

SPORTS, C1

Concord girls win inaugural hockey game

BOOKS, D4

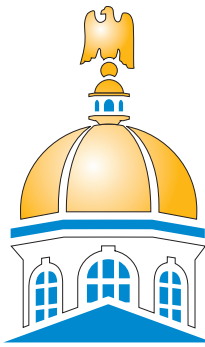
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NATION & WORLD, A3

Top lawmakers knew of waterboarding

SUNDAY



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Top: In April, Rich St. Pierre shoots Brian a look from the front seat while Brian and Elijah fight in the back seat. Brian had been suspended from school that day. **Above:** At Brian's graduation from SWSU of the Carolinas, Rich and Brian (left) sit with graduate Jordan Clayborn of Kansas and his parents, Tabitha and Mike.

Surviving together

Time and distance help Rich and Brian repair a tumultuous relationship

Thirteen-year-old Brian Thone ran down a grassy hill at the edge of a North Carolina forest to where his stepdad, Rich St. Pierre, stood waiting for him.

"Dad!" he called and threw a bear hug around Rich. "Oh, I missed you so much."

It was Labor Day, and 75 days had passed since they'd seen each other. Brian had kept a careful count during his weeks at a therapeutic wilderness program. He fired off questions about his siblings and his home in Concord. Rich stooped to look him in the eye, gripping his shoulder.

"I'm really proud of you," he said. Brian grew quiet and smiled.

So much of this was new. Brian hadn't heard such reassurance in

A FAMILY'S STORY

For a multimedia presentation, see cmonitor.com/rememberme. The site documents the past two years of the St. Pierres' lives through photos and interviews.

a long time, particularly from Rich. And Rich had never before been "Dad" to Brian except in the flowery letters that Brian had written home, filled with promises of being a better kid.

Almost seven months had passed since Brian's mother, Carolynne St. Pierre, had died at home after a three-year battle with an aggressive liver cancer.

Even before her death, the two had argued often. After her death, in the struggle to redefine their family without a mother, Rich and Brian could barely get through the day without a fight.

Brian was kicked out of class regularly and bucked Rich's role as caregiver. Rich talked about sending Brian to live with other family members.

Now here they were, spending a night together in the woods as part of Brian's graduation from the program, with no distractions. No cell phones. No siblings. No baseball practice or television or business obligations. Brian had to take responsibility for Rich, starting a fire, setting up camp, preparing a fireside dinner and keeping him

See **TOGETHER - A5**

Story by Chelsea Conaboy ♦ Photos by Preston Gannaway

CAMPAIGN 2008

Democrats' plans have sizable costs

Estimates called 'very, very squishy'

By SARAH LIEBOWITZ
Monitor staff

John Edwards's plan to extend health care to every American could cost as much as \$120 billion annually. Hillary Clinton wants the federal government to invest \$10 billion in universal preschool. Barack Obama would spend \$150 billion over the next decade on climate-friendly energy supplies and for the creation of new jobs.

On the campaign trail, Democratic presidential candidates have been proposing big-ticket programs. At the same time, they're pushing to ease the tax burden on middle-income earners. While candidates have stressed the importance of fiscal discipline, it's unclear whether their proposed revenue sources would keep pace with their spending plans.

"The take-home message is, 'No one knows,'" said Stephen Slivinski, director of budget studies at the Cato Institute. "There's really no way to price these things out unless there are specific details. And candidates don't like to talk about details."

Spending proposals range from

HOW MUCH will that cost? We outline the costs of the Democrats' proposals. **A10**

the relatively small - Bill Richardson wants to spend \$25 million annually on a national job bank, to find employment for those seeking work - to more expensive items, such as Edwards's plan to direct \$2 billion annually to expand family medical leave programs.

It seems that every subject has a relevant spending plan. There are proposals to help homeowners avoid foreclosure, to create more housing for seniors and to eliminate the alternative minimum tax. Edwards would commit the government to paying for one year of public college for more than 2 million students, while Chris Dodd would spend \$25 billion to modernize existing schools and build new ones.

The costliest programs, budget

See **DEMOCRATS - A10**

NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

FairPoint official: Conditions okay

Deal with Verizon has met stiff opposition

By KATE DAVIDSON
Monitor staff

FairPoint Communications, the small, North Carolina company that wants to take over Verizon's landline phone service in northern New England, would agree to all of the conditions proposed by the staff at the state Public Utilities Commission to make the deal happen, company Vice President Walter Leach told the *Concord Monitor*. But those conditions hinge on whether Verizon would agree to lower its \$2.72 billion price by at

least \$200 million, Leach said. "Clearly the deal will rest on what will Verizon accept in order to go forward, because we're willing to accept most of everything we've seen," Leach said.

Critics of the sale have said Verizon's asking price is too high and would force FairPoint to take on more debt than it can handle. But Leach defended the company's financial viability and cited reports from Wall Street analysts that say the deal is solid.

Verizon spokeswoman Jill Wurm said the company will not budge on the price.

"We're not open to negotiation,"

See **FAIRPOINT - A10**

PLAINFIELD

Elaine Brown offers details of her arrest

By MARGOT SANGER-KATZ
Monitor staff

Elaine Brown performed dental work on the undercover U.S. marshal who arrested her, and was eating pizza and drinking beer with him and her husband, Ed, when she was suddenly tackled, Tasered and handcuffed, she said in a letter recently posted on the internet.

The arrest, in October, ended a nearly nine-month standoff between federal officials and the Browns, who vowed to die before surrendering to serve prison sentences for tax crimes. The Browns contend that no law required them to pay taxes on

OPRAH WINFREY campaigned for Barack Obama in Iowa yesterday. She's set for a New Hampshire visit today. **Story, A2**



FRIGID Colder, with clouds later. High 28, low 18. Lindsay Raymond, 8, of Northfield draws the day. **B6**

Books **D4**
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“He means a lot to me – like, a lot. I just haven’t really shown it before.”

Brian Thone



Top: Rich and Brian sit in the grass during Rich’s visit to Brian’s therapeutic wilderness program. “There was a lot more peace in his eyes,” Rich said about seeing Brian after his summer at SUWS. Above: During his graduation ceremony, Brian prepares to fall backward while Rich and field instructor Steve Austin ready themselves to catch him.



Above: During skills demonstrations, Brian and Jordan Clayborn start a fire. Right: Sitting on a swing outside his new boarding school, Brian cries while saying goodbye to Rich. Brian told Rich he didn’t want him to leave.



Photos by Preston Gannaway

