

All tied up

Sox pound Rays, claim share of AL East lead. **C1**

Back on duty

School resource officer returns to Dartmouth High hallways. **A9**

The Standard-Times

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TUESDAY, September 16, 2008

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Start of something special

Photos by **PETER PEREIRA**/The Standard-Times

Inmates from the Bristol County House of Corrections work on renovating an old mill on Cove Road in New Bedford into the new headquarters of GiftsToGive, a nonprofit corporation founded by Jim Stevens that is just getting off the ground.

Entrepreneur's upstart nonprofit GiftsToGive sets up in New Bedford



Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson pledged the help of inmates Michael Washington, left, and Bob McDermott among others to help GiftsToGive get off the ground.

By **JOE COHEN**
Standard-Times staff writer

NEW BEDFORD — Jim Stevens is no Santa Claus — unless Santa is a tough, seasoned businessman with a history of helping children.

Then again, maybe Jim Stevens is Santa in disguise, for his goal is to deliver gifts of clothes and other things to children in need and, at the same time, engage more affluent children and their SouthCoast elders in providing the less fortunate with a lift up.

GiftsToGive is a nonprofit corporation created by Mr. Stevens after he broke away from a similar, highly publicized organization called Cradles to Crayons that got its start in the Boston area in 2002. Just this month, Cradles to Crayons made a gift of 2,500 backpacks to social-service providers in New Bedford which will distribute them to local children who are homeless or low-income. Another 1,000 backpacks are headed to Fall River.

Mr. Stevens was one of the guiding forces behind Cradles to Crayons — someone who helped run the organization and make it work from its infancy to its becoming fairly

See **CHARITY A3**

Bank failure batters stocks

Dow plunges 500 on Lehman news

By **PATRICK RIZZO**
and **JOE BEL BRUNO**
Associated Press writers

NEW YORK — The upheaval in the American financial system sent shock waves through the stock market Monday, producing the worst day on Wall Street in seven years as investors digested the failure of one of its most venerable banks and wondered which domino would be next to fall.

The Dow Jones industrial average lost more than 500 points, more than 4 percent, its steepest point drop since the day the stock market reopened after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. About \$700 billion evaporated from retirement plans, government pension funds and other investment portfolios.

The carnage capped a tumultuous 24 hours that redrew U.S. finance. Lehman Brothers, an investment bank that predates the Civil War and weathered the Great Depression, filed the largest bankruptcy in American history. A second storied bank, Merrill Lynch, fled into the arms of Bank of America.

It was by far the most stomach-churning single day since a financial crisis began to bubble up

See **CRISIS A7**

Lehman Brothers

Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. says it intends to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Lehman Brothers Holdings

Revenue

INSIDE TODAY

POLLS OPEN TODAY

Today is the Massachusetts State Primary. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. across the state. SouthCoast contests on **A11**.WEATHER Morning sun with afternoon clouds; high 71, low 53. **A2**LOTTERY Daily Numbers: **4272, 8879**; more lottery, **A2**.

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Local suspect nabbed in Maryland

By **BRIAN FRAGA**
Standard-Times staff writer

NEW BEDFORD — Wanted in the stabbings of two people last November, Peterson Museau evaded police for almost 10 months. He moved around New Bedford, always a step ahead of detectives hot on his trail.

Mr. Museau, 28, traveled down the East Coast, wandering through the Northeast and ultimately moving to Maryland, where he assumed a new identity as a recent immigrant from Trinidad and Tobago.

However, the fugitive was ultimately done in by modern

See **SUSPECT A5**

FROM GERMANY WITH DISCOVERY



JOHN SLADEWSKI/The Standard-Times

New Bedford High School sophomores Taylor Pacheco, left, and Lauren Kelly watch as German scientist Martin Stegner looks for microscopic sea creatures at Sea Lab in New Bedford recently. City students are helping experts from overseas study a tiny crustacean to discover the secrets of evolution. **Story, B1.**

"We are in the middle of a deep, dark recession, and it won't end soon. Here it is, and it is pretty nasty."

BARRY RITHOLTZ,
CEO of FusionIQ and popular financial blogger

ANALYSIS

Buckle up!

