

A Slow Process



September 3, 2007

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The next issue of Capitol Journal will be available on September 10th.

Top Story

It has been two years since Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. While Congress has approved billions of dollars toward rebuilding the area, progress has been painfully slow.

SNCJ Spotlight

Gulf Coast communities still awaiting Katrina relief

Two years have passed since Hurricane Katrina slammed the Gulf Coast. And that is particularly hard to believe for the residents of some of the communities that were hardest hit — and that are still waiting for the government funding to rebuild.

Most of New Orleans' firefighters, for example, are still working out of aluminum trailers and about 147,000 of the city's residents have yet to return to their homes.



Although Congress has approved \$34 billion for long-term rebuilding, less than half that amount has made it to the areas that need it most. Which has understandably frustrated many locals. “We’re working ourselves close to death,” said one New Orleans civic activist. “But we can’t move it past further than what we have today. The government needs to step up.”

Part of the problem is simply the magnitude of the damage caused by Katrina. “There was a tendency in the early days to think we could run this as we might run a garden-variety disaster,” said FEMA’s deputy administrator for Gulf Coast Recovery Gil Jamieson. “But you just can’t push that big of a pig through the pipe.”

Another major reason for the delay, however, is that until recently, federal law required cities and states to match federal disaster funding at a rate of 10 percent and to pay their share up front. Although those requirements were waived after other disasters, like Hurricane Andrew in 1992 and the 2001 terrorist attacks, they remained in place for post-Katrina recovery until this past May, when Congress abolished the law imposing them.

Over the last year and three-quarters, the 10 percent match requirement placed communities that had lost their property and sales tax base in a Catch-22 situation. “You take a town that has absolutely no income and say they have to pay 10 percent,” said Leo “Chipper” McDermott, mayor of the small, coastal MISSISSIPPI town of

“There was a tendency in the early days to think we could run this as we might run a garden-variety disaster. But you just can’t push that big of a pig through the pipe.”

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Pass Christian. “It was a burden we just could not have done.”

Other communities have been more fortunate. Almost 80 percent of the homes in the New Orleans neighborhood

of Lakewood — which sustained some of the worst flooding when the city’s levee system failed — have been rebuilt or reoccupied. The key in that instance, however, appears to be that the community’s affluent residents possessed the resources and contacts to make them less dependent upon government assistance.

One Lakewood resident, Denise Thorton, who used her own savings to rebuild her home and also started a non-profit organization called Beacon of Hope, which cleared streets of debris and rebuilt parks to draw other residents back, had some advice for those who might find themselves in a similar situation in the future.

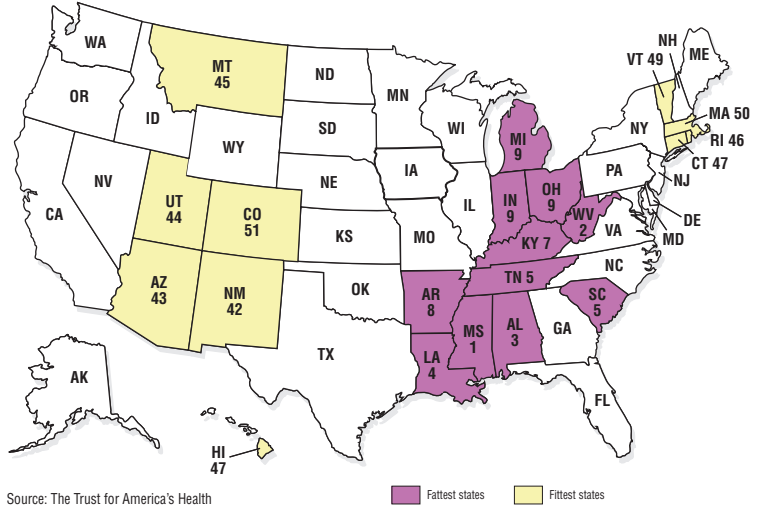
“If disaster strikes another city, the best thing they could do is realize that the government will not do anything for you,” she said.



