

‘Benjamin Button’ leads Oscars with 13 nominations

From “OSCARS,” Page 1

Streep for “Doubt.” It was a record 15th nomination for Streep, who

Weather Corner



National Weather Service
Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 24. Calm wind becoming north between 10 and 15 mph.
Friday: Cloudy, with a high near 35. Breezy, with a north wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.
Friday Night: A 40 percent chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 13. East wind between 10 and 15 mph.
Saturday: A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 30. Southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph.
Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 12.
Sunday: Partly sunny, with a high near 28.
Sunday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 10.
Monday: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 35.
Monday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 15.
Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 43.
Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 18.
Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 45.
Wednesday: High, 68; Low 24
Precip: Wed. 0.00 inches
Month: 0.09 inches
Year: 0.09 inches
Normal: 0.48 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)

already had more Oscar nominations than any other actor.

A drama set at a Roman Catholic school, “Doubt” had four of the 20 acting nominations. Besides Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Adams and Viola Davis were nominated in supporting categories.

“It’s divine,” Davis said. “It feels like the greatest blessing in the world. It’s a fulfillment of a purpose. It’s a fulfillment of a dream. It’s everything that you could possibly imagine it is, and not that I needed the nomination to know I was on the right path, but it certainly helps. It really does.”

Joining Pitt and Jenkins in the best-actor category were Frank Langella, “Frost/Nixon”; Sean Penn, “Milk”; and Mickey Rourke, “The Wrestler.”

Robert Downey Jr. — star of the year’s other big superhero flick, “Iron Man” — is up against Ledger with a supporting-actor nomination for “Tropic Thunder,” a rare broad comedy that crept into the acting categories.

Other supporting-acting picks include Josh Brolin for “Milk,” Penelope Cruz “Vicky Cristina Barcelona” and Marisa Tomei for “The Wrestler.”

“It’s personal,” said Brolin of his first Oscar nomination. “The movie got eight nominations, which I’m so happy about. With “No Country,” I was just as happy, but in a different way. There was nothing personal about it. I was so happy for Javier (Bardem). Javier called me from Spain just now. He was running through the streets of Spain screaming at the top of his lungs.”

Notably snubbed in the acting categories were Clint Eastwood for “Gran Torino,” Sally Hawkins for “Happy-Go-Lucky” and Kristin Scott Thomas for “I’ve Loved You So Long.”

But perhaps the biggest surprise overall was the so-so results for “The Dark Knight,” which had been picking up momentum as one Hollywood trade guild after another chose it as one of the year’s best films.

The largest blockbuster in years, “The Dark Knight” had eight nominations, but other than

Ledger’s honor, it scored only in technical categories such as cinematography, visual effects and editing.

Before his death, Ledger’s reinvention of the Joker as a mad-dog anarchist already was bringing him Oscar buzz. After Ledger died on Oscar nominations day a year ago, an almost mythical aura grew around the actor, helping fuel a record \$158.4 million opening weekend for “The Dark Knight” last summer.

Long viewed as the favorite, Ledger won the supporting-actor prize at the Golden Globes. If the same happens on Oscar night, Ledger would be only the second performer to receive an Oscar posthumously, following Peter Finch, the best-actor winner for 1976’s “Network.”

Ledger is the seventh actor to earn a posthumous nomination. Along with Finch, others include James Dean, nominated for best actor twice after his death, with 1955’s “East of Eden” and 1956’s “Giant.”

The other actors nominated after their deaths were Spencer Tracy (1967’s “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner”); Ralph Richardson (1984’s “Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes”); Massimo Troisi (1995’s “The Postman”); and Jeanne Eagels (1929’s “The Letter”).

Directors of all five best-picture nominees all were nominated. Along with Boyle and Fincher, the directing category includes Ron Howard for “Frost/Nixon,” Gus Van Sant for “Milk” and Stephen Daldry for “The Reader.”

Featuring a cast of unknowns, “Slumdog Millionaire” mixes the humorous and the horrific in a love story about an orphan from the streets of Mumbai who becomes a champion on India’s version of “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire.”

The film’s newcomer cast was shut out in acting categories, but its 10 nominations included slots for screenplay, cinematography and musical score.

