

'A MIRACLE ON THE HUDSON'

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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TOP NEWS

BURRIS JOINS THE SENATE

Roland Burris takes the oath of office and his place as Barack Obama's successor in the Senate.

NATION | A2

LOCAL NEWS

CHIEF'S OUSTER?

St. Louis County Executive Charlie A. Dooley reportedly seeks to oust county Police Chief Jerry Lee.

METRO | C1

OBAMA BLVD.

St. Louis is poised to designate Delmar Boulevard in honor of President-elect Barack Obama.

METRO | C1

HASLETT IS OUT

Jim Haslett, who guided the Rams the final 12 games of last season, is told he will not be back as the team's head coach.

SPORTS | B1

CARDS' WARM-UP

The Cardinals hope this weekend's Winter Warm-up will thaw fans from the chilly indicators of an unfinished offseason.

SPORTS | B1

SUPER BOWL ADS

Anheuser-Busch ads will highlight the brewer's long-held values.

BUSINESS | D1

ONLINE



T-REX HISTORY
The Science Center has the replica of the T-Rex, but check out our interactive graphic on the biology and history of the T-Rex and a 3D version of the dinosaur. STLtoday.com/multimedia

Numb's the word



Help pick the Bird line daily at 5:30 pm.
STLtoday.com/birdsnest

All subscribers who do not receive a Sunday paper as part of your subscription, will receive one on Jan. 18 and Jan. 25 included as part of your regular subscription rate.

Henry P. Williams was in the '7 Stars Club' — a tier reserved for elite gamblers. He often gambled 20 days or more per month. Over 5 years, he lost as much as \$176,000.



HE GAMBLED

AND RIVERVIEW GARDENS SCHOOL DISTRICT PAID THE PRICE

By David Hunn
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

To completely understand why a former school superintendent siphoned more than \$100,000 from a struggling north St. Louis County district, prosecutors say, you must also understand his gambling.

Henry P. Williams liked the slots. Williams gambled the day he signed his first employment contract with the district.

He gambled before or after school board meetings. He often gambled 20 days or more per month.

In fact, over the five years he led Riverview Gardens School District, Williams gambled more than 900 days — nearly 190 days a year — and lost as much as \$176,000, according to court records just made public.

All the while, the 8,000-student district was falling into economic and academic failure.

Williams, 67, was driven out of the district almost two years ago after being accused of funneling more than \$100,000 in school money into a personal life insurance fund, understating his income and double-dipping on district travel reimbursement. He pleaded no contest in September to two counts of felony theft and three counts of tax fraud.

Early this month, Williams was sentenced

PLEASE SEE **WILLIAMS** | A6

'THIS IS WHAT WE DO TO SURVIVE'



Darryl Spinks and his wife Lisa bundle up Wednesday night in an entryway at the St. Louis Public Library on Olive Street. The Spinks choose not to go to emergency shelters because they would have to split up into women's and men's dormitories. Robert Cohen | Post-Dispatch

Cold reality

Though services expand in bitter weather, some homeless opt to stay outside.

By Adam Jadhav
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

The drafty cracks beneath the doors of downtown buildings would be little more than a heating inefficiency if it weren't for the bitter, bitter cold that descended this week.

With the temperature approaching

zero last night and the night before, the air escaping from buildings turns entryways into premium real estate for those who know of and need it. Those vents just inside the vestibules mean the difference between a night wrapped in multiple blankets, albeit uncomfortably, and frostbite, hypothermia or even death.

Darryl and Lisa Spinks have a favorite door on the east side of the public library. Wednesday night, they took refuge there from a windchill in negative double digits, putting down cardboard and building a makeshift igloo of blankets to capture the warm air.

PLEASE SEE **COLD** | A7

Bush bids farewell to the nation

In his final address, president acknowledges setbacks but says he followed his conscience to keep U.S. safe.

By Sheryl Gay Stolberg
NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON • President George W. Bush said goodbye to the American people Thursday night, declaring in his final address to the nation that while he had some setbacks during his turbulent eight years in office, "I have followed my conscience and done what I thought was right."

The 13-minute address, delivered from the East Room of the White House before a small audience of guests and members of Bush's Cabinet, was a somber end to an administration that, by Bush's own account, did not always go according to plan.

"Like all who have held this office before me, I have experienced setbacks," Bush said, in a steady even cadence. "There are things I would do differently if given the chance. Yet I have always acted with the best interests of our country in mind."

The speech will be Bush's last public appearance until Tuesday, when he turns the Oval Office over to his successor, Barack Obama.

Bush leaves behind two unfinished wars and an economy in turmoil, and he warned in his speech of tough times ahead. The president who came to office vowing to be a "uniter not a divider" alluded to the deep partisan divisions that marked his eight years in office. But he

PLEASE SEE **BUSH** | A3

Lights, Clooney, extras!

Comedy featuring Hollywood heartthrob sets stage for filming in St. Louis

By Joe Williams
POST-DISPATCH FILM CRITIC

Yes, George Clooney is coming to St. Louis. No, he's not here now.