But the government hasn't been entirely inactive. It has cleared about 111 million cubic yards of debris from Gulf Coast communities, and restored water and power to virtually every city in the region. And the Army Corps of Engineers has spent billions shoring up New Orleans' levee system.

And although government relief has been slower in coming to the region than it perhaps should have been, an alternate problem may have been avoided. According to Haruo Hayashi, Ph.D., of the Disaster Prevention Research Institute at Kyoto University, when an earthquake struck Kobe, Japan in 1995, killing 4,500 people and causing billions of dollars in damage, the Japanese government poured the equivalent of 113 billion in today's dollars into recovery. While that flood of federal money allowed the city to rebuild its infrastructure within a year and a half, when the money ran out, the city's economy slumped into a depression that lasted five years. "Government spending is a very powerful tool for recovery," said Hayashi. "Too fast is not so good. Too slow is also not good. Wise pacing is key to recovery." (USA TODAY)

Bird's eye view



Many states still facing weight problem



When it comes to battling the bulge, no state struggles more than MISSISSIPPI, which for the third year in a row has the highest percentage of obese adults in the nation. According to a new survey from the Trust for America's Health (TFAH), a Washington D.C.-based non-profit that focuses on disease prevention, the Magnolia State is the only one to have an obesity rate above 30 percent (30.6). MISSISSIPPI was not alone in its added girth, however, as the TFAH report notes that 31 states experienced a hike in adult obesity over the last year, while no state saw a decrease. The added girth was particularly acute in the South, where 10 of the 15 most obese states are located. In contrast, Western and Northeastern states were the fittest, led for the second year in a row by COLORADO, which was the leanest state in the nation.

— Compiled by KOREY CLARK

Budget & taxes

SCHWARZENEGGER SIGNS BUDGET: Fifty-six days into the start of the new fiscal year, CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) finally signed a state budget on Aug. 24. After being approved by the Assembly on





July 20, the plan had been held up in the Senate by Republicans who demanded, among other things, that the state's structural deficit be reduced to zero. The GOP minority ultimately conceded to the plan in exchange for \$703 million in line-item cuts to the \$145 billion plan: \$523 million from health and human services programs, including Medi-Cal; \$70 million in state worker raises and \$39 million in funding for correctional facilities. Shortly before signing the budget, Schwarzenegger, in his usual way, put a positive spin on the proceedings of the last two months, stating, "Let me just say that some things are worth fighting for, and a good budget is one of those things." (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE)

CENSUS BUREAU RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT CARD: The U.S. Census Bureau released its annual report on the state of America's standard of living last week. Among the more positive findings: the percentage of Americans living below the poverty line dropped for the first time in a decade (from 12.6 percent to 12.3 percent) and the income of the typical, or median, household rose for the second year in a row (to \$48,200). However, earnings for full-time workers fell, the disparity between the rich and poor is continuing to widen and 2.2 million people were added to the ranks of the uninsured, bringing the total number of Americans who lack health insurance to 47 million. As Douglas Besharov of the conservative American Enterprise Institute put it, "I would not call 2006 a banner year, but it could be a lot worse." (STATELINE.ORG, WALL STREET JOURNAL)

— Compiled by *KOREY CLARK*

The week in session

States in Regular Session: CA, MA, MI, NH, US, WI

States in Skeleton Session: OH

States in Perfunctory Session: IL
(Regular and Special Sessions "a" - "l")

States in Special Session: MT "b"

States in Recess: DC, NJ, NY, PA

Special Sessions in Recess: CT "a", DE "a"

States Currently Prefiling or Drafting for 2008: FL, KS, KY, OK

States Adjourned in 2007: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MN, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NM, NV, OK, OR, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY

State Special Sessions Adjourned in 2007: AK "a", AL "a", FL "a", FL "b", HI "a", KY "a", KY "b", MO "a", MS "a", MT "a", NM "a", NV "a", UT "a", WI "a", WV "a", WV "b"

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(session information current as of 08/31/2007)
Source: State Net database

Politics & leadership

PRIMARY SCHEDULE CONTINUES TO DEVOLVE: The 2008 presidential election season took another turn last week when the Democratic National Committee voted to strip FLORIDA of its convention delegates for moving its primary up to Jan. 29, in violation of party rules.

