

BRIEFS  
**STATE**

MARION  
**Trucker's lawyer asks to be removed from case**

The attorney for a trucker charged with causing a highway crash that killed a Taylor University employee and four students, including one who was misidentified for weeks, has asked a judge to take him off the case.



CERAK

Joe Keith Lewis, who represents trucker Robert F. Spencer, said he has a conflict of interest because he once represented a man who since tried to become a jailhouse informant against Spencer.



VANRYN

Spencer, 38, of Canton Township, Mich., near Detroit, is now scheduled to be tried beginning April 30. The judge has yet to rule on a defense request to move the trial out of Grant County.

Spencer was charged in September with five counts of reckless homicide and four counts of criminal recklessness causing serious bodily injury in the April 26 crash.

Five weeks later, authorities announced they had mixed up the identifications of 19-year-old Whitney Cerak of Gaylord, Mich., who was severely injured but survived, and 22-year-old Laura VanRyn of Caledonia, Mich., who had been killed.

Authorities say Spencer fell asleep at the wheel of his semitrailer and slammed into a Taylor van on Interstate 69 midway between Fort Wayne and Indianapolis.

The students killed in the crash were: VanRyn, Bradley J. Larson, 22, of Elm Grove, Wis., Elizabeth A. Smith, 22, of Mount Zion, Ill. and Laurel E. Erb, 20, St. Charles, Ill.

University employee Monica Felver, 53, of Hartford City, was also killed.

LAPORTE

**Church's fund to help wife of Iraq kidnap victim**

The church attended by a woman whose husband was kidnapped in Iraq in 2005 has created a fund to help her pay bills so she can remain in the family's home.

Carl Galloway, pastor of LaPorte Missionary Church, said the congregation ramped up its fundraising efforts after learning Liliana Ake had put the lakeside home she shares with the couple's four children on the market.

Her husband, Jeffrey, has been missing in Iraq since April 2005, when he was abducted by gunmen near Baghdad.

"We have been supporting Lilly since Jeff was kidnapped," Galloway said. "It's a strange situation, because Lilly can't draw any of Jeff's benefits since nobody knows what has happened to him."

Liliana Ake recently began bankruptcy proceedings for Equipment Express, the water bottling company her husband founded and ran until he was abducted near a water treatment plant where he was working outside Baghdad.

**Police: Gun was from pawn shop**

**Man accused of workplace shooting to have initial hearing Tuesday**

By RICK CALLAHAN  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

A man accused of shooting four co-workers after apparently being teased about his large size bought the handgun used in the attack at a pawn shop in compliance with federal law, authorities said.



BURNAM

Jason Burnam, 24, has an initial hearing scheduled for Tuesday to face four counts of attempted murder and one count of carrying a handgun without a license in Thursday's shootings.

The Indianapolis man faces the latter charge because he did not have a required permit to carry the semiautomatic weapon, which he bought Jan. 5, outside his home, said Indianapolis police Lt. Douglas Scheffel.

Burnam told officers he shot his co-workers at Crossroads Industrial Services over issues of respect, police said.

His mother, Judy Burnam, said her son, who weighs more than 300 pounds, had complained that some of his co-workers had been teasing him about his size. In high school, she said he once tried to commit suicide because of taunting.

All four workers were shot at Crossroads, which employs mostly disabled people as part of the Easter Seals program, were recovering from arm and leg



Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department officers stand in the lobby of Crossroads Industrial Services following a morning shooting at the Indianapolis plant in which four people were injured Thursday.

AP PHOTO

wounds. None of the injuries were considered life-threatening.

Judy Burnam said her son suffered from bipolar disorder and was once diagnosed with schizophrenia. He was taking medications, including Prozac, and seeing a mental-health counselor.

Paul Massock, resident agent in charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms' Indianapolis office, said federal law does not specifically prohibit people with mental health conditions from buying firearms.

"There is no question that asks if you have been diagnosed with a medical condition. A diagnosis as depressed or with some other condition is not a prohibiting factor

under federal law," he said.

While the FBI turns away people who have been committed to a mental institution by a judge, Massock said potential buyers who admit unlawfully using narcotics or abusing depressants, stimulants or any controlled substance are denied gun sales.

Individuals taking legally prescribed drugs for mental conditions are not prohibited from buying weapons, he said.

In 2005, state lawmakers passed gun restrictions after an Indianapolis police officer, Timothy "Jake" Laird, was fatally shot by a man with a history of mental illness.

That law allows police and prosecutors to seek a court order to

retain custody of weapons seized from "dangerous" subjects who have not been charged but who may be mentally unstable. It does not, however, apply to gun purchases.

Crossroads Industrial Services on Indianapolis' east side employs 100 people who do light manufacturing in subcontracts with companies.

Workplace-violence expert Paul Viollis, who runs a consulting firm that teaches employers how to spot, prevent and respond to workplace violence, said there are usually warning signs in such shootings. But he said they tend to be overlooked by supervisors and colleagues.

BRIEFS  
**NATION**



AP PHOTO

Veronica Vargas, left, pays Angel Soto with Mexican Pesos at a Pizza Patron store in Dallas on Wednesday.

