

# The Tuscaloosa News

TUSCALOOSA, NORTHPORT, WEST ALABAMA

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2013 75¢

WWW.TUSCALOOSANEWS.COM

## Deadly tornadoes sweep across the Midwest

### At least five dead and dozens injured by unusually powerful late-season storms

By Don Babwin and David Mercer  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON, ILL. | Dozens of tornadoes and intense thunderstorms swept across the Midwest on Sunday, leaving at least five people dead and unleashing powerful winds that flattened entire neighborhoods, flipped over cars and uprooted trees.

Illinois took the brunt of the fury as the string of unusually powerful late-season tornadoes tore across the state, injuring dozens and even prompting officials at Chicago's Soldier Field to evacuate the stands and delay the Bears game.

"The whole neighborhood's gone. The wall of my fireplace is all that is left of my house," said Michael Perdun, speaking by cellphone from the hard-hit central Illinois town of Washington, where he said his neighborhood was wiped out in a matter of seconds.

"I stepped outside, and I heard it coming. My daughter was already in the basement, so I ran downstairs and grabbed her, crouched in the laundry room, and

SEE STORMS | 5A



Washington, Ill., homeowners and friends try to salvage items from homes that were destroyed by tornadoes on Sunday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## UA exhibit lights up history



STAFF PHOTOS | DUSTY COMPTON

To see more photos of UA's exhibit, visit [www.tuscaloosa.com/news.com](http://www.tuscaloosa.com/news.com).

A display commemorating the 50th anniversary of a 1964 surgeon general's report about the health effects of smoking is set up in the lobby of Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library on the University of Alabama campus on Friday. A professor in UA's College of Community Health Sciences has set up a display called "The Surgeon General vs. The Marlboro Man: Who Really Won?"

### Display in Gorgas records shift in U.S. attitude about smoking

By Ed Enoch  
Staff Writer

The old magazines, novelties and newspaper clippings on display in the foyer of the Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library at the University of Alabama are a snapshot of the heyday of cigarettes in the U.S. and a record of the gradual shift in public attitudes about smoking following a landmark 1964 report by the U.S. surgeon general.

"The report came about because the health organizations like American Cancer Society wanted the government to be involved, because they hadn't been," said Dr. Alan Blum, the Gerald Leon Wallace MD Endowed Chair in Family Medicine at UA's College of Community

Health Sciences.

Blum, the exhibit's curator, is one of the nation's foremost authorities on the history of smoking and cigarette marketing and a vocal and longtime advocate for the anti-smoking movement.

The exhibit, featuring an array of materials from the 1930s to present, commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Jan. 11, 1964, release of U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health. Work on the report began under the administration of President John F. Kennedy in 1962.

The document was compiled by a committee convened by U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Luther Terry and reported the serious health

SEE SMOKING | 5A



"The Surgeon General vs. The Marlboro Man: Who Really Won?" display features a copy of a scientific report, advertising, press clippings and other materials cataloging the public discussion of the impact of smoking from the 1930s to present.

## Kidnapping trial to start for ex-UA player, mom

### Jesse Pollard expected to plead temporary insanity

By Holbrook Mohr  
The Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. | Trial is scheduled to begin today for a Mississippi woman and her son, a former University of Alabama basketball player, both charged with conspiring to kidnap a 6-year-old girl from school.

Jesse Mae Brown Pollard has filed court documents saying she plans to use an insanity defense during the trial in U.S. District Court in Jackson, Miss. She is expected to argue that she was insane at the time of the abduction.

"Ms. Pollard continues to maintain her innocence, and we are diligently preparing for trial," her lawyer, Abby Brumley, said in an email.

Federal prosecutors filed a motion Thursday that seeks to block Jesse Pollard from using insanity as a defense. The document cited a July 26 Federal Bureau of Prisons report that said Jesse Pollard underwent an evaluation that found she "was not suffering from a mental disease or defect which would render her

SEE TRIAL | 5A

## Recent attacks on teachers shed light on job risks

By Carolyn Thompson  
The Associated Press

When a 16-year-old student slammed a metal trash can onto Philip Raimondo's head, it did more than break open the history teacher's scalp, knock him out and send him bleeding to the floor.

"It changed my whole world," Raimondo said about the attack in the school where he taught for 22 years.

Experts say the phenomenon of student-on-teacher violence is too often ignored.

"There's some reluctance to think that the teaching profession can be unsafe," said Dr. Dorothy Espelage of the University of Illi-



# STORMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

all of a sudden I could see daylight up the stairway and my house was gone."