The Sunshine State's primary switch created a domino effect, spurring SOUTH CAROLINA Republicans to move their primary from Jan. 29 to Jan. 19 to maintain their state's "first in the South" position. That move, in turn, will force NEW HAMPSHIRE, by law, to hold its primary on Jan. 12 or earlier — a week before all other state primaries — and IOWA, likewise, to schedule its caucus on or before Jan. 4, eight days before any other state votes.

What's more, MICHIGAN is considering legislation to shift its primary to Jan. 15, which would push NEW HAMPSHIRE's primary to Jan. 8 and IOWA's caucus into 2007, although the state's governor, Chet Culver (D), has said, "We're committed to going in January 2008."

In an effort to rein things in, the DNC voted to strip FLORIDA of all 210 of its delegates, unless it agrees within 30 days to hold its primary at a later date. Meanwhile, the Republican National Committee is planning not only to strip FLORIDA of half of its delegates to the GOP national convention, but impose sanctions on at least five other states as well, including NEW HAMPSHIRE. "The rules are clear," said RNC spokeswoman Tracey Schmitt. "Any state that holds their primary outside the window" — that is, before Feb. 5 — "shall be penalized delegates."

The fact that 20 states are now planning to hold their primaries on Feb. 5 is another major concern for party officials. "If we don't do something, this is going to become a national primary and there will be federal legislation that takes it away from the parties," said one national Republican Party official.

But officials in the early primary states are undeterred. "If we end up being stripped of delegates, that is the price we are willing to pay," said Fergus Cullen, chairman of the NEW HAMPSHIRE Republican Party. FLORIDA GOP chairman Jim Greer's outlook is slightly more optimistic. "I am confident that all 114 [GOP] delegates from FLORIDA will be seated," he said, adding, "I am confident that the Republican National Committee or any eventual nominee will not allow the voices of FLORIDA voters not to be heard. FLORIDA is too important a state as it relates to electing the next president." And his faith isn't entirely unjustified. The parties aren't likely to do anything that could hurt their nominee's chances in the general election.

So the parties — and the nation's voters — may just have to prepare themselves for the longest general election campaign season in U.S. history. (USA TODAY, MIAMI HERALD, NEW YORK TIMES)

LOBBYING STATES' TOP COPS: Influence peddlers at the state level have found themselves a new target: attorneys general. And with AGs making decisions that can cost corporations millions of dollars in legal fees, fines and settlements, and the lobbying of those officials generally less subject to oversight than the lobbying of state legislators, it has become a lucrative specialty.

"A cottage industry has sprung up. There are now hundreds of people making a very good living lobbying attorneys general," said COLORADO Attorney General



John Suthers (R) at a recent forum in Washington, D.C. “When the 50 state attorneys general get together to discuss issues, there are often 100 or more lobbyists in the back of the room looking for an opportunity to further their cause.”

Suthers said the practice has become increasingly prevalent since attorneys general of 45 states won the record \$246 billion settlement

with tobacco companies in 1998. And high-profile investigations like the one conducted by NEW YORK Attorney General Andrew Cuomo’s (D) into the college-loan industry are likely only to fuel that trend. (STATELINE.ORG)

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

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Governors

HIGH NOON FOR CA HEALTHCARE REFORM: CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) made a big splash back in January when he announced an ambitious MASSACHUSETTS-style plan to provide everyone in the Golden State with health insurance. Interest in the proposal was understandable — given the state’s enormous population of uninsured, estimated at around 6.7 million people, a workable universal healthcare plan in CALIFORNIA could reasonably serve as a model for all other states and perhaps even the federal government. But with only a week left in the legislative session, some legislative

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leaders are saying the governor’s plan is all but dead for the year.

