



MARTIN • ST. LUCIE
LOCAL COVERAGE

Cashing in on 'Caddyshack'
'Lacey Underall' actress
keeps her film fame alive
IN SPORTS



Jessica in the pink hat
How a father's snapshot
became an iconic image
IN ACCENT

The Palm Beach Post

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1 2 3 4 • 50 cents

Martin commissioners delay vote on cluster pockets

A Hobe Sound plan is seen as a test case.

By JASON SCHULTZ
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer
STUART — The battle over rural growth in western Martin County will rage on.

After nearly eight hours of public comment and commission debate, county commissioners voted 4-1 Tuesday night to postpone a vote on a consultant's recommendation to allow clustered pockets of homes on rural lands and instead hold more public hearings. Sarah Heard was the dissenting commissioner.

Commissioners also voted to use a proposed 2,758-acre clustering development in Hobe Sound that commissioners will consider in April as a test case. "We need to keep talking. We have a lot more work to do," Commissioner Susan Valliere said. The county's comprehensive plan — its state-required blueprint for growth — limits development in rural areas to one home for every 20-acre lot.

The \$528,000 study, conducted by Orlando-based firm Glattig Jackson, recommends allowing clustered pockets of densely packed homes on land in rural areas

if developers promise to conserve at least 60 percent of their land as open space. While building homes on 20-acre parcels does preserve wetlands, it doesn't do a good job of connecting large pieces of wildlife habitat or preserving large-scale agriculture, consultant Tim Jackson said. Allowing clustering on rural

land would help the county preserve habitat and farming while leading to only 2,500 more homes than staying with the 20-acre lot plan would, Jackson said. Of the more than 200 residents who attended the meeting, about 70 spoke before it

See GROWTH, 8A ►

Anna Nicole Smith battle ignites frenzy in Fort Lauderdale

Pinup issues: Eternal rest, paternity mess



Vergie Arthur, Anna Nicole Smith's mother, and Howard K. Stern, her boyfriend, are in court to determine where Smith should be buried.



J. PAT CARTER/The Associated Press

Larry Birkhead, Anna Nicole Smith's one-time lover and possibly the father of her daughter, is besieged by reporters Tuesday in Fort Lauderdale.



Smith Dispute over her body, child continues in courts.

By MARK SCHWED
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

In death, Anna Nicole Smith has finally come closer to achieving her life's wish — to become as famous as her idol, Marilyn Monroe. On Tuesday, while lawyers on both coasts waged a lurid legal battle over her 5-month-old child and her body, cable news networks went wall-to-wall with live coverage in a media frenzy reminiscent of the O.J. Simpson trial. But the biggest surprise came out of nowhere: Broward County Medical Examiner Joshua Perper interrupted the proceedings in the Fort Lauderdale circuit courtroom of Judge Larry Seidlin with an extraordinary cellphone

call warning that the pinup's body was decomposing "much faster than expected," even after being embalmed. The delay in embalming the body accelerated the deterioration, he said. Further delay, he testified via speakerphone, "might create a problem." Blindsided by the news, the man fighting to bury Smith's body in the Bahamas — her lawyer and lover Howard K. Stern — erupted in sobs on the witness stand. Seidlin, who had been exchanging wisecracks with the lawyers for most of the day, moved to fast-track the trial, which will enter

See SMITH, 8A ►

Court upholds Gitmo process

The right of habeas corpus does not extend to foreign citizens detained outside the U.S., the judges hold.

By STEPHEN LABATON
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — A divided federal appeals court on Tuesday upheld the constitutionality of a new law stripping federal judges of authority to review foreign prisoners' challenges to their detention at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba. The decision set the stage for a third trip to the Supreme Court for the detainees, who will once again ask the justices to consider a complex issue that tests the balance of power among the White House, Congress and the courts in the murky context of the fight against international terrorism. It also prompted some senior Democratic lawmakers, who have fought the administration on the matter before but who now hold sway in Congress, to vow enactment of a law more favorable to the prisoners. The Supreme Court previously ruled twice that federal statutes empowered the courts to consider Guantanamo prisoners' habeas corpus petitions challenging the grounds for their detention. In response to those rulings, Congress twice rewrote the law to limit the detainees' avenues of appeal. The most recent revision was at issue in Tuesday's 2-1 decision.

See COURT, 10A ►

LEGISLATURE 2007

Plan would erase tax on homesteads, hike state sales tax

Lawmakers say the speaker's plan would require a 2.5-cent increase.

By MICHAEL C. BENDER and DARA KAM
Palm Beach Post Capital Bureau

TALLAHASSEE — State House Speaker Marco Rubio is expected to unveil a plan this morning to eliminate property taxes for Florida homesteads in exchange for a sales tax increase, several lawmakers said Tuesday. Under the plan, property taxes would still be collected on second homes and businesses, but House lawmakers said a cap on government revenues would roll back those taxes by 20 percent. Voters would need to approve any change to how homestead properties are taxed, but lawmakers could raise the sales tax and create a revenue cap without voter approval. Removing property taxes from houses with a homestead exemption would require a sales tax increase of about 2.5 cents, lawmakers said. The state sales tax is currently 6 cents per dollar spent on taxable items. "We're out of big issues, aren't we? All

See PROPOSAL, 4A ►

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

At Lake Worth Christian, a first state title and the coach's firstborn are in the offing.

By ANDREW ABRAMSON
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

BOYNTON BEACH — Heaven knows Lake Worth Christian is feeling the pressure heading into this week's girls state basketball tournament. The school, 13-time runner-up, has another shot at its first state championship in any sport in 48 years. The mother of the Defenders' starting center is begging her 6-foot-1 daughter to bring home the title that eluded her as the starting

center in 1979. And the head coach is hoping for two special deliveries in between trips up and down the turnpike to Lakeland — his firstborn and his first championship. It won't take a miracle, but is a dash of divine intervention too much to ask? "If we win the state championship and my son's born, this will be the greatest week of my life," coach Carlos

See TEAM, 4A ►



GARY CORONADO/Staff photographer

Kim Meerbeek won a regional basketball title with the Defenders in 1979. Now daughter Becki is trying to help bring back her school's first state title.

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Weather:
Partly cloudy.
High 78, low 60.
FORECAST ON BACK PAGE OF SPORTS

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BUSINESS 1D
CLASSIFIED 1F
COMICS 10E
CROSSWORD 9E
CROSSWORD 5F
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Blair to lay out plan to withdraw troops
His agenda calls for about 3,000 British soldiers to leave Iraq this year. **Story, 3A**

Ex-cemetery worker gets 15 years for theft
She apologizes for taking \$125,000 and spending it on lingerie and bills. **Local, 1B**