“Slumdog Millionaire” nearly became a casualty of 2008’s collapse of studio arthouse divisions, until 20th Century Fox division Fox Searchlight stepped in.

Golden Plains seniors named to Liberty League all-academic team



T. Moss



R. Lewis



T. Bruggeman

Golden Plains seniors named to the Western Kansas Liberty League All-Academic Team for 2009 were Tanner Moss, left, and Tate Bruggeman, right. Randa Lewis, center, received Honorable Mention. To receive this honor, seniors must have a minimum 3.7 GPA and have participated in a minimum of 6 athletic and 6 non-athletic activities during their previous seven semesters of high school. The top 24 students make the academic team, while others meeting the requirements receive honorable mention status.

State Department enters ‘new era’

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton assumed her role as secretary of State on Thursday with a pledge to State Department employees that they would be at the leading edge of improving U.S. foreign relations.

“This is a new era,” she declared at a welcoming ceremony where hundreds of department employees applauded and cheered as she arrived for her first day of work.

“There are three legs to the stool of American foreign policy: defense, diplomacy and development, and we are responsible for two of the three legs,” said the former New York senator and one-time first lady. “And we will make clear as we go forward that diplomacy and development are essential tools in achieving the long-term objectives of the United States.”

Clinton’s mandate from President Barack Obama is to step up diplomatic efforts and restore the nation’s tattered image abroad.

Her appointment, confirmed by the Senate and sealed in a private ceremony in her Senate office on Wednesday, came as Obama moved quickly in his first day in office to shore up a team of seasoned advisers and take the nation’s foreign policy in a new direction.

Obama prepared to name former Senate Democratic leader George J. Mitchell as Clinton’s special envoy to the Middle East, and he placed telephone calls to leaders overseas.

The new administration also drafted executive orders to close the U.S. naval prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, review military

trials of terror suspects and end harsh interrogations.

Obama was to join Clinton at the State Department on Thursday, where the two were to address department employees. Obama, Clinton, Vice President Joe Biden and national security adviser James Jones were to convene a closed-door meeting beforehand.

After being confirmed 94-2 by the Senate on Wednesday, Clinton delivered letters of resignation to Vice President Joe Biden, as president of the Senate, and New York Gov. David Paterson, who will choose her replacement.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said her swift confirmation was an imperative.

“We face two wars abroad, a complex and unpredictable crisis in the Middle East, the nuclear ambitions of a volatile Iranian regime, together with the complexities of dealing with North Korea,” he said.

While Republicans agreed that Obama should be allowed to quickly pull together his Cabinet, some remained skeptical about his plans to revamp the nation’s policies on such issues as detainees.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who challenged the Bush administration’s detainee policy in 2006 and helped write legislation governing the new court system, said he agrees that Guantanamo Bay should be closed and a new secure location found.

But “the prison is not the problem,” Graham said in a recent interview. “For all the challenges facing the nation, finding a place to put (military prisoners) is not the issue. ... Before we move them, we need to know what’s going to happen to them.”

Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C., said he was concerned that Obama and Clinton would reverse the policy that prohibits U.S. aid to overseas groups that offer abortions.

Kennedy withdraws from senate consideration

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A person who worked closely with Caroline Kennedy on her bid for the Senate says a pressing personal matter unrelated to her uncle’s health prompted her to tell the governor she was withdrawing from consideration.

The person said Gov. David Paterson had not yet offered her the job, but Kennedy knew she was being seriously considered.

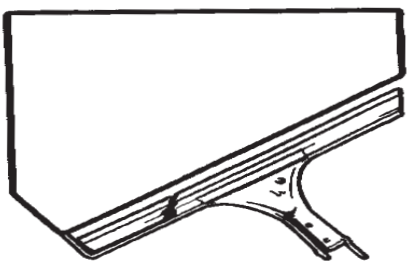
The person said Kennedy’s

decision to bow out was not related to her uncle, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, who suffered a seizure during an inaugural luncheon Tuesday. The 76-year-old senator was diagnosed in May with an aggressive type of brain tumor.

Caroline Kennedy is the 51-year-old daughter of President John Kennedy. She was considered a front-runner to replace Hillary Rodham Clinton in the Senate.

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