

I 4
Issues
Impact
Insights
Interests



Oh, the humidity! Giant Popsicle melts

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — An attempt to erect the world's largest Popsicle in a city square ended with a scene straight out of a disaster film — but much stickier. The 25-foot-tall, 17½-ton treat of frozen Snapple juice melted faster than expected Tuesday. It flooded Union Square in downtown Manhattan with kiwi-strawberry-flavored fluid that sent pedestrians scurrying for higher ground.

Firefighters closed off several streets and used hoses to wash away the sugary goo.

Snapple had been trying to promote a new line of frozen treats by setting a record for the world's largest Popsicle. It called off the stunt before it was pulled fully upright by a construction crane.

Authorities said they were worried the thing would collapse in the 80-degree heat on the first day of summer.

Snapple official Lauren Radcliffe

said the company is unlikely to make a second attempt to break the record, set by a 21-foot ice pop in Holland in 1997.

The giant ice pop, made in Edison, N.J., was hauled to New York by freezer truck in the morning.

"What was unsettling was that the fluid just kept coming," Stuart Claxton of the Guinness Book of World Records told the Daily News.

"It was quite a lot of fluid. On a hot day like this, you have to move fast."

/ www.TimesDispatch.com /

Congress ignores proposal

Bush wants to expand 'No Child Left Behind' overhaul to high schools

BY GIL KLEIN
MEDIA GENERAL NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — President Bush's plan to reform high schools fell with a thud in Congress.

No hearings have been held. No Republicans — much less Democrats — have expressed enthusiasm.

And no one is talking about any money for it.

Asked what happened to the proposal, Rep. John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, deadpanned: "Nothing."

ISSUE
State education officials are already overwhelmed with the cost and requirements of implementing the No Child act for elementary schools.

"There are a lot of innovative ideas out there to reform the big box high schools, to create a new high school experience," he said.

But those ideas are coming from states and local school districts as well as private high school reform organizations, he said.

In January, Bush proposed expanding into high schools his "No Child Left Behind" act, now aimed at elementary and middle schools.

His plan included federally mandated tests to determine if high school students were making adequate yearly progress, just as the original No Child act requires for the lower levels.

"The role of the federal government is to serve as a funding source for specific projects and an instigator for accountability systems," Bush said.

But "the states are saying we have enough federal intervention now," said Kathy Christie, of the Education Commission of the States, an organization of state education officials.

Bush's high school proposal was "dead on arrival" in part because conservative Republicans oppose it, said Rep. Michael N. Castle, R-Del., chairman of the House education subcommittee who supports the proposal.

"Conservatives took the position that maybe No Child Left Behind was not the right step in the first place, so let's not extend it," Castle said.

• Gil Klein writes for the Washington bureau of Media General News Service.

Corrections

A 14-year-old boy killed in Richmond's East End on June 12 in what police said was a robbery attempt by the boy was shot with a 40-caliber weapon. An article on Page B10 yesterday incorrectly described the gun.

Becca Hunt, named to the All-Metro swimming first team in the girls 50-meter freestyle, attends J.R. Tucker High School. Her school was listed incorrectly in the All-Metro chart in Saturday's Sports section.

Kip Robson and not Gray Cassada was on the Douglas Freeman High School No. 3 doubles team that lost to Godwin in the state championship match June 4.

Clarification

Virginia Union University's 1992 men's Division II championship basketball team was invited to a White House ceremony, but the event was called off because of problems stemming from the acquittals in the Rodney King case in Los Angeles. An article this past June 1 indicated that no VUU championship team had ever been invited to the White House.

a closer look . . . feel the earth move



A seismograph of one of last week's California earthquakes.

Great shakes



INSIGHT
The Earth's shell is made up of plates that move about slowly. The movement strains the rock at or near plate boundaries, which produces faults. Earthquakes tend to occur along these weak spots when the stress makes the rock break and shift, which causes the ground to shake.

Forget California: We're not too far from an area with some serious earthquake potential

BY ABBY VOGEL
TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

Intense strain on the Earth's crust — strong enough to cause a significant earthquake — may be closer to Virginia than you think.

An area in southeast Missouri known as New Madrid is best known for three earthquakes within three months that shook the entire eastern half of the country in 1811 and 1812. The course of the Mississippi River was changed, and forests were destroyed over an area of 150,000 acres.

Scientists have long debated the risk of a large earthquake in the New Madrid region. A paper in today's Nature suggests that the earthquake-causing strain there is high, and it is similar to what is found along the famous San Andreas fault in California.

