

MORE LOCAL
'Mighty Ninety'

The Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society honored local seniors recently with a dance at a restaurant. **C3**

NATION & WORLD

Army seeks soldier's link to WikiLeaks

BY NANCY A. YOUSSEF
MCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Army has launched a wide-ranging investigation into how a private suspected of downloading thousands of secret reports and diplomatic cables and handing them over to WikiLeaks was able to do so and whether other soldiers should face criminal charges in the case, McClatchy Newspapers has learned.

The Army confirmed the investigation but wouldn't release details. An Army official familiar with the investigation told McClatchy that the six-member

task force has been given until Feb. 1 to complete a report that will look at everything from how Pfc. Bradley Manning was selected for his job and trained to whether his superiors missed warning signs that he was downloading documents he had no need to read.

The report could change how the Army — the largest distributor of government security clearances — grants access to government documents as well as lead to recommendations of charges against soldiers who worked with Manning and may have been aware of his activities.

A similar probe was undertaken

after an Army psychiatrist opened fire on fellow soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas, in November 2009, killing 13.

Manning was working as an intelligence specialist in Baghdad during 2009 and the early months of 2010 when he allegedly downloaded hundreds of thousands of classified documents.

Those documents reached WikiLeaks — Army officials have said they're not certain how — and have been published by the website in four separate bursts that began in April with the release of a video showing an Army helicopter firing on civilians in Baghdad, killing two Reuters news agency employees.

The website also released tens of thousands of documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan before the current, ongoing publication of hundreds of thousands of State Department cables, which began Nov. 28.

Manning allegedly downloaded the documents while pretending to listen to music by Lady Gaga on headphones, a cover story, investigators say, to explain the sound of the computer's CD drive whirring as he copied the files. He's being held in solitary confinement at the Quantico Marine Base in Virginia on charges that could lead to a 52-year prison sentence.

Nuke treaty called 'useful'

RUSSIA: Observers see the New START pact for what it does, but also for its value toward future agreements.

BY JONATHAN S. LANDAY
AND WARREN P. STROBEL
MCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — Senate approval Wednesday of a nuclear arms reduction pact with Russia has boosted President Barack Obama's long-shot initiative to rid the world of nuclear weapons and salvaged his drive to improve U.S.-Russian ties, experts said.

Fulfilling his call for a "reset" of the chilly relationship with Moscow, Obama's victory could also help in two U.S.-led initiatives that rely on Russian cooperation — to curb Iran's nuclear program and to prevent terrorists from stealing nuclear materials.

There are obstacles to accords in any of these areas, but Obama can pursue them with an enhanced image for himself and his government.

"There is a bigger audience out there. If we hadn't done this with the Russians, Obama looks impotent and the United States looks more uncertain, unpredictable and untrustworthy to the rest of the world," said Tom Fingar, who served until last year as chairman of the National Intelligence Council, which prepares presidential intelligence assessments.

Experts across the spectrum expressed relief, if not euphoria.

"It's a modest but useful agreement," said Stephen J. Hadley, the national security adviser in President George W. Bush's second term. "I think the biggest thing is that it avoids some downsides if it had been actually rejected by the Senate."

Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry, D-Mass., who steered the pact through the Senate, said the 71-26 approval of New START "makes a statement about the United States of America as a whole. It says we're a country in which, even in contentious times, where 100 senators have a responsibility, 71 of them came together ... and articulated the direction the U.S. wants to go with respect to nuclear weapons."

Obama's ambitious agenda still faces potential land mines.

It will be much harder for Washington and Moscow to reach agreement on cutting their arsenals to levels lower than those imposed by New START on operational warheads and delivery vehicles. The pact limits the sides to deploying no more than 1,550 strategic warheads on 700 bombers and land- and sea-based ballistic missiles within seven years.

Moreover, renewed frictions could arise over the Kremlin's growing authoritarian rule, **SEE TREATY/C2A**



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police officers stand outside the Chilean Embassy in Rome on Thursday after a package exploded, injuring one person who was in the process of going through packages the embassy had received. A few hours earlier, the Swiss Embassy was targeted, severely injuring an employee there.

Rome embassy blasts injure two

'DEPLORABLE': Anarchist extremists are believed responsible for bombs at Swiss and Chilean diplomatic offices.

BY JANET STOBART
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LONDON — Two parcel bombs exploded inside the Swiss and Chilean embassies in Rome on Thursday, injuring an employee at each diplomatic post.

All other embassies in the Italian capital were on alert. Suspicious packages were examined at the nearby Ukrainian, Slovenian and Estonian embassies, but all were false alarms.

Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini said the episode was "a deplorable act of violence," and ordered a warning to be put out to all the embassies as well as Italian missions abroad.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attacks, but police suspected anarchist movements that have launched similar attacks



Chile's ambassador to Italy, Oscar Godoy Arcaya, talks on a cell phone after a bombing at the embassy. No claims of responsibility were made.

recently.

The first blast Thursday wounded a Swiss Embassy employee who opened the small package. The worker reportedly was in danger of losing one or both hands because of the injuries.

