

## Ba-ba-ba, ba-Barbra Ann



Members of the X-Pressos, the high school show choir, delivered singing telegrams to Valentines on Thursday. The boys in the group serenaded managing editor Rachel Miscall at *The Goodland Daily News* right before noon, thanks to a \$10 fee paid by her fiancée, Mitch Hixson. The singers are raising money to attend a spring competition in Missouri. Photo by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

# Senate rebels pass redistricting bill

TOPEKA (AP) — A coalition of Democrats and conservative Republicans pushed a redistricting bill through the Senate over the objections of the chamber's GOP leaders.

Approved on a 21-19 vote Thursday and sent to the House, supporters said the new map of the Senate's 40 districts better preserves the voice of rural western Kansas than a version produced by a Senate committee.

The rebellion, led by Sen. Stan Clark of Oakley, save him from having to run against Sen. Janice Lee of Kensington. That kept more seats in western, rural areas. The main features of the new map are creation of one new district in Johnson County, where population rose sharply in the 1990s, and the collapse of two large western Kansas districts into one.

Less significant adjustments were made in the boundaries of many other districts, to even out their populations — which is the point of the redistricting that is carried out every 10 years.

The map approved Thursday had been submitted and given initial approval a day earlier as an amendment by Sen. Ed Pugh, R-Wamego, to a plan approved by the Senate Reapportionment Committee. The committee's version was supported by many Republicans, including Senate President Dave Kerr.

On Thursday, Kerr denounced the

Pugh plan.

"The amendment that was adopted on the floor of the Senate yesterday represented a poor example of legislating," said Kerr, R-Hutchinson. "The amendment was presented with a total disregard for the time and hard work of those who toiled in the trenches at the committee level."

The Pugh plan places Sens. Janis Lee, D-Kensington, and Larry Salmans, R-Hanson, in a new 36th District that would stretch from the Nebraska border to within two counties of the Oklahoma border.

The committee's plan had put Lee in a district with Sen. Stan Clark, R-Oakley.

Last week, Clark and Lee responded with an alternative map that would have preserved the cores of all current districts and avoided pairing any incumbents — including themselves. The committee ignored their plan, and the Senate rejected it Wednesday.

The final map expands Clark's 15-county district to 18 districts of northwest Kansas. Clark said maintaining rural voices to the north and west of Salina was the purpose of the Pugh plan.

"That voice would not be heard again in the Senate for 10 years" if either his seat or Lee's were eliminated, Clark said.

"It probably wouldn't be heard ever

again," he added.

Two senators on Thursday switched the positions they had taken Wednesday on the initial vote on Pugh's plan. Sen. Karin Brownlee, R-Olathe, ended up voting for the Pugh plan, while Majority Leader Lana Oleen, R-Manhattan, cast her final vote against it.

Brownlee said she had given the map further study Wednesday night.

"I had a comfort level today that I didn't have yesterday," Brownlee said. "The more time I had to think about it, the more it was a 'yes' vote."

Oleen had surprised some colleagues by backing the Pugh plan Wednesday, but said Thursday she couldn't vote for it after considering it overnight.

"The map made changes throughout the state that affected a lot of people," said Oleen. "I didn't see the map until it was placed on my desk. There was no fairness doctrine in it."

The measure is expected to clear the House without debate, since each chamber traditionally approves the other's redistricting plan without changes. From the House the bill would go to Gov. Bill Graves, then to the Kansas Supreme Court for an automatic review.

In other action Thursday:

- On a 105-16 vote, the House approved a bill redrawing the chamber's 125 districts.

bill, said of his GOP House colleagues. "I'm very disappointed."

Larkin thought Reardon's amendment was good for northeast Kansas, but voted against the final plan. He has said the redistricting process has been partisan, with majority Republicans being heavy-handed.

The map also removes part of Fort Scott, in southeast Kansas, from the 4th District now represented by Andrew Howell and places it in the 2nd District.

Howell, R-Fort Scott, serves on the House Redistricting Committee, which had endorsed a different map. He, too, voted against the bill.

"I don't like splitting a town," Howell said. "I think we could have done a better job."

But the bill passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, including that of Rep. Laura McClure, D-Osborne, who had promised Republicans not to run if it was passed.