DALLAS  
**Pizza chain threatened for accepting pesos**

A pizza chain has been hit with death threats and hate mail after offering to accept Mexican pesos, becoming another flashpoint in the nation's debate over immigrants.

"This is the United States of America, not the United States of Mexico," one e-mail read. "Quit catering to the damn illegal Mexicans," demanded another.

Dallas-based Pizza Patron said it was not trying to inject itself into a larger political debate about illegal immigration when it posted signs this week saying "Aceptamos pesos" — or "We accept pesos" — at its 59 stores across Texas, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada and California.

Pizza Patron spokesman Andy Gamm said the company was just trying to sell more pizza to its customers, 60 percent of whom are Hispanic.

The promotion will run through the end of February and then be re-evaluated, Pizza Patron founder Antonio Swad said.

WASHINGTON  
**Vote means no pensions for convicted lawmakers**

Former Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, behind bars for bribery, can at least be consoled by the federal pension he'll continue to collect. Current or future lawmakers convicted of crimes may not be so lucky.

The Senate on Friday voted 87-0 to strip away the pensions of members of Congress convicted of white-collar crimes such as bribery, perjury and fraud. That

could result in benefit losses of more than \$100,000 a year.

The pension measure was attached to a comprehensive ethics and lobbying bill that the Democratic-controlled Senate, trying to improve the image of Congress after the scandals of last year, took up as its first legislative act of the year.

Cunningham, R-Calif., was sentenced to more than eight years in prison last year after pleading guilty to receiving \$2.4 million in bribes from defense contractors. Sen. John Kerry's office said that by law Congress cannot take away pensions retroactively and the so-called "Duke Cunningham Act" won't affect the benefits of Cunningham or Ney. It would also not touch the military benefits of a veteran such as Cunningham.

Under current law, pensions can be forfeited only if a lawmaker commits crimes such as treason or espionage.

MIAMI

**Judge delays trial of man accused of being terrorist**

A federal judge Friday ordered a three-month delay for the trial of alleged al-Qaida operative Jose Padilla and two others, in part to allow time for a full evaluation of Padilla's mental competency.



PADILLA

U.S. District Judge Marcia Cooke set a new trial date of April 16. It was the third time the case had been postponed.

Padilla, a 36-year-old U.S. citizen and former Chicago gang member, is charged with being part of a North American cell that provided cash, supplies and recruits to Islamic extremists.

He was arrested in 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and originally accused of plotting to detonate a radioactive "dirty bomb" in a U.S. city.

Trial for Padilla, alleged recruiter Adham Amin Hassoun and Kifah Wael Jayyousi had been scheduled to start on Jan. 22.

BRIEF  
**WORLD**

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan  
**Pakistan says it's not a terrorist haven**

Pakistan on Friday rejected allegations by America's spy chief that it is a refuge for terrorist leaders and demanded that his intelligence networks share information on the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden and other top al-Qaida figures.



NEGROPONTE

Director John Negroponte that Pakistan is a haven for al-Qaida and Taliban terrorists are incorrect, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said.

"In breaking the back of al-Qaida, Pakistan has done more than any other country in the world," ministry spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam said. "The proper way to do this would be to share the intelligence with us."

Negroponte said that despite Pakistan's vital role in the war on terrorism, leaders of both al-Qaida and Afghanistan's former ruling Taliban militia are sheltering in its lawless frontier areas, largely beyond reach of U.S. or Pakistani fighters.

**FSSA makes its point with \$1,800 in copies**

By MIKE SMITH  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

The state's social services agency might have illustrated a point by hauling dozens of copies of a 1,700-page document to a state committee hearing, but it cost taxpayers \$1,831.



ROOB

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman William Crawford asked the Family and Social Services Administration to respond in writing to 303 questions Crawford had about a contract to outsource parts of the eligibility system for the state's food stamp, Medicaid and welfare programs.

Gov. Mitch Daniels had signed the deal to pay an IBM-Corp.-led team \$1.16 billion over 10 years to do the work.

During a legislative hearing on

**AT A GLANCE**

**The document:** The Family and Social Services Administration had 50 copies of a 1,700-page document made that answered 303 questions by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman William Crawford, D-Indianapolis. The questions were about a contract to outsource parts of the eligibility system for the state's food stamp, Medicaid and welfare programs for \$1.16 billion.

**Taxpayer cost:** \$1,831

**Reasoning:** FSSA Secretary Mitch Roob had copies distributed to 23 committee members. Roob said the documents helped make his point that caseworkers are buried under reams of paperwork that make eligibility determination menial and slow. He said having paper documents printed and distributed was not intended to drive home that point but that it just turned that way.

turned that way. He said Crawford asked for written responses, and the agency interprets that to mean hard copies. The agency was simply complying with Crawford's request, he said.

Roob said because of the volume of responses and the short time FSSA had to meet Crawford's request, the agency had to have the copies made by an outside printing company instead of doing it internally. The tab was \$1,831.

"The real question ought not to be about paper, but how many hours did it take to compile this?" Roob said.

Crawford, D-Indianapolis, issued his list of questions on Jan. 4, and Roob said agency staff worked over the weekend and into some nights to provide thorough answers.

If 50 members of the public had requested the document and the agency provided them by charging the state's rate of 10 cents per page, it would have cost those people \$8,500 collectively.

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