An elderly man and his sister were killed when a tornado hit their home in the rural southern Illinois community of New Minden, said coroner Mark Styninger. A third person died in Washington, while two others perished in Massac County in the far southern part of the state, said Patti Thompson of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. She did not provide details.

With communications difficult and many roads impassable, it remained unclear how many people were killed or hurt. The Illinois National Guard said it had dispatched 10 firefighters and three vehicles to Washington to assist with immediate search and recovery operations.

In Washington, a rural community of 16,000, whole blocks of houses were erased from the landscape, and Illinois State Police Trooper Dustin Pierce said the tornado cut a path from one end of town to the other, knocking down power lines, rupturing gas lines and ripping off roofs.

An auto parts store with several people inside was reduced to a pile of bricks, metal and rebar; a battered car, its windshield impaled by a piece of lumber, was flung alongside it. Despite the devastation, all the employees managed to crawl out of the rubble unhurt, Pierce said.

"I went over there immediately after the tornado, walking through the neighborhoods, and I couldn't even tell what street I was on," Washington Alderman Tyler Gee told WLS-TV.

"Just completely flattened — some of the neighborhoods here in town, hundreds of homes."

Among those who lost everything was Curt Zehr, who described the speed with which the tornado turned his farmhouse outside Washington into a mass of rubble scattered over hundreds of yards. His truck was sent flying and landed on an uprooted tree.

"They heard the siren ... and saw (the tornado) right there and got into the basement," he said of his wife and adult son who were home at the time. Then, seconds

later, when they looked out from their hiding place, the house was gone and "the sun was out and right on top of them."

At OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, spokeswoman Amy Paul said 37 patients had been treated, eight with injuries ranging from broken bones to head injuries. Another hospital, Methodist Medical Center in Peoria, treated more than a dozen, but officials there said none of them were seriously injured.

Steve Brewer, Methodist Medical Center's chief operating officer, said doctors and other medical professionals were setting up a temporary emergency care center to treat the injured before transporting them to hospitals, while others were dispatched to search through the rubble for survivors.

By nightfall, Trooper Pierce said there were reports of looting in Washington.

About 90 minutes after the tornado destroyed homes in Washington, the storm darkened downtown Chicago. As the rain and high winds slammed into the area, officials at Soldier Field evacuated the stands and ordered the Bears and Baltimore Ravens off the field. Fans were allowed back to their seats shortly after 2 p.m., and the game resumed after about a two-hour delay.

Earlier, the Office of Emergency Management and Communications had issued a warning to fans, urging them "to take extra precautions and ... appropriate measures to ensure their personal safety."

Just how many tornadoes hit was unclear. According to the National Weather Service' website, a total of 65 tornadoes had struck, the bulk of them in Illinois. But meteorologist Matt Friedlein said the total might fall because emergency workers, tornado spotters and others often report the same tornado.

Still, when the weather service was issuing its warning that severe weather was bearing down on the Midwest, officials said the last such warning issued so late in the season in November came in 2005, and the result was an outbreak of 49 tornadoes.

The storm followed warnings by the weather service that it was simply moving too fast for people to wait until they saw it to get ready.

# SMOKING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

consequences of tobacco use, including identifying smoking as a significant risk factor for lung cancer and linking it to emphysema and heart disease.

The exhibit will be on display until Dec. 1 at the library, according to UA.

A version will be displayed after Dec. 1 at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library in Austin and the Texas Medical Center Library in Houston.

On Nov. 20, there will be a reception at Gorgas Library from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. to honor the memory of Terry, an Alabama native, including the premiere of a documentary about the legacy of the report and a discussion of future efforts to reduce smoking and counter its promo-

tion. The short documentary, "Blowing Smoke: The Lost Legacy of the Surgeon General's Report," was co-produced by Blum, his son, Samuel Blum, and UA alumnus Jake Buettner.

The materials on display are simultaneously a record of the resiliency of the industry following the damning health report and Blum's effort to document it.

"It is sort of the story of what I have done for the last 50 years," Blum said.

Blum started documenting tobacco advertising when he was a boy in the 1950s with the encouragement of his father, a doctor who was upset his beloved Brooklyn Dodgers were sponsored by Lucky Strike despite health concerns about smoking.

"That's when I started saving the advertising," Blum said.

Blum has collected thousands of pieces, including

promotional items, magazines, government documents, recordings, films and other materials.

UA's Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society, where Blum is director, houses the collection.

He continues to collect, including current magazines and promotional materials distributed by tobacco companies on college campuses and at bars and nightclubs.

The 1964 report and subsequent regulations about advertising merely became obstacles to be overcome for the tobacco industry.

"This is water-off-a-duck's back as far as cigarette companies are concerned," Blum said.

