

Poll: Raise taxes on rich; don't raise debt limit

BY STEVEN THOMMA
MCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON • Alarmed by rising national debt and increasingly downbeat about their country's course, Americans are clear about how they want to attack the government's runaway budget deficits: raise taxes on the wealthy and keep hands off of Medicare and Medicaid.

At the same time, they say that the government should not raise the legal debt ceiling, which the government must do soon to borrow more money, despite warnings that failing to do so would force the government

SEE POLL • PAGE 5



OBAMA POLL FINDINGS

• Only 44 percent of voters approve of Obama's job performance, while 49 percent disapprove. That was down from 48 percent approval in January, and marked the 17th straight month that his approval has been below 50 percent;
• Only 34 percent of voters approve, and 61 percent disapprove, of the way he's handling the budget deficit, projected to total about \$1.6 trillion this year.

• Only 30 percent approve of the way Republicans in Congress are doing their job, while 63 percent disapprove.

Obama eases pain from Medicare cuts

Administration denies move is political

BY RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON • Millions of seniors in popular private insurance plans offered through Medicare will be getting a reprieve from some of the most controversial cuts in President Barack

Obama's health care-law. In a policy shift critics see as political, the Health and Human Services department has decided to award quality bonuses to hundreds of Medicare Advantage plans rated merely average.

The \$6.7 billion infusion could head off service cuts that would have been a headache for Obama and Democrats

SEE MEDICARE • PAGE 5

Grand jury subpoenas Victorville officials

BY BROOKE EDWARDS
STAFF WRITER

VICTORVILLE • Five city officials have been subpoenaed for testimony by the San Bernardino County Grand Jury as part of a two-year investigation into Victorville's finances and management practices.

"I understand that there have been subpoenas served to the city attorney," Mayor Ryan McEachron confirmed, stating City Attorney Andre de Bortnowsky is authorized to accept subpoenas on the behalf of Victorville. "I don't know who they're for or what they're regarding."

McEachron said Tuesday afternoon he personally had not received one of the requests to appear before the grand jury. However, two sources close to the investigation said subpoenas were issued for a couple of council members and three upper-level city employees.

Late Monday afternoon, Victorville added an urgency item to its closed-session agenda for Tuesday night to discuss

SEE SUBPOENAS • PAGE 8

Tough cuts before Victorville Council

BY BROOKE EDWARDS
STAFF WRITER

VICTORVILLE • Closing one fire station and up to seven city parks, doing away with citywide code enforcement and halting most graffiti cleanup were among the worst-case scenarios staff reluctantly proposed Tuesday to help Victorville close an \$8.4 million budget deficit.

The City Council didn't vote on any of the proposals yet, with a difference of opinion on whether Victorville should drain its last \$2.2 million in reserve funds and consider cuts to public safety to balance the 2011-12 budget.

Councilman Jim Kennedy said he's against using the city's last reserves, stating it would just postpone inevitable cuts that need to be made to bring expenses in line with revenues.

Without that \$2.2 million, Deputy City Manager Doug Robertson said he instructed managers to prepare to cut 29 percent from their department budgets to close the deficit.

"There's not much left," Planning Director Bill Webb said. He told the City Council during the afternoon budget workshop that service could drop to fair or poor if he's forced to lay off more employees and cut another third from a budget that's already down to 1995 levels.

Community Services Director Jon Gargan called the 29 percent cut "doomsday" for his department, likely forcing them to close seven parks, Pebble Beach Pool, end all special events and more.

Among other cuts proposed by staff: going to an

SEE VICTORVILLE • PAGE 7



PHOTOS BY JAMES QUIGG, DAILY PRESS

BLOOMING IN THE VICTOR VALLEY

ABOVE: Bigelow coreopsis bloom along a hiking trail northeast of Apple Valley. Wildflower blooms are popping up across the Victor Valley.

AT RIGHT: Blue bells bloom in the desert north of Apple Valley.



Hotel owner gets weekend jail in \$863,000 scam

BY TOMOYA SHIMURA
STAFF WRITER



JAMES QUIGG, DAILY PRESS

SENTENCED: Ashka Patel, a local hotel owner scans the court room before her sentencing hearing Tuesday afternoon.



VICTORVILLE • A local hotel owner convicted of stealing more than \$800,000 from Orbitz.com was sentenced Tuesday to 270 weekend days in jail.

Victorville Superior Court Judge Lynn Poncein also ordered Ashka Patel, 28, to pay restitution to the online travel company.