Researchers at the University of Memphis used a global positioning system to track the slow motion of the Earth's crust over four years. The system measures strain as it builds up along a fault line.

The technology measured per-year move-

ment in the crust near New Madrid as small as the width of a nickel. The movement is similar to what is found around active earthquake areas on the West Coast.

"This GPS data say that these are significant crustal strains that are similar to plate boundaries, and plate boundaries are places where we have big earthquakes," said Christopher Bailey, a College of William and Mary geologist.

The research shows for "the first time that high strain rates have been successfully recorded in Eastern North America," said Martin Chapman, director of the Virginia Tech Seismological Observatory. "There is a lot of this type of measurement going on in the Western part of America, but it's being applied here for the first time in this part of the country."

Light earthquakes are not unusual in central Virginia. Virginia uses seismographs at points throughout the state to record ground movement during earthquakes. A new station is planned for Richmond this summer, Chapman said.

Plans are in the works to install a few GPS stations throughout the Eastern part of the country. Blacksburg should get one in the next few years, he said.

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The rattle report

Were last week's earthquakes in California connected? Maybe. Did they relieve pressure on major fault lines? Perhaps, but not much. Did they make a bigger quake more likely? Possibly. These are not exactly the answers quake-rattled Californians are looking for. But the recent temblors involve some of the issues that seismologists most often debate.

WHAT HAPPENED?

The California quakes — two felt across Southern California and one 7.2 temblor in northern California that prompted a brief tsunami warning — didn't cause much damage or many injuries. They captured attention because they came so close together and hit after a period of less-than-normal seismic activity.

WERE THEY CONNECTED?

Seismologists disagree about whether the 5.2 Anza quake on June 12 triggered the 4.9 Yucaipa quake four days later. They were within about 25 miles of each other, and both occurred on secondary faults. There is general agreement that the Southern California quakes were not connected to the larger one in Northern California on June 14, mainly because of the distance between them.

IS A BIG QUAKE COMING?

It has long been held that earthquakes relieve pressure on fault lines, potentially decreasing the threat of a massive quake. But experts said it's not that simple. Last week's may have been too small to significantly reduce stress on major faults, and they may have just redistributed the stress elsewhere.

JUST A COINCIDENCE?

While the types of temblors California saw last week are not unusual, it is rare for them to occur in such rapid succession. Seismologists said one reason these quakes have gotten so much attention is because California has seen relatively few major shakers in recent years. Big quakes have always occurred in unpredictable patterns, they said.

A TOUGH SUBJECT

Though California is a rich laboratory for seismic study, scientists are beset by obstacles. To truly gauge how earthquakes trigger other quakes, scientists need to understand the state of stress deep underneath the surface of the Earth, and they can't get deep enough yet. "We don't get to create our experiments," one seismologist said. "We have to accept what the earth gives us."

—The Los Angeles Times

Anti-drug advocates take aim at marijuana-flavored candy

Sweets are flavored with hemp oil and are legal, but some want them off shelves

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — Marijuana-flavored lollipops with such names as Purple Haze, Acapulco Gold and Rasta are showing up on the shelves of convenience stores around the country, angering anti-drug advocates.

"It's nothing but dope candy, and that's nothing we need to be training our children to do," said Georgia state Sen. Vincent Fort, who has persuaded some convenience stores to stop selling the treats.

The confections are legal because they are made with hemp oil, a common ingredient in health food, beauty supplies and other household products. The oil imparts marijuana's grassy taste but not the high.

Merchants call them a harmless novelty for adults and insist they advise stores to sell only to people 18 and older.

"There are more than 70 million people in the United States who smoke marijuana. We're catering to the audience of people who are in that smoking culture," said Rick Watkins, marketing director for Corona, Calif.-based Chronic

Candy, which uses the slogan "Every lick is like taking a hit."

An Atlanta company called Hydro Blunts markets a similar product under the name Kronic Kandy, which is made in the Netherlands.

New York City Councilwoman Margarita Lopez introduced a resolution condemning the candies when she saw them at convenience stores near schools in her district. She plans to hold hearings this summer.

At Junkman's Daughter, an Atlanta novelty shop, the suckers are sold near the cash register from a bucket labeled with a marijuana leaf. "We've got probably every weird kind of candy there is in here," owner Pam Majors said. "If it was anything you could get high off of, we wouldn't carry it, obviously."

