



The ferry Al Salam Boccaccio 98 sails near Suez, Egypt, on Nov. 25, 1999. The ship sank off the Egyptian port of Hurghada Friday.

## Egyptian ship sinks with 1,500 on board

By MARIAM FAM  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### SAFAGA, Egypt

An Egyptian passenger ferry carrying nearly 1,500 people, mostly Egyptian workers returning from Saudi Arabia, sank in the Red Sea early Friday. Coast Guard vessels pulled some 185 bodies from the sea, and at least 324 people have been rescued, officials said.

Four Egyptian rescue ships reached the scene Friday afternoon, about 10 hours after the 35-year-old ferry likely went down. As darkness descended Friday at the site, some 57 miles off the Egyptian port of Hurghada, there were fears the death toll could be extremely high.

The ferry did not have enough lifeboats, a spokesman for President Hosni Mubarak said.

Rescue efforts appeared confused. Egyptian officials initially turned down a British offer to divert a warship to help out and a U.S. offer to send a P3-Orion maritime patrol aircraft to the area.

The British craft, HMS Bulwark, headed toward the site of the ship, then turned around when the offer was rejected.

But then Egypt reversed itself and asked for both the Orion and the Bulwark to be sent, then called off the Bulwark, deciding it was too far away to help, said Lt. Cmdr. Charlie Brown of the U.S. 5th Fleet, based in Bahrain. In the end, the Orion, which has the capability to search underwater from the air, was sent, but the Bulwark was not, he said.

The ship, Al-Salaam Boccaccio 98, which was also carrying about 220 vehicles, left at 7:30 p.m. Thursday from the Saudi port of Dubah on a 120-mile trip to the Egyptian port of Safaga, south of Hurghada.

The vessel went down between midnight and 2 a.m., when authorities lost contact with it. No distress signal was received.

About 1,400 passengers, along with a crew of 98, were on board, said presidential spokesman Suleiman Awad.

### BRIEFS

## STATE/NATION

### INDIANAPOLIS

#### ATA, flight technicians make tentative contract

ATA Airlines and its 200 flight technicians have reached a tentative agreement on a new three-year contract, both sides said Friday.

Union and airline officials declined to comment on the details of the deal with the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association.

"We're pleased this agreement has been reached and we're hopeful that it will be ratified," said ATA spokeswoman Michelle Foley.

If approved, the agreement would end more than three years of negotiation and be the first contract for the airline's technicians who are represented by the union.

### WASHINGTON

#### Judge sets ex-Cheney aide's trial after elections

A federal judge on Friday set former White House aide I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby's trial date in the CIA leak case for January, two months after the midterm congressional elections.

The trial for Libby, who faces perjury and obstruction of justice charges, will begin with jury selection Jan. 8, said U.S. District Judge Reggie B. Walton. The judge said he had hoped to start the trial in September but one of Libby's lawyers had another trial that would make that impractical.

Libby, formerly chief of staff to

# FSSA expects outside bidders

## \$1B contract on benefits attracts out-of-state firms

By KEN KUSMER  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### INDIANAPOLIS

The companies considered most likely to try for the state's \$1 billion contract to determine who's eligible for food stamps and other federal benefits all are based outside Indiana despite Gov. Mitch Daniels' directive to steer more state business toward Hoosier companies.

Jim Robertson, director of the Division of Family Resources in the Family and Social Services Administration, identified the three top companies expected to bid on the contract as Accenture, CGI-AMS and International

Business Machines Corp.

Accenture LLP is the Chicago-based U.S. subsidiary of business consultant Accenture Ltd., whose headquarters are in the Bahamas. CGI-AMS is a subsidiary of Montreal-based information technology services provider CGI Group Inc. IBM's headquarters are in Armonk, N.Y.

Within minutes of being sworn into office last year, Daniels had signed an executive order establishing a "Buy Indiana" program under which state agencies are required to spend 90 percent of their contract money on Indiana businesses.

Daniels defended his administration's outsourcing policies during a meeting with reporters on Friday.

The meeting came less than two weeks after announcing that under his "Major Moves" highway plan, an Australian-Spanish consortium would pay the state \$3.85 billion to lease the Indiana

Toll Road and keeping its toll revenues for 75 years.

"Taxpayers come first. But again, remember, what matters most is not the mailing address of the company, but where are the W-2s?" Daniels said.

"I want Hoosiers doing the work and Hoosier suppliers being used wherever possible when state tax dollars are involved."

According to the FSSA's draft request for proposals, vendor teams will have until March 15 to prepare and submit their proposals.

The state expects to sign a contract by June 29 and turn over services by the end of the year, pending federal approval.