Experts closely watching the situation say that failure to get healthcare reform this year would not

only be a significant setback for both Schwarzenegger and lawmakers, but could potentially discourage other states from pursuing similar healthcare reform as well. Robert Ross, president of the CALIFORNIA Endowment, a foundation devoted to health care, says many of the presidential candidates have also been closely watching to see if CALIFORNIA can pull off substantive reform, noting that “If we fail, it will have the effect of a wet blanket on health reform nationally.”

Schwarzenegger’s proposal was a direct outcropping of the universal healthcare reform approved last year in MASSACHUSETTS. But fellow Republicans and



most business interests have never warmed to his plan, which would impose fees of 4 percent on hospitals and 2 percent on doctors. The measure would also require employers to spend at least 4 percent of their payroll on health care and require all CALIFORNIANS to obtain minimum coverage. Democrats have countered with legislation that would force employers to dedicate 7.5 percent of their payroll to healthcare or pay into a state fund, and would not require all residents to purchase coverage. Schwarzenegger has said he would veto that measure should it get to his desk. Either proposal would need approval from two-thirds of the Legislature, which is highly unlikely given Republican resistance to any fees on businesses.

Schwarzenegger has threatened to pursue a ballot measure next year if the issue does not get resolved before the session ends. Business groups could conceivably pursue their own measure as a hedge against a plan that imposes coverage mandates or fees on employers. One plan currently being floated around by the CALIFORNIA Restaurant Association would call for a 1 cent sales tax hike as a means of funding expanded healthcare, a proposal both Democrats and Republicans have rejected outright.

While some Legislative leaders have expressed grave doubts that anything will get done, Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez (D) says he has not yet given up hope. He compares the situation with last year's struggle to pass greenhouse gas legislation, saying that "I think if we kind of sit back and say, 'Well, we have too many differences,'

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In what could be construed as a positive sign, Núñez backed off of a planned call for a vote on Schwarzenegger's proposal, which he admitted was intended to publicly illustrate how little support the plan has in his chamber. "I'm not going to embarrass the governor. We're negotiating, and we're making progress," Núñez said. Whether that results in anything remains to be seen, but Schwarzenegger has yet another card to play should that progress again grind to a halt — he has already said he is willing to call a special session in mid-September should current talks fail. (SACRAMENTO BEE, ASSOCIATED PRESS, CAPITOL WEEKLY [SACRAMENTO], SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS)

Upcoming elections

08/30/2007 - 09/20/2007

09/04/2007

Massachusetts Special Primary
US House (Congressional District 05
(Martin T. Meehan))

Missouri Special Election
Senate District 23 (Chuck Gross)

South Carolina Special Primary
House District 124

09/11/2007

Alabama Special Election
Senate District 32

Massachusetts Special Primary
Senate Middlesex, Suffolk, Essex District
(Jarrett Barrios)

BLANCO DENIES KATRINA

CULPABILITY: During three hours of testimony, LOUISIANA Gov. Kathleen Blanco (D) said last week that she did everything in her power to warn Pelican State residents about the impending danger of Hurricane Katrina two years ago, but that heeding those warnings was an “individual responsibility.” Blanco’s statement came at the trial of a couple who ran a New Orleans nursing home where 35 elderly residents drowned during Hurricane Katrina. The couple — which is facing 35 counts of negligent homicide and 24 counts of cruelty to the infirm — contend that they did not evacuate their facility in St. Bernard Parish because a mandatory evacuation was never ordered there.