McClure voted for the map, which she said was better for Democrats than earlier versions had been, despite the denials of Republicans that they sought the promise from her.

Rep. Clay Aurand, R-Courtland, told the House Wednesday the promise was the result of miscommunication.

Before the House, McClure asked both Aurand and Rep. Mike O'Neal, R-Hutchinson, the chairman of the redistricting committee, if they would release her from the promise — if it resulted from a misunderstanding.

Neither answered her question directly, saying they had not asked for it.

O'Neal said he was pleased with the Thursday's vote because it represented a good bipartisan showing.

"That's very acceptable," he said. "I like those numbers."

The Senate is expected to pass the bill without debate because, by tradition, one chamber does not interfere with the other's map. From the Senate the bill would go to Gov. Bill Graves, then to the Kansas Supreme Court for an automatic review.

Legislators this year are redrawing all of the state's Kansas House, Kansas Senate, State Board of Education and U.S. House districts to adjust for population changes reflected in the 2000 census.

# Afgan pilgrims kill Air Minister because planes to Mecca delayed

## ap news capsules

**INTERNATIONAL**  
KABUL, Afghanistan — A mob of Muslim pilgrims enraged over flight delays to the Islamic holy city of Mecca stormed a plane at Kabul airport and beat Afghanistan's aviation minister to death, tossing his body to the tarmac, officials and eyewitnesses said.

Afghanistan's Cabinet met in emergency session for several hours late yesterday following the killing of the aviation and tourism minister, Abdul Rahman. The Kabul airport was sealed off Friday morning.

The fatal confrontation was sparked when Rahman went to the Kabul airport Thursday afternoon for a flight to New Delhi, according to accounts from government and Afghan airline officials. Hundreds of pilgrims, stranded at the airport awaiting Saudi visas and transport to Mecca, blocked Rahman's plane, beginning a standoff that went on for about five hours, airline and government officials said.

The mob stormed the plane when Rahman emerged to try to talk to the crowd, said Abdul Wahab Nuristani, the deputy chief of a military division in eastern Afghanistan. Rahman was seized, beaten and his body tossed to the tarmac below, he said, citing witness accounts.

Rahman, 49, was trained as a medical doctor. He fled Afghanistan when the Taliban took over and had been living in exile in New Delhi.

**JERUSALEM** — Israeli forces swept through a West Bank village early today, killing a Palestinian, hours after Palestinians set off a huge bomb in Gaza, destroying a tank and killing three soldiers, threatening a new round of violence.

In what appeared to be a coordinated attack late Thursday in central Gaza, Palestinians detonated a bomb near a convoy heading toward a Jewish settlement, damaging an armored bus. Following standard procedure, the Israelis sent a tank toward the scene, and it ran over another bomb.

The Popular Resistance Committees, a combination of Fatah and Hamas militants in Gaza, claimed responsibility for the attack in a leaflet circulating in the Gaza Strip. The group includes members of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement who oppose his policies. Palestinian security forces have tried several times to break the group, without success.

In the West Bank early Friday, Israeli forces went into the village of Saida in the northern part of the West Bank after midnight to search for suspected militants, a military statement said. In an exchange of fire between the soldiers and Palestinian gunmen, a Palestinian was killed, the military said.

## NATIONAL

**GARFIELD, N.J.** — In a bizarre weeklong crime spree, a man shot a woman in New Jersey, plowed his car into 19 pedestrians in midtown Manhattan and then stole another car, returned to the city and slammed into pedestrians again two days later, police said.

The incidents left a total of 27 people wounded, police say — seven in the most recent hit-and-run rampage Thursday in addition to the 19 hit Tuesday and the woman who was shot, authorities say.

The man, identified in various media reports as Ronald Popadich of Garfield, N.J., was arrested Thursday, hours after he allegedly tore into the same area of Manhattan for the second time. He is charged with attempted murder in the Sunday shooting of a neighbor, Lisa Gotkin, 40.

Popadich, 39, was taken into custody at the home he shared with his 77-year-old mother.

Popadich had a court date scheduled for Friday in the shooting of his neighbor, who was found in an industrial area of Elmwood Park, Assistant

Bergen County Prosecutor James Santulli said.

**MONTGOMERY, Ala.** — "Idiotic judgment," not racism, was behind the actions of eight white officers accused of planting evidence and beating blacks, Montgomery's police chief says.