Robertson and FSSA Secretary Mitch Roob said during an interview that their expectation that the lead vendors will be Accenture, CGI-AMS and IBM was based on those companies' responses to the agency's requests for information.

## Mexican clinic where King was treated closes

By TRACI CARL  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### MEXICO CITY

The Mexican clinic where Coretta Scott King died has been closed, U.S. Embassy officials said Friday.

Mexican officials weren't immediately available to explain why the clinic was shut. But Judith Bryan, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, said the U.S. consulate in Tijuana was helping patients find new facilities.

The consulate's spokeswoman, Liza Davis, said 20 American patients were at the clinic when it was closed Thursday. Mexican authorities gave the Americans three days to leave the country.

"None of them were in serious enough condition that we had to get them back in an ambulance," Davis said. "Lots of them had family with them or means to get back on their own. Those that don't, we'll be working with them, and the hospital will be helping them as well."

King traveled last week to the beachside Santa Monica Health Institute in the Mexican beach resort of Rosarito, 15 miles south of San Diego. She was seeking treatment for advanced-stage ovarian cancer and a stroke she suffered several months ago.

King's children have said she died there Monday night, although a spokeswoman for the U.S. con-

sulate in Tijuana has said King died early Tuesday.

The clinic specializes in alternative treatments for patients with incurable illnesses.

Its founder and director, Kurt W. Donsbach, has a criminal past and a reputation for offering dubious treatments to desperately ill patients, according to court records and a watchdog group.

King's death raised questions about the safety of alternative medical clinics across Mexico, many of which aren't closely regulated.

It was unclear if Donsbach's past had anything to do with the closing of the Santa Monica clinic.

In 1997, Donsbach was sentenced in federal court in San Diego to a year in prison for smuggling more than \$250,000 worth of unapproved drugs into the United States from Mexico, according to court records. Donsbach was sentenced on three felony counts, including introducing unapproved drugs into interstate commerce, smuggling merchandise contrary to law and income tax evasion.

In 1988, the U.S. Postal Service ordered Donsbach and his nephew to stop claiming that a solution of hydrogen peroxide that they sell could prevent cancer and ease arthritis pain.

A woman who answered the phone at the clinic's corporate offices in San Diego said she had no information on the closure of the Rosarito clinic.

Identifying herself only by her first name, Maria, she said she did not know where Donsbach was and there was no one else available to comment.

### BRIEF

## WORLD

### MILAN, ITALY

#### Computer worm causes little damage so far

In Milan, Italy, the government shut down its 10,000 computers as a precaution, but a file-destroying computer worm otherwise caused relatively little damage when it triggered worldwide Friday.

Hundreds of thousands of computers were believed to be infected, but most had time to clean up their machines this week after security vendors and media outlets warned of the "Kama Sutra" worm.

Experts had warned earlier the worm could corrupt documents using the common file types, including ".doc," ".pdf," and ".zip."

### The Family of Joseph "Joe" Perry

wishes to thank each and every one for their many acts of kindness at the loss of our loved one. To our family, friends and church family, we love you. We also wish to thank the



emergency response unit, Sheriff's deputies and fire personnel for the manner in which they handled such a difficult situation. We cannot begin to express our gratitude to the staff of the Meredith-Clark Funeral Home for their patience and understanding. Each and every request was carried out far beyond our expectations.

May God Bless You!

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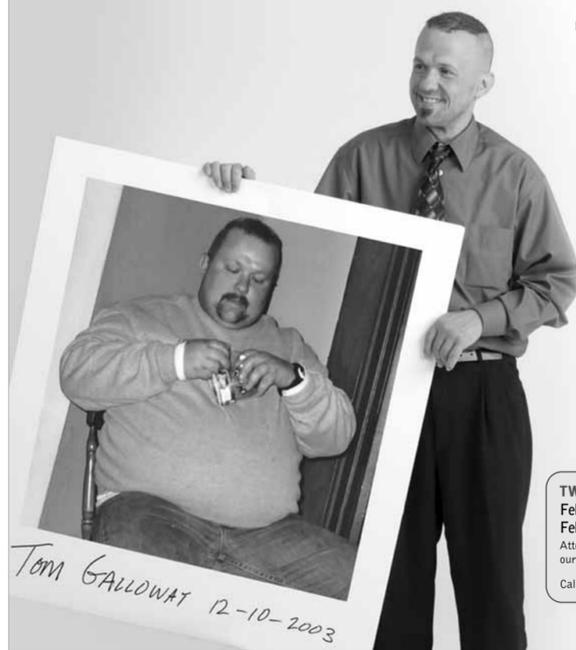
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On Her 40th Birthday  
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