

*** READER SPEAK**

“Connecticut can claim the title, the new Louisiana.”
 misery loves company at courant.com/readerspeak on layoffs at The Stanley Works



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Chilling Scene At Garage

Gunman Describes Shooting Three Men, Making Telephone Call To Cipriani

“I told [Cipriani] that I did what he paid me to do.”

Jose Guzman testifying in Superior Court

By **ANN MARIE SOMMA**
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“Game over.”

The convicted triggerman in a triple homicide testified Friday that he spoke those two words to the man who hired him

MURDER TRIAL

after the job was done. In testimony that prompted shivers and sobs throughout the Hartford courtroom,

Jose Guzman said he did what Benedetto Cipriani paid him to do on July 30, 2003 — kill Robert Stears and anyone else in the Windsor Locks auto repair shop Stears owned.

Speaking slowly, Guzman told the jury in Superior Court in Hartford that he drove to B & B Automotive with convicted

*** ON THE WEB**

For previous coverage and photos of the Cipriani case, visit courant.com/cipriani

co-conspirator Michael Castillo. Guzman, who was armed with a 9mm handgun, said he saw Stears in a red pickup truck in the shop's driveway. He said he waved Stears down and told him to turn off his truck, put the keys on the floor of the truck and walk back into the shop. Inside, finishing out the day's business, were Stears' partner, Barry Rossi, and mechanic Lorne Stevens.

“As soon as I got close enough to the

KILLING, A2

ICE STORM



CHERYL SENTER | Associated Press

AUTO INDUSTRY

Bush Offers A New Option

Administration, Carmakers Meet On Rescue Plan

By **STEVEN MUFSON**
 Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration on Friday moved to pull Detroit's automakers back from the brink, saying it would drop its opposition to tapping the \$700 billion financial industry rescue package to help General Motors and Chrysler survive through year's end.

The White House said it would explore all financing options, including drawing on the Treasury's Troubled Asset Relief Program, which until now has been used exclusively to aid banks and other financial firms. The automakers and some members of Congress were also hoping that the Federal Reserve would make a loan to aid the firms and preserve tens of thousands of jobs. But the Fed has strongly resisted such entreaties and has said it would be “extremely reluctant” to lend to the companies.

“We need these loans, and we're not particularly fussy about how we get the loans or where they come from,” said GM board member George Fisher, retired

RESCUE, A2

» **GM:** General Motors says it will temporarily close 20 plants and cut vehicle production. **Page A6**

» **BALLOUT:** The president of the United Auto Workers President accuses Republican senators who blocked emergency loans to the car industry of trying hurt organized labor. **Page A7**

» **LAYOFFS:** A Middlebury-based company that makes chemicals used in the car industry has announced layoffs. **Page A7**

LINES DOWN, POWER OUT

TRAFFIC IS REDIRECTED in Derry, N.H., after a utility pole snapped from an overnight ice storm Friday. The storm knocked out power to more than a million homes and businesses in New England and upstate New York and some were expected to remain without power for several days. The ice storm compared with some of the Northeast's worst. **See story, Page A8.**

INSIDE: »BROWSER: M7, M8 »CROSSWORD C7 »EDITORIAL A10, A11 »LOTTERY A4 »MOVIES C6 »OBITUARIES C8-C9 »PUBLIC NOTICES M8

CTBUSINESS

Callers trying to file for unemployment benefits with the state still are kept waiting.

PAGE A7

BEYONDCT

President-elect Barack Obama's chief of staff choice reportedly spoke with the Illinois governor's aide about Obama's replacement.

PAGE A9

CTSPORTS

Claude Lemieux, a rookie when the Canadiens knocked the Whalers out of the Stanley Cup playoffs in 1986, is back.

He was with AHL Worcester at the XL Center Friday night. Jeff Jacobs checks in on him.

PAGE B1

CTLIVING

Actor Van Johnson, boy-next-door star of movies in the 1940s and 1950s, dies.

PAGE C1



CTWEATHER

Mostly sunny and cold, high of 28. Clear tonight, low of 18.

PAGE C12

WEST HARTFORD

Tax – And Bend

Longtime Watchdog Group Shifts Its Approach

By **JOSH KOVNER**
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WEST HARTFORD — The local taxpayers' group — known for opposing budgets and confronting officials — wants to attract new members, bulk up on expert advice about how to run a municipality and work more closely and productively with town and school leaders.

Is this a kinder, gentler West Hartford Taxpayers Association? To a degree, said George Kennedy, president of the group, which was formed in 1933.

Spearheading a budget defeat, as it did

in referendums in spring 2007 and in June and October “is still our ultimate weapon,” said Kennedy, whose family has lived in town for three generations. But the group wants to shed any perception “that it's a bunch of right-wingers,” and show that it can do more than say “no” to whatever budget the town's Democratic majority comes up with.

Heading into what is expected to be a difficult budget season, the group recently voted to revise its mission statement, which may be seen on its website, www.whta.org.

The association “offers input to the

TAX, A4

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