Hours later, an explosion at the Chilean Embassy injured employee Cesar Mella, 50, who was preparing to open a package.

The Swiss mission had previously been targeted by an unknown group. An explosive device

found in the street outside the embassy wall on Oct. 5 contained a message demanding the release of three convicted eco-militants held in Swiss jails.

Interior Minister Roberto Maroni, quoted in the Italian news agency ANSA, confirmed that police were following "an anarchic" trail "because there are precedents; in November similar incidents occurred at several embassies in Greece."

Last month, two parcel bombs were detonated in the cargo section of the Athens airport, and other devices were found in parcels destined for several embassies in the Greek capital. About the same time a package bomb arrived at the offices of German Chancellor Angela Merkel while she was away and also was deactivated.

None of the packages caused injuries or contained lethal amounts of explosives.

Europe was already on edge after the arrest of a dozen terrorism suspects in Britain on Monday.

TIDINGS OF JOY IN SHORT SUPPLY

Many in Gulf Coast feeling ripple effect from job losses in wake of oil disaster

BY BRIAN SKOLOFF
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PORT SULPHUR, LA. — Even before the Gulf oil leak, Jennifer Reddick was just getting by, living paycheck to paycheck as she tried to support six children on the \$400 a week she made working part-time as a deckhand and shrimp net maker.

Then BP's well blew out off the coast of Louisiana, scaring away tourists and shutting down fishing. Now she has no work and no money to buy her children toys or new clothes this Christmas. Charities are providing what they can, but it's hard for Reddick to take handouts.

"It was never easy before, but we could make it," said Reddick, 30, of Buris, a small fishing town along the Mississippi River. "I couldn't even afford Christmas this year for the kids."

For many people along the Gulf Coast, there won't be much holiday cheer this Christmas.

It's been more than five months since the well was finally capped after spewing millions of gallons of crude into the Gulf. Many shrimpers and oystermen are catching and selling only a fraction of previous hauls. Business owners who saw a summer of lost revenue are still struggling to pay their

SEE GULF/C2A



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vickie Perrin, left, and Joannie Hughes carry Christmas gifts that they plan to take to 112 Plaquemines Parish families, many impacted by the BP oil rig disaster. Said Hughes, "Even after Katrina, it wasn't like this."

INSIDE



Ahoy Santa

The Corona-Norco Family YMCA brought 48 preschoolers to the Navy's Lake Norconian Conference Center recently for the base's Children's Holiday Party with Santa and Mrs. Claus. **C2b**

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NAVY'S HOLIDAY PARTY A BIG HIT

SPECIAL TO THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

It happens each year when the preschoolers file into the Navy's Lake Norconian Conference Center with eyes aglow, cautiously peeking at Santa and Mrs. Claus as they get ready to hand out red bags of toys that will make their holiday wish come true.

"When you see their little faces, there're tears of joy from parents, from the volunteers ... from me, too," said Monica Hunter, program director of the Corona-Norco Family YMCA, who brought 48 3- and 4-year-old kids to the base's annual Community Children's Holiday Party Dec. 17.

"You see in their little faces that this is not something they are used to," she added.

And that's why the Naval Surface Warfare Center Corona continues to host the event that began more than 40 years ago when base employees provide Christmas cheer to children in the Corona-Norco community, said NSWC Corona commanding officer Capt. Jay Kadowaki.

"As a parent, I take particular delight in this event in which our employees can make such a special impact on children in our own community," he said.

When the base asked the YMCA pick children to attend the party, Hunter said she randomly chose this particular class of 48 out of the other classes.

They all are in a special program that now totals 265 youngsters enrolled in pre-school education classes funded by the state of California. Other classes had larger numbers. This lucky group had just the right size, she said.

The rest of the children at the YMCA were not forgotten, however. Marine Master Sgt. Neal Chan-



GREG VOJTKO/SPECIAL TO THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

Mrs. Claus and Santa Claus, portrayed by Roberta Marmolejo and Ron Anderson, offer a candy cane to Damian Calderon during the annual Community Children's Christmas Party at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Corona Division.

andler, who's stationed at NSWC Corona, provided enough toys for everybody, packages of Christmas cheer collected through the Marine Corps Reserve's annual Toys for Tots campaign.

"The parents, the YMCA are just so appreciative," Hunter said.

Chandler, in his dress blues, and Ralph "The Clown" Whittington, an NSWC Corona engineer,

greeted the bus and welcomed each of the wide-eyed youngsters, making them feel comfortable as they entered the decorated Norconian center where Christmas music set the holiday tone.

Whittington, who has played his sailor clown for the annual party since 1974, soon after graduating from Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's Clown Col-

lege, said he loves to make the children feel at ease as they look expectantly at Santa.

"I mingle. Santa doesn't mingle. The kids are just so easy," he said of the occasion for which he takes special delight as a volunteer.

More than 20 volunteers from NSWC Corona helped entertain and host the children during the

two-hour visit, where they also ate lunch and played games.

Event chair Keena Mancini said the children's party has been a special community hallmark for many years.

For the volunteers, they also receive their own holiday cheer by watching the children's response. "It's really good," she said.

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