Financial ride getting rougher

By **ADAM GELLER**
Associated Press writer

NEW YORK — It started as a panic attack, soothed by assurances that the problem was limited to a relatively small number of reckless home loans. Now it's clear the crisis was anything but contained — and that the nation's financial system is dangerously close to the edge.

It may well pull back. But as policymakers try to guide the economy across a very frayed tightrope, it is growing increasingly difficult to

See **ANALYSIS A7**

MORE INSIDE

Jack Spillane wonders why the little guys have to foot the bill for failing, rich CEOs and their companies. **A7**

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Assonet group seeks accessible version of state report

By KIM LEDOUX
Standard-Times correspondent

FREETOWN — Officials and residents are going over the results of a 1,039-page study of the effects the proposed Payne's Crossing retail and commercial development will have on traffic and the environment.

"I don't think that many on the (Assonet Bay Action Committee) have had an opportunity to read the whole thing," said Brian Dunning, a member

of the committee.

"My initial reaction after getting the CD was that a lot of people who commented won't be able to read it because they don't have access to good computers," he said, referring to the compact disk, or digital version of the report.

Mr. Dunning and other members of the Assonet Bay Action Committee, including Carl Brodeur and Peter Erwin, have contacted Nicolas Zavalas,

Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office analyst, and Steven Cabral, president of Crossman Engineering, to request paper copies for residents who responded during the comment period for the most recent impact report.

The deadline for submitting comments to the current report is Oct. 10.

"I would like to see paper copies released and a new deadline calculated to allow

people to properly examine the report," Mr. Dunning said.

Dated Sept. 2, the second supplemental report discusses installing two roundabouts and moving the driveway 140 feet to approximately 300 feet west of the Route 24 southbound ramps, Exit 9.

Selectman Lawrence N. Ashley said the board would meet project proponents individually sometime this week.

"The area is certainly zoned

for business," he said, "but I personally would like to see something more like Mashpee Commons, which is a combination of village and residential. I would rather not see the cookie-cutter approach of putting in three large stores. Freetown has always been different, and I would like to see it stay that way."

Mr. Dunning indicated that Assonet Bay Action Committee organizers would meet this

week, as well, at a time to be determined, and that a public meeting will likely be scheduled in the next two weeks.

The project entails 377,000 square feet of retail and commercial use, including a 167,000-square-foot home improvement store, a 195,000-square-foot discount super store and 15,000 square feet of miscellaneous retail space. The plan proposes 1,530 parking spaces.

Two charged with stealing scrap metal

By CHARIS ANDERSON
Standard-Times staff writer

FAIRHAVEN — Two Fairhaven men were arraigned Monday on charges they stole scrap metal from the town's wastewater treatment plant over the weekend.

Tyler Snell, 18, of 133 Spring St. and Joseph Fitzgerald, 19, of 23 Day St. were charged with breaking and entering, larceny of property worth more than \$250 and vandalizing property, court records stated. Both were released on personal recognizance.

The two were driving a pickup truck on Huttleston Avenue Saturday night when they were pulled over by police for a motor vehicle violation, Chief Gary F. Souza said.

The bed of the truck was filled with scrap metal, including two 30-foot-long aluminum railings, some copper and a cast-iron stove, according to court records.

During questioning, Mr. Snell told police he and Mr. Fitzgerald had taken the railings from the wastewater treatment plant, court records stated.

Mr. Fitzgerald is the younger brother of Joshua Fitzgerald, who was killed in a stabbing after a hip-hop event at the Fort Phoenix Veterans of Foreign Wars post in April. Patrick, another brother of Mr. Fitzgerald, was seriously wounded in the same incident. Joseph drove his wounded brothers to the hospital that night.

According to William Fitzgerald, the public works superintendent who is not related to the suspect Joseph Fitzgerald, many public works departments are concerned about scrap-metal thefts.

"They've seen metal disappear," he said.

Most of the department's metal and equipment is locked up, he said. What was stolen was old, discarded metal: "It's no value to us other than scrap," Mr. Fitzgerald said.

The department cashed in the remaining scrap metal on Monday, he said.

Charity: Upstart nonprofit aims to help children

CONTINUED FROM A1

established. He put in five years with the program, which was the idea of a former staffer in the administration of President Bill Clinton. A current executive in Cradles to Crayons, Jennifer White, spoke positively last week about Mr. Stevens' work and contributions.