Blanco conceded that point, but defended her actions by insisting that she properly ceded that decision to local authorities, saying “I did not issue that order, because all of the local governments were deeply engaged in getting people out and helping them to evacuate.” Blanco’s appearance is the first time a sitting LOUISIANA governor has been compelled to testify in a criminal trial. (TIMES-PICAYUNE [NEW ORLEANS], NEW YORK TIMES)

EXECUTIVE ORDERS: GEORGIA Gov. Sonny Perdue (R) issued EO 240, which creates a commission to examine “perceived or actual” problems in mental health care, including overcrowding in the state hospitals and insufficient staffing and financing (STATE NET). • ARIZONA Gov. Janet Napolitano (D) issues EO 20, which directs all

“I did not issue that order, because all of the local governments were deeply engaged in getting people out and helping them to evacuate.”

state agencies to “rotate suppliers, regularly solicit new suppliers, and where practicable, request at least 1 quotation from a small business, a women-owned business or a minority-owned business...” when soliciting procurements less than \$50,000 (STATE NET).

• CALIFORNIA Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) issues EO 11, which directs state health officials to allocate \$500,000 to the state Fish and Game Department for vegetation management aimed at fighting West Nile Virus transmission (STATE NET).

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: ARIZONA Gov. Janet Napolitano (D) said she wants the Grand Canyon State to develop a 3-in-1 ID card that would serve as a

In the hopper

At any given time, State Net tracks tens of thousands of bills in all 50 states, the US Congress and the District of Columbia. Here’s a snapshot of what’s in the legislative works:

Number of prefiles last week: 32

Number of Intros last week: 108

Number of bills enacted/adopted last week: 397

Number of prefiles to date: 39,082

Number of Intros to date: 159,758

Number of enacted/adopted overall to date: 39,726

— Compiled By JAMES ROSS
(measures current as of 08/30/2007)
Source: State Net database

will still be required to carry at least \$10,000 of property damage coverage even if lawmakers allow the state's no-fault insurance law to expire in October. Lawmakers begin a special session on Sept. 18, but are not currently scheduled to address insurance issues (ORLANDO SUN-SENTINEL). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs legislation that will provide \$1 billion in rebates to Prairie State electrical customers. The measure rolls back about half of the price increases enacted since the state's 10-year price freeze expired in January. The new law additionally requires utilities to include an increasing percentage of renewable energy in their power portfolio each year and to encourage more efficient consumer energy use (STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER [SPRINGFIELD]). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate gives final approval to a measure that bars employers from requiring their workers to have radio frequency identification device (RFID) chips implanted under their skin. It moves to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) for review (LOS ANGELES TIMES).

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: The **CALIFORNIA** Supreme Court rules that the salary and hiring records of police agencies and other government employees are open to the public. The ruling settles a five-year-old lawsuit brought by newspapers seeking to obtain the information (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs SB 300, which requires first-time DUI offenders to install breath alcohol ignition interlock devices if they are to be allowed to drive their cars to work while their licenses are suspended (STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER [SPRINGFIELD]). • A **NEW JERSEY** court rules that juvenile detention centers have the same responsibility as public schools to serve as a substitute parent, and are thereby legally responsible for protecting inmates from sexual abuse by facility supervisors or employees (STAR-LEDGER [NEWARK]).

EDUCATION: **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) vetoes a measure that would have required public schools to observe a moment of silence before the start of each school day. Blagojevich said state law already allows Prairie State teachers to ask students to take a moment for silent reflection before class and that making such time mandatory could violate the Constitution's ban on state-sponsored religion (DAILY HERALD [ARLINGTON HEIGHTS]).

ENVIRONMENT: The **HAWAII** Supreme Court rules that Aloha State officials should have ordered an environmental review before allowing the private **HAWAII** Superferry service to begin carrying passengers between the Islands. A state court later issued a temporary restraining order that has blocked the ferry service from entering Maui's Kahului Harbor until the assessment is complete. The ferry service later suspended operations indefinitely after protesters prevented the vessel from entering Kauai's Nawiliwili Harbor (HONOLULU ADVERTISER, SEATTLE TIMES).



