paying individual medical bills.

While there is tentative support for the idea, enough commissioners have serious misgivings that it is not yet assured of being included in the panel's final recommendations.

Independent analysis of the plan by congressional and Clinton administration auditors is not complete.

The study by commission staff found that the plan could slow expected growth in Medicare costs by about 1 percent a year — a modest amount that would compound over time.

Heinz To Lay Off Up to 4,000

PITTSBURGH (AP) — H.J. Heinz Co. will lay off as many as 4,000 workers during the next four years, sell its Weight Watchers diet classes and close some factories to boost profits, company officials said Wednesday.

The Pittsburgh-based company will concentrate on food products, including Heinz ketchup and Star-Kist tuna.

William R. Johnson, Heinz's president and chief executive officer, described the four-year plan called "Operation Excel" to financial analysts in Naples, Fla.

"It is regrettable that a necessary consequence of the restructuring process is a reduction of the global workforce," he said.

Heinz executives want to save \$2.5 billion during the next four years to reinvest in Heinz

brands and \$100 million to market food in other countries.

Johnson said the company will lay off at least 3,000 workers by closing 15 to 20 factories and reducing operations at least 10 others. Production will be expanded at 13 to 15 other factories to help centralize manufacturing, Johnson said.

Company spokesman Ted Smyth said officials have yet to decide which factories will close or lose production. Heinz has 100 factories and 40,500 employees worldwide.

Some Heinz employees in Pittsburgh said they were not worried.

Jimmy Mullin, a 53-year-old driver, said workers learned Tuesday that the layoffs would affect mostly workers overseas. The aromatic plant along the Allegheny River makes baby food,



AREA FARMER HONORED - Bob Brace of Waterford accepted the Lincoln Heritage Institute's Guardian of Liberty Award in Washington, D.C., from last year's recipient, Rep. Helen Chenoweth (R-ID). Brace has spent 12 years and over \$3 million defending his private property rights from state and federal officials who declared his farm a supposed "wetland."

Simpson Memorabilia Burned at Courthouse

LOS ANGELES (AP) — O.J. Simpson memorabilia went up in flames to a chorus of cheers and boos Wednesday, a day after it was sold at auction to help pay off the \$33.5 million judgment he owes in the deaths of ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend.

Two No. 32 football jerseys and a Professional Football Hall of Fame induction certificate were burned and two trophies were smashed outside the Criminal Courts Building in a

protest organized by a Christian radio talk show host who purchased \$16,000 worth of items.

The auction Tuesday raised \$430,000, including \$255,500 for Simpson's Heisman Trophy.

"We are destroying O.J. Simpson's property in front of the L.A. courthouse because the criminal justice system is destroying justice before our very eyes," protest organizer Bob Enyart of Denver said.

The destruction was criticized

See BURNED page two

ANF Allocations Made

The U.S. Treasury has paid the state an amount equal to the 25 percent of all monies collected by Allegheny National Forest in fiscal year 1998, according to ANF Forest Supervisor John Palmer.

Gross receipts on the ANF amounted to \$23,201,785 for the period of October 1997 through September 1998. Of this amount, \$23,096,745 or 99 percent came from timber purchasers paying for the value of wood they harvested. The remaining \$105,039 was collected from recreation activities and people or

organizations who have special use permits for things like TV antennas, water wells for cabins, gas pipelines and transmission lines.

By law, 25 percent of all gross national forest receipts are returned to the state in which the national forest is located.

For fiscal year 1998, the 25-percent fund payment to Pennsylvania attributable to ANF activities was \$5,800,446.

These funds can be used only for schools and roads in the four counties with ANF land. Distribution is projected according to

the amount of federal land in each county. Allocations to the four counties for fiscal year 1998 are:

Elk - \$1,263,746.

Forest - \$1,346,155.

McKean - \$1,529,573.

Warren - \$1,660,972.

Between 1986 and 1998, 25-percent fund payments from the ANF have steadily increased from \$2,344,344 to a peak of \$6,207,364 in fiscal year 1996, dropping slightly in the past two years.

The high value of gross re-

See ANF page two

House Members Protest Plans For Human Stem-Cell Research

WASHINGTON (AP) — Funding of human stem cell research by the National Institutes of Health would violate a federal law, 70 House members told the Clinton administration.

In a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, the lawmakers objected to plans by the National Institutes of Health to fund research using stem cells obtained from human embryos or fetuses.

Stem cells are basic biological building blocks. Some forms of stem cells extracted from embryos or fetuses theoretically have the ability to create any organ or any tissue. Scientists say that by guiding the growth of these cells it might be possible to culture new organs to re-

place ailing hearts, or neurons for the treatment of brain disease or injury, or insulin-producing cells to cure diabetes.

No government-backed research has been conducted on stem cells because a 1996 law specifically forbids spending federal dollars for medical research that involves creation of a human embryo for research purposes, or conducting research in which a human embryo has been destroyed.

However, privately funded researchers not covered by the ban last year grew colonies of stem cells from tissue taken from human fetuses and embryos.

Last month, NIH Director Harold Varmus announced that the agency had decided these laboratory-grown cells were not

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