Federal and state authorities are reviewing at least three incidents involving the officers, the most recent of which occurred Jan. 28 when one officer allegedly beat a black handcuffed teen-ager, challenged him to a fist fight, then sprayed him with Mace.

The eight all resigned after an internal investigation began last week. A police review board recommended three other black officers be dismissed for witnessing but not reporting similar incidents.

Chief John Wilson said on Thursday that some of the officers would likely face criminal charges, but he denied any racism on their part.

"I think what we're dealing with is an abundance of idiotic judgment and outright criminal activity," said Wilson, who is white.

The officers, all of whom worked on the overnight shift, face other allegations of planting evidence, jailing a person on false charges and throwing rocks and bottles at a suspected crack house. City officials said all the victims were black.

At a news conference Thursday, the state president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference called for a citizens review board and said Wilson should resign.

**GREENWICH, Conn.** — Its previous residents-only beach policy voided by a court ruling, this wealthy New York suburb has imposed new restrictions, voting to make out-of-towners who want to visit its beaches buy more than \$400 in permits.

The Greenwich Board of Selectmen voted 2-1 Thursday in favor of the ordinance, which requires visitors to buy seasonal passes with no option for a day pass. Greenwich's previously residents-only policy was ruled unconstitutional in July by the state Supreme Court.

Stamford attorney Brenden Leydon had brought the case to the court after being turned away while attempting to jog on a beach in 1995. Leydon said the seasonal pass was still elitist and promised to bring the issue back to court.

Supporters say the plan represents costs paid by residents' property taxes to maintain the pristine beaches. It requires a nonresident to buy a seasonal pass for \$308, and another \$100 to park their vehicle. Pass holders could bring guests for \$6 each, but would be limited to 30 guest passes.

**WASHINGTON** — When Enron Corp. executive Sherron Watkins warned then-chairman Kenneth Lay last summer that the company's financial house of cards was set to collapse, she was nervous about her job security. Later, she feared for her personal safety and locked up her files.

Hailed as a hero by lawmakers during testimony before Congress on Thursday, Watkins drew a portrait of a company where rank-and-file employees were pumped up and loyal while Lay was duped by subordinates into acceptance of dodgy accounting.

Watkins said it was common knowledge in the financial division where she worked that a complex web of partner-

ships was used improperly to hide more than \$1 billion in debt, inflate profits and buoy Enron's stock price.

Still, few challenged top executives, especially former chief financial officer Andrew Fastow, the architect of some of the off-the-books partnership transactions, she told the House Energy and Commerce investigative subcommittee.

Watkins, an accountant and vice president, said she believed Fastow and then-chief executive officer Jeffrey Skilling — along with Enron's accounting firm, Arthur Andersen, and its outside legal advisers — "did dupe Ken Lay and the board."

**WASHINGTON** — Senate supporters of campaign spending limits pledged to move within days to enact legislation that has eluded them for years. A possible filibuster and uncertain White House support make success anything but sure.

Bolstered by a strong vote in the House early Thursday, Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle said he would take up campaign finance legislation once it comes over from the House.

"We have the first real chance in a generation to limit the access of special interests to the political process," said Daschle, D-S.D. The House voted 240-189 to ban the unregulated flood of soft money donations from corporations, unions and individuals to the national political parties.

Both the House and Senate are off next week and the issue probably will not come up in the Senate until the following week. Senate supporters of the bill sponsored by Reps. Christopher Shays, R-Conn., and Martin Meehan, D-Mass., hope to accept it without change, sending it directly to President Bush and avoiding a House-Senate conference where it could be stalled indefinitely.

**WASHINGTON** — President Bush, making a six-day Asia tour that was postponed because of the Sept. 11 attacks, will defend his missile-defense plans to the wary Chinese and press his hard line against the missile-trafficking of North Korea, his national security adviser says.

"We believe the North is exporting to just about anybody who will buy," Condoleezza Rice told reporters in a Thursday briefing on the president's trip. He and first lady Laura Bush depart Saturday morning.

The president will also seek to reassure China that it has nothing to fear from U.S. plans for a missile defense system. Chinese officials have warned that Beijing might respond by building more nuclear missiles and trying to make them more sophisticated.

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