For his part, Mr. Stevens says he is not trying to re-create Cradles to Crayons with GiftsToGive, but simply reworking a concept into a format he believes will work better at lower cost with a more grass-roots orientation. While he does not have the cachet of a relationship with Bill Clinton or the access to fundraising it can provide, Mr. Stevens remains confident he can overcome a range of hurdles and become fully operational later this year.

Like Ms. White's comments about Mr. Stevens, Mr. Stevens had nothing bad to say about his old organization.

Both parties are very much in agreement on one point: sadly, there are so many children who are homeless and from lower-income families in serious need of assistance that there is plenty of work to be done for everyone interested in offering a helping hand.

Mr. Stevens decided to set up shop in the city for a number of reasons, including what he perceived as a tremendous, unfilled need locally. In addition, he had the encouragement of Mayor Scott W. Lang. He also found plenty of low-cost factory space for his planned operations along with a cooperative landlord, Rick Miller. A willing architect also surfaced in the form of Kyra Lawton from Dartmouth.

Perhaps the most important immediate need was filled by Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson. Sheriff Hodgson's jail provides six inmates overseen by a corrections officer to work Mondays through Fridays at GiftsToGive's new quarters off Cove Street. The inmates are assisting Mr. Stevens in renovating the interior of the building to make it ready for GiftsToGive's operations.

In 300,000 square feet, Mr. Stevens intends to have three separate areas: one to receive used clothing and other donations, a second for sorting and cleaning and readying for use and a third for packaging items for distribution. Mr. Stevens said his concept calls for only distributing through social services workers, institutions and organizations, not directly to recipients.

His vision statement is: "One day, all children will be connected to the things they need. We all have gifts to give. We

believe that we can reach most children that need things by connecting citizens/neighbors and leveraging existing resources. We have a low-cost, highly efficient business model that will build a connected community. This model provides immediate assistance to underprivileged children while building a foundation for service, tangible giving and social change."

Mr. Stevens' vision is not just to help the less fortunate but also the very fortunate. He believes the more affluent and their children need opportunities to get involved with charitable endeavors in a hands-on fashion, such as working in packaging clothing and other items for needy children. Family-organized drives to collect used clothing and other items — usually through religious or social organizations — also fits into the Stevens business model.

In an interview Friday inside his rented factory building, Mr. Stevens shifted quickly back and forth from the language of the committed social activist to a hard-nosed businessman who is comfortable taking on a tough challenge with little tangible reward. Mr. Stevens is 58, a resident of the South Shore and has a lengthy resume that includes stints in major corporations and with smaller businesses — often with a heavy dose of marketing. He also has been affiliated for more than 20 years with Special Olympics. He has two grown children of his own.

Much of the funding to start GiftsToGive is from friends, family and himself, Mr. Stevens said.

The social activist side of Mr. Stevens tosses out lines including "pathway for social service and justice," "36,000 nonprofits in Massachusetts of which 7,000 are focused on kids" and thoughts on how the baby boomer generation is shifting from wanting to make money to worrying about "legacy."

The business side of Mr. Stevens uses expressions such as "finished packages," "concerns about philanthropy," "business model" and "strategic differences." Mr. Stevens describes himself as a former "serial entrepreneur" and "sales and marketing guy." He is not taking a salary at GiftsToGive. Should it become highly successful, he does not believe salaries or overhead should ever be allowed to become a large part of the cost of doing business.

Mr. Stevens' interim-term goal is to get as many as four facilities such as the one under development in the city up and running, something he believes is neces-



PETER PEREIRA/The Standard-Times

Sparks fly as Michael Washington's power saw hits some nails while he cuts out some old flooring for replacement with plywood last week.

sary to achieve the critical mass that can assure long-term operational success. Mr. Stevens is optimistic he can be open to receive used clothing and other donated items by late October and begin distribution by late November.

He has no illusions that he is Santa Claus.

"If it was easy, I could fail," he says good-naturedly. "I have an efficient model; I have the skill set; it works."

In New Bedford and the surrounding environs, thousands of children are in need. "It's got legs," Mr. Stevens said optimistically, reassuring his interviewer. "It's going to be sustainable."

Contact Charis Anderson at canderson@s-t.com

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