The prosecution alleged Orbitz' losses totaled about \$863,000, whereas Patel claimed the amount was closer to \$500,000. She agreed to give up \$680,000 authorities

seized from her three bank accounts after her arrest. Patel's restitution hearing is set for July 15.

The prosecution alleged Patel went to Orbitz.com and booked a room for several nights. After Orbitz charged the credit card and relayed the funds to one of two local hotels Patel was involved with, she would — acting as the customer — cancel the transaction.

Orbitz would then reimburse her credit card used to make the transaction, with the expectation the hotel would pay the money back to

SEE SCAM • PAGE 8



TOMOYA SHIMURA, DAILY PRESS

TESTIFYING: Marcus Lewis Wade, 39, testifies against co-defendant Rayford Newsome in Newsome's murder trial Tuesday at Victorville Superior Court.

Co-defendant testifies against friend

Described his involvement in fight that led to shooting

BY TOMOYA SHIMURA
STAFF WRITER

VICTORVILLE • A co-defendant testified for the prosecution Tuesday in the murder trial of an Apple Valley man

accused of shooting an 18-year-old after a fight among children escalated.

Marcus Lewis Wade, 39, of Apple Valley took the stand against his friend, Rayford Newsome, as a condition of his plea agreement. Giving his account of the alleged murder of Michael Subacz, Wade frequently glanced at

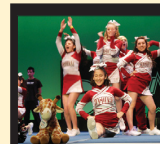
the counsel table.

Wade, who admitted to his extensive criminal history, said he received a call from his niece in April 2010. The 21-year-old told Wade she got into a fight with women who lived nearby, who'd jumped in after their children had started to fight.

SEE TESTIFIES • PAGE 8

FINDER

HIGH DESERT



Cheerleading squad wins national titles

Page B1

WEATHER > Page D3

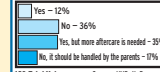


High 73
Low 47

Pt. SUNNY

Online poll results

Do you think programs such as the Juvenile Intervention Program is effective for getting troubled kids back on track?



120 Total Votes Source: VVDailyPress.com
Check out this week's poll question at www.VVDailyPress.com

HOME DELIVERY: (760) 241-7755
NEWS TIPS: (760) 951-6270

INDEX

Table with 3 columns: Category, Page Number, Category, Page Number. Includes Business Classifieds, Comics, Crossword, Dear Abby, Editorials, High Desert, Lottery, Movies, Obituaries, Scoreboard, Sports, Weather.



The Daily Press uses recycled newspaper. For tips on going green, go to www.VVDailyPress.com/green

Page edited by Mike Lamb

# SCAM: Judge orders supervision when working at hotels

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The Chicago-based travel agency, authorities said. Instead, Patel withheld Orbitz' money from December 2008 until November 2009, when Orbitz officials reported the suspected fraud to local authorities, Deputy District Attorney Jason Wilkinson said.

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Victorville station. "Due to Ms. Patel's background and nature of the crime, we wanted to make sure she was thoroughly supervised while being able to pay back restitution," Wilkinson said. "I am satisfied that the victims of this case will receive their restitution fairly quickly. We will be asking for the full amount Orbitz has asked for."

The majority of the fraud was committed through the Travel Inn Motel on Seventh Street, but prosecutors said a small amount was processed through the Days Inn on Park Avenue. Patel accepted the prosecution's offer and pleaded no contest in March to two felony counts of grand theft. Poncin said Tuesday she was initially reluctant to accept the plea.

In the courtroom Tuesday, Patel tried to cover her face with a jacket to avoid Daily Press cameras but a court deputy reprimanded her. She told the deputy her life has been ruined because of the newspaper's coverage of the case.

Poncin put Patel on an extended five-year probation. The judge ordered her to be supervised when she works at her hotels to prevent further offenses. According to the plea agreement, Patel will have to do 100 hours of community service at the

Prior to her arrest, Patel was reportedly preparing to run for a Victorville City Council seat in the November 2010 election.

Tomoya Shimura may be reached at (760) 955-5368 or tshimura@VVDailyPress.com.