HEALTH & SCIENCE: NEW YORK Gov. Eliot Spitzer (D) vetoes legislation that would have restricted the use of lead in the manufacture of children’s jewelry. Spitzer cited language in the bill that he says would have made the measure unenforceable (TIMES UNION [ALBANY]). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs legislation that requires dentists to hold a state permit before they can sedate patients to a state between consciousness and unconsciousness. To qualify for the permit, dentists must complete sedation education and be certified in basic life support (CHICAGO SUN-TIMES).

Upcoming stories

Here are some of the topics you will see covered in upcoming issues of the State Net Capitol Journal:

- **Exotic mortgages**
- **Retail health clinics**
- **Family leave**

IMMIGRATION: Citing what he calls an “unnatural influx” of illegal immigrants, **MISSOURI** Gov. Matt Blunt (R) orders Show Me State police to begin checking the immigration status of every person they arrest. Blunt’s order commands various state authorities to enter into an agreement with the federal government that will effectively “deputize” those agencies to enforce state and federal immigration laws (KANSAS CITY STAR). • Still in **MISSOURI**, Gov. Blunt also orders state officials to conduct random on-site inspections of all state-funded construction projects to ensure that contractors are not employing illegal workers. Violators could face a five-year ban on receiving state contracts (KANSAS CITY STAR). • A federal judge upholds the constitutionality of an **ARIZONA** law that requires proof of citizenship for people to vote. The ruling determined that the statute, known as Proposition 200, does not violate either federal or state law. Opponents plan to appeal (ARIZONA REPUBLIC [PHOENIX]).

HOMELAND SECURITY: The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly and Senate approve SB 924, a measure that would place a referendum on the ballot to allow voters to decide whether to urge President Bush to immediately pull U.S. troops out of Iraq. It moves to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R), who has not taken a position on the measure (LOS ANGELES TIMES).

SOCIAL POLICY: A federal court temporarily blocks **MISSOURI** from implementing a new law that would require Show Me State abortion clinics to upgrade their facilities to meet stricter standards for ambulatory surgical centers. The court will hold another hearing to review the matter in mid-September (KANSAS CITY STAR). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs SB 1318, which makes it illegal to park in a space reserved for people who are disabled unless the person who holds the authorized disability license plate or decal enters or exits the vehicle (STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER [SPRINGFIELD]). • The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly shelves SB 11, which would have expanded the state’s domestic partnership program



to include opposite-sex couples, 18 or older, who live together and register with the secretary of state's office (SACRAMENTO BEE).

POTPOURRI: The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly and Senate endorse SB 33, which would prohibit drivers under the age of 18 from using a cell phone, pager, text-messaging device or laptop while driving. The measure moves to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R), who has not indicated if he will sign it into law (SACRAMENTO BEE). • **ILLINOIS** Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D) signs HB 1900, a measure that allows Prairie State residents to petition state transportation officials to post a roadside marker to memorialize relatives killed by drunk drivers. The law takes effect next January (STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER [SPRINGFIELD]). • The **MISSOURI** House and Senate endorse a proposal that would allow the state to award a contractor with a single 30-year contract to fix and maintain 802 of the Show Me State's worst bridges. The state would not be obligated to begin payments until after all the repairs are completed, and the contractor would have to maintain the bridges in satisfactory condition for the next 25 years. The measure now goes to Gov. Matt Blunt (R), who is expected to sign it (ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Once around the statehouse lightly

A ROSE IS JUST A ROSE...Unless you happen to be a woman who served in the CALIFORNIA Legislature in the previous two decades. Each month from 1978 to 2003 Mayrant “Mac” McKeown hand-delivered a single rose to every female lawmaker as a reminder that their presence was vital if issues important to women were to get equal time in such a male-dominated environment. It was a token of appreciation that generally went unnoticed by everyone except the recipients — which was just how McKeown, who abhors publicity, wanted it. But, as reported by the *Sacramento Bee*, McKeown's anonymity was blown last week when more than a dozen current and former female lawmakers got together to say thanks for his kindness. McKeown, whom female lawmakers fondly call the “Rose Man,” also received a commemorative letter from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and a plaque from Sect. of State Debra Bowen, herself a longtime rose recipient during her days under the Dome. McKeown choked up at the honor — and dutifully grumped about the presence of reporters.