But casting agents will be recruiting extras Jan. 24-25 at

Crestwood Court mall. (See sidebar)

Details are emerging about "Up in the Air," the comedy starring Clooney that is slated to shoot in St. Louis. Jerry Jones of the Missouri Film Commission said Thursday that the Hol-

lywood film crew has opened an office in St. Louis County, is scouting background locations and is recruiting extras, but that director Jason Reitman will not be shouting "Action!" until

PLEASE SEE **CLOONEY** | A8



C Casting call for extras for the new movie "Up in the Air," starring George Clooney, is set for Jan. 24-25 at the Crestwood Court mall on Watson Road.

MORE DETAILS | A8

C Don't be shy. Tell the actor what he should do when he hits the Lou.

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Volunteers from Centenary United Methodist Church check out a makeshift shelter made of wooden pallets, bricks and plastic Wednesday night as they patrol to encourage the homeless to enter emergency shelters.
Robert Cohen
Post-Dispatch

COLD | FROM A1

Shelters scramble to help

“This is what we do to survive,” Darryl Spinks said.

Even on dangerously cold nights like the last two, some percentage of the homeless either refuse a night indoors or just don't know where to turn. Instead, they scavenge for warmth, getting by on some combination of scrappiness, blankets, body fat and luck.

Social service advocates fear for those people. What scares them more these days is tough economic times that almost certainly have left more people outside, some without the street smarts or faculties to know when the cold is too much.

This week, as the forecast became clear, the city shelters scrambled to add beds — or even mats on the floor — to compensate for the expected demand. Some, such as the Rev. Larry Rice's New Life Evangelistic Center, put more volunteers on the streets ahead of the cold to distribute provisions ranging from firewood to bottled water.

Wednesday night, as the cold set in, volunteers from church and social service groups went out in small convoys, loosely coordinated, if at all. Most offered food, drinks, blankets and clothes; more important, they urged the homeless to not chance it on the street, to instead head for a warm shelter bed.

Thursday night promised even colder temperatures and volunteers planned a similar

TALK

Sure it's cold now, but would you rather sit in a puddle of sweat. STLtoday.com/talk

routine. “The main mission is to just make sure people don't freeze to death,” said Natalie Ray, a social worker at the Horizon Club, a daytime-only downtown shelter and service center.

Ray spent Wednesday night dropping in on homeless hangouts: a tent of scraps in a thicket along Interstate 44, the narrow St. Charles Street downtown, loading docks that serve as lean-tos, overpasses of Highway 40, window wells of buildings and even a bridge over a railroad in south St. Louis.

In most cases, she found the signs of the homeless residences — empty tents and shacks, mattresses with heaps of blankets, bags of clothes, scattered and random possessions, decorations and stuffed animals — but no people.

“When you see these, you're reminded that these are still people's homes,” Ray said. “Even in their poverty, they sometimes have touches of home.”

NO PERMANENT WORK

Ray met the Spinks couple as they prepared to bed down. The two turned down an offer of a blanket — they had three giant garbage bags full of them — but accepted sandwiches.

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'GETTING WORSE'

Even as Darryl Spinks shivered in the dropping temperature Wednesday night, he said he notices more people without shelter. And more of them are younger or come with kids.

“With the economy coming down, it's getting worse,” Spinks said. “There's a whole new class of homeless out here.”

Across the street from the Spinks, Ray greeted Chris Jackson, another huddled mass in a bus stop. He spent six years in state prison for dealing cocaine in Sikeston, Mo., and has been on parole about a year. Jackson said he has held down a job at a meat processor in south St. Louis for a few months, but he hasn't found a permanent place to live. The felony conviction, he said, remains a barrier even to an apartment, given that the housing crisis has increased competition in the rental market.

Jackson was hardly a grizzled veteran and he admitted to not really having a plan to survive the cold. Ray gave him a lift to the St. Peter and Paul Shelter in Soulard.

“It's bad when you've got to be out here and you've got a job,” Jackson said.

Elsewhere in the city, other teams were roaming about. A van from Covenant House, a youth shelter, drove back alleys behind warehouses near Highway 40 and the rail lines, before heading north.

They made their way to an elaborate homeless camp in north St. Louis where dozens of homeless men and women live inside a long, abandoned, multi-story warehouse funded by the donations of churches and other groups. A young, homeless man — drunk and wearing far too few layers for the cold — took a blanket before winding back to a campfire. Another man, bundled in multiple coats, delivered hot cocoa mix, spoons and canned fruit to the group, most of which had bedded down.

Among them was David Clements, 45, an out-of-work concrete finisher who keeps a mattress, tent, propane heater and stockpiles of canned food. He said the stereotype of drug-addicted homeless people doesn't apply, least of all in this economy.

“Nobody in our group is shooting up,” he said Tuesday night as he was visited by volunteers from New Life Evangelistic Center. “Most of us are just trying to survive until there's work.”

“But we don't know when that will be.”

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