**PERMANENT MAKEUP**  
Corrective Permanent Makeup  
**Kim's Beauty Salon**  
50% OFF EYELINER  
25% OFF EYEBROWS  
20% OFF LIPLINER  
Microdermabrasion • Chemical Peel  
24 Years Experience In The High Desert  
**760-242-1700**

# TESTIFIES: Buried gun in remote desert

**FROM PAGE 1**  
"It was a bunch of chaos going on, as far as I know," Wade said, testifying he'd heard racial slurs in the background. After dropping his two children off at a friend's house, Wade headed to an Apple Valley apartment complex in the 20400 block of Zuni Road with Newsome and the friend. When they arrived at the apartment, Wade saw a bunch of people in a courtyard, some of them holding

bats, he testified. Wade said he confronted another victim, Mitchel Welsh, and knocked him out. Someone then "swung" at him, Wade said, and bumped into Newsome, who fell to the ground. Wade saw a flash and heard multiple gunshots before he fled the scene, according to his testimony. When Deputy District Attorney Mari Braun asked him if he recalled telling investigators

he had seen Newsome extend his arm toward Subacz, Wade answered he didn't. Wade said he buried Newsome's gun in a remote area of the desert in Victorville, off Bear Valley Road. If a judge rules he testified truthfully, Wade is expected to be sentenced to eight years and four months in prison. He pleaded guilty in January to being an accessory and admitted to a gang allegation and having a

prior strike and prison term. Newsome is charged with the murder of Subacz and attempted murder of Welsh along with other allegations. Newsome told investigators he used to be a South Side Crip gang member, but got out of it after his family members had been shot, according to sheriff's officials.

Tomoya Shimura may be reached at (760) 955-5368 or tshimura@VVDailyPress.com.

# SUBPOENAS: Probe started in 2009

**FROM PAGE 1**  
the ongoing grand jury investigation. There was no reportable action out of that meeting. The 19-member citizen group first began probing Victorville in early spring 2009, interviewing a slew of city officials regarding troubled finances, reported handshake deals and more. And for the first time in the county's his-

tory, six citizens were held over from the 2009-10 grand jury to continue serving with this fiscal year's watchdog group. On request from the Victorville City Council, the grand jury hired New York-based firm Kessler International in May to begin investigating the city's books. Deputy City Manager Doug Robertson said Tuesday that he suspects the city

has sent more than 1 million pages of documents to Kessler's firm as part of that investigation. Meanwhile, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the FBI also continue to investigate Victorville, though

City Manager Jim Cox said during Tuesday's special Council meeting that no one has indicated to him that any crime has been committed.

Brooke Edwards may be reached at (760) 955-5358 or at bedwards@VVDailyPress.com.

**LAW OFFICE OF CAROLYN J. SCHAUF**  
In Private Practice Since 1986

- Family Law
- Estate Planning
- Probate
- Bankruptcy

Free In-Office Consultations Only. House Calls at Your Home or Office. Weekend Appointments Available.

**New Location**  
21811 Outer Highway 18, Next to B of A  
Apple Valley, California 92307

Senior Citizen Discounts  
**760-240-8822**  
Fax: 760-240-8865

**SMILE DENTAL**  
Family & Children's Dentistry  
SERVING THE HIGH DESERT SINCE 1986  
**Dr. Jin H. Kim D.D.S.**  
General Dentist  
Loma Linda University Graduate

Insurance & Healthy Families Program Accepted  
Medical & Medicare Plan

Preventive Dentistry • General Dentistry  
Provider For Delta Dental, Union Plans, UFCW And More

\$100 OFF Major Procedure  
\$25 FOR Exam and X-Ray

**FREE WHITENING FOR LIFE**  
with No Cash

14238 VALLEY CENTER DR., VICTORVILLE  
Next to Donny's Across From Green Tree Inn  
www.smiledentalhighdesert.com  
**760-243-5437**

Payment Plan Available  
Se Habla Español

Azusa Pacific University  
**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY**



**Beverly Gonzales, M.A. '99**  
Santa Fe Elementary School  
2011 California Teacher of the Year

**Earn your degree from a university known for excellence in education.**

Azusa Pacific has a reputation for consistently producing innovative and comprehensively prepared educators. Our graduates serve as teachers, counselors, coaches, and administrators throughout Southern California, and are known in their schools and districts as leaders in their field.

Choose from more than 40 credential and degree options at APU, and join a 112-year legacy of commitment to excellence in education.

Attend an information meeting on April 21 at 6 p.m. at APU's High Desert Regional Center to learn more.  
www.apu.edu/explore/education | (877) 247-3462 | 15283 Pahute St., Victorville, CA 92395

AZUSA | HIGH DESERT | INLAND EMPIRE | LOS ANGELES | MURRIETA | ORANGE COUNTY | SAN DIEGO | VENTURA COUNTY | ONLINE