JET? I'D CALL IT AN ALBATROSS: Or perhaps the “Wings that Brought Down a Governor.” But whatever nickname you like, the *New York Times* reports the notorious Westwind II jet purchased by former ALASKA Gov. Frank Murkowski during his ill-fated single term in office is a goner. Murkowski, who seemingly lusted for the jet from the moment he hit office in 2004, originally tried to get the federal Department of Homeland Security to foot the bill, but was rebuffed. Much to the consternation of Last Frontier lawmakers, Murkowski bought the jet anyway in 2005, forking over \$2.7 million in public dollars to do so. Not surprisingly, it became a major issue in a disastrous re-election bid that saw him finish a very distant third out of three candidates in his own party’s primary. New Gov. Sarah Palin immediately placed the jet up for sale, and the buyer flew off with it last week.

In case you missed it

Lawmakers consider thousands of bills every year, with only a relative few of those measures destined to become law. With all but a handful of statehouses done for the year, our August 6, 2007 issue took a look at how states handled some of the year’s hottest issues.

In case you missed it, the article can be found on our Web site at http://statenet.com/capitol_journal/08-06-2007/html

HOW LITERARY: As wordplay goes, it was actually kind of clever. But given the setting, you have to wonder what WISCONSIN Dems were thinking recently when they opted to sell buttons with the phrase “F Scott Fitzgerald” on them from their booth at the Dodge County Fair. As noted by the *Appleton Post-Crescent*, the buttons infuriated Republican state Sen. Scott Fitzgerald, not because he has issues with the Great Gatsby or The Last Tycoon, but because the “F” was clearly intended to represent one of our more notorious curse words. Fitzgerald demanded the state Democratic Party issue an apology, not only to him but to all the fair-going families “offended by their actions.” No “sorry” was offered, but Dems did stop selling the buttons.

HUSKER FEVER HITS JAPAN: Gubernatorial trade missions always require copious pre-planning, but when those trips come during the college football season, well, things can get even more hectic. Case in point — like most NEBRASKA natives, Gov. Dave Heineman is loath to miss a Cornhuskers football game. So, according to the *Lincoln Journal Star*, when Heineman recently left on a two-week trade mission to Asia — a trip that would place him in Tokyo during the Huskers’ Sept. 8 game against Wake Forest — aids made sure the gov had a place to at least catch the game on TV. A local sports bar that caters to Americans agreed to record the game, which airs live at 2:00 am Tokyo time, and replay it for the gov’s entourage after breakfast the following morning. One caveat: staffers can go online early to check the final score, but nobody is allowed to spill the beans to Heineman beforehand.

ROLL TIDE: A recent survey by the *Kansas City Star* revealed that most states pay their governor significantly less than the top-salaried athletic coach. The biggest gap is found in ALABAMA, where Gov. Bob Riley makes \$113,000 annually, a



pittance compared to the \$4 million the state pays University of ALABAMA head football coach Nick Saban. In fact, ALASKA Gov. Sarah Palin is the only chief executive in the country to outdo the state's top-paid university coach. Palin earns \$125,000, slightly more than ALASKA-Anchorage ice hockey coach Dave Shyiak, who collects \$112,000 annually. Of course, Palin has a built-in advantage over her gubernatorial colleagues — there is no college football in the Last Frontier.

— By RICH EHISEN

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