Blum believes the political clout of the tobacco industry was enough to protect it until the 1970s and that its financial clout — in the media, politically and for research — serves it well today. Blum

said tobacco has attached itself to cultural, ethnic and artistic events as well.

"They have been able to create the notion that they have contributed to society," he said.

Blum sees the collection on display at Gorgas as a sobering reminder of the inability of the country to overcome one of its greatest preventable public health challenges.

It's a cultured pessimism born out of his observation of a tobacco industry that has evolved and continued to thrive and a largely ineffective or uninspired response from the government, major health organizations and institutions.

"I noticed that everybody was saying we are winning the war, but I never really felt that way," Blum said.

Reach Ed Enoch at ed.enoach@tuscaloosaneews.com or 205-722-0209.

# ATTACKS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

But the October deaths, one day apart, of Nevada middle school math teacher Michael Landsberry, who was shot on a basketball court by a suicidal 12-year-old, and Massachusetts high school math teacher Colleen Ritzer, who authorities said was attacked by a 14-year-old student inside a school bathroom, have brought the issue to the forefront.

About 4 percent of public school teachers reported they had been attacked physically during the 2007-08 school year, according to the U.S. Department of Education, citing a 2012 school safety report.

Seven percent were threatened with injury by a student.

A 2011 survey found that 80 percent of teachers reported being intimidated, harassed, assaulted or otherwise victimized at least once during the previous year.

Of the 3,000 teachers surveyed, 44 percent reported physical offenses including thrown objects, student attacks and weapons shown, according to the American Psychological Association Task Force on Violence Directed Against Teachers, which conducted the national web-based survey.

The task force recommended creating a national registry to track the nature and frequency of incidents, saying this would help de-

velop plans for prevention and intervention. It also suggested that all educators be required to master classroom management before they are licensed to teach.

Raimondo, who taught in Buffalo, N.Y., was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and thought about suicide after suffering a concussion and other head injuries that required 32 staples and more than 40 stitches.

Unable to return to teaching, the history teacher who coached cross-country, girls' basketball and softball remains in therapy and on medication today, nearly 10 years later.

"I trusted kids," Raimondo said, becoming emotional as he told The Associated Press his story for the first time. "I loved what I did. For 22 years,

that was my identity."

His attacker, one of two girls he had stopped from fighting, pleaded guilty to assault and was sentenced to up to six months in jail.

The National Education Association, the largest teachers' union, has reported anecdotal incidents of teachers being struck with a computer keyboard and of being "body slammed." One had hearing loss and blurred vision from a tossed M-80 explosive, the union said.

NEA President Dennis Van Roekel said that while school campuses remain safe places, more attention and resources should be directed toward diagnosing and treating mental health issues and training educators in classroom management and safety.

# TRIAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

unable to appreciate the nature, quality and wrongfulness of her alleged offensive behavior."

Lisa Ross, attorney for Pollard's son, Devonta Pollard, said her client didn't conspire to kidnap anyone.

The child was taken from East Kemper Elementary School in the Kemper County community of Scooba on April

30 and was dropped off unharmed near a stranger's mobile home on a rural Mississippi road the next day.

Authorities say Jesse Pollard planned the abduction to pressure her cousin, the child's mother, in a dispute over land, though details of the fight were not spelled out in court records.

Five people pleaded guilty in the case on Nov. 6. They include a school secretary charged with telling Jesse Pollard where to find the child that day: in the school library.

Court records and testimony in previous hearings allege a complicated scheme in which the child was taken from the school to a hotel in Bessemer, then moved to a hotel in Laurel, Miss.

She was dropped off near Enterprise, Miss., the next day, after a missing-child alert had been issued, prosecutors say.

In addition to allegations of planning the abduction and enlisting the help of others, Jesse Pollard is accused of sending a text message to the

child's mother: "don't call the police I will call you later if you call the police u won't see her again."

For his part, prosecutors say Devonta Pollard drove to Boligee to pick up another conspirator when that woman's car broke down on the way to get the child in Bessemer. The next day, prosecutors say Devonta Pollard called the same woman to tell her that his mother "had gone to take a polygraph."

The child was dropped off later that day.

# OK TIRE STORES

  

## BFGoodrich

Tires

McFarland Blvd.  
556-2515

Northport  
759-4273

West End  
759-5138

Fayette  
932-5996

90 DAYS  
SAME AS CASH!



LOW MONTHLY PAYMENTS  
TO QUALIFIED BUYERS!



Prices Starting  
at \$69.99  
WE WILL MEET  
OR BEAT ANY  
COMPETITORS  
PRICES!