NATIONAL NEWS
IN BRIEF

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Postal Service wants rate increase to 37 cents

The cost of mailing a letter will go up again next year, jumping 3 cents to 37 cents.

Citing a looming $1.65 billion deficit, the U.S. Postal Service announced Tuesday it will seek rate increases averaging about 9 percent, including the boost for personal letters.

"Our options are limited," said Robert Rider, chairman of the agency's board of governors. "We must take the necessary action today."

Rider said the decision by the governing board was unanimous.

The current 34-cent mail rate took effect in January along with increases in many other classes of mail. Another boost in some rates kicked in July 1.

Obesity, diabetes rates rise sharply, study finds

The rates of obesity and diabetes in the United States have grown 50 percent or more over the past decade, and the increase seems to be accelerating, according to new figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The study found that the proportion of Americans who are obese — 30 to 50 pounds overweight, depending on height — rose from 12 percent in 1991 to 19.8 percent in 2000. Over the same period, the proportion who are diabetic increased from 4.9 to 7.3 percent.

Between 1999 and 2000 alone, the proportion of obese Americans increased from 18.9 to 19.8 percent, and the incidence of diabetes rose from 6.9 to 7.3 percent, indicating that the growth rate of both problems is accelerating, the researchers said.

The findings are being published in today's edition of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

GEORGIA

Man tied to McDonald's contest gave to hospital

A man accused of stealing millions in a McDonald's contest scheme apparently gave a $1 million gift to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, CNN reported Tuesday.

Jerome "Jerry" Jacobson sent the Memphis hospital the winning game piece nearly six years ago.

McDonald's verified the $1 million game piece from its Monopoly "Instant Winner" contest, waived contest rules that required such pieces be redeemed only by winners and agreed to pay St. Jude $50,000 a year for 20 years.

The hospital has been receiving the payments since 1996.

MASSACHUSETTS

Voters narrow down congressional candidates

Massachusetts voters went to the polls Tuesday to choose the top two candidates in the race to replace the late Rep. Joe Moakley. New York's highly anticipated mayoral primary was postponed because of the World Trade Center attack.

Veteran state Sen. JoAnn Sprague, 69, easily won the GOP nod in Massachusetts' heavily Democratic 9th Congressional District.

In early returns, Democrat Stephen Lynch pulled ahead of fellow state Sen. Cheryl Jacques.

TENNESSEE

University gets $25M after budget cut planned

A businessman donated $25 million to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga just days after Gov. Don Sundquist announced $12 million in budget cuts for state colleges.

The university will receive the money from Jack Lupton, a former Coca-Cola bottling magnate, over the next three years. He made the donation Aug. 29 without public comment, the university said. The university also said it will establish the John T. Lupton Center for Urban Planning.

From Mercury News Wire Services

THE NORTHWEST

Security tightened at bases, landmarks in Seattle area

CITY QUIET, TENSE AS AIRPORT, MALLS ARE CLOSED; RESIDENTS EAGER TO HELP VICTIMS

By Kristi Heim
Mercury News Seattle Bureau

SEATTLE — Washington, a state with major military installations, an international border and one of the largest ports in the country, remained on high alert following Tuesday's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

One Navy destroyer and two frigates left the Everett naval base 30 miles north of Seattle on Tuesday afternoon and patrolled Puget Sound looking for any suspicious activity, including in Elliot Bay just off downtown Seattle, a Navy spokesman said.

Security was tightened at the region's military bases, including the Army's Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base, and the Navy's Bangor submarine base — one of the nation's largest nuclear arsenals — and at the Hanford nuclear power plant in Eastern Washington.

Seattle's tallest building, the 76-story Bank of America Tower, was evacuated, as was the city's most recognizable landmark, the Space Needle.

Dams along the Columbia River were closed to the public, as were Boeing Field, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, the federal courthouse and many downtown stores and suburban malls.

The Washington state ferry system, which is the nation's largest and a mainstay of local transportation, stopped carrying automobiles on most of its routes Tuesday as a precaution against car bombs. Ferries resumed car traffic late Tuesday afternoon, but cars were being searched before boarding.

The Canadian border north of Seattle remained open, but officials warned of long lines at the crossing while cars were inspected.

Seattle had its own brush with terrorism two years ago when Ahmed Ressam, a terrorist linked to Osama bin Laden, was caught entering Washington state from Canada with a trunk full of bomb-making supplies. Seattle Mayor Paul Schell canceled the city's millennium celebration at the Seattle Center two weeks later, worried that terrorists might target the popular public landmark.

Later, Ressam admitted he was trying to plant a bomb at Los Angeles International Airport.

The area around the Seattle Center and downtown were weirdly quiet Tuesday. Groups of people clustered across from the Space Needle, and stores that are usually bustling were dark Tuesday afternoon.

As they struggled to comprehend the day's tragic events, Seattle area residents began helping victims on the other side of the country the only way they knew how — by donating blood.

A line of at least 50 people stretched outside the Puget Sound Blood Center on Tuesday, where 900 people had donated blood in the first three hours the center was open. People in line exchanged snippets of news and passed around chocolate as they waited.

Alisa Luber, a Seattle financial adviser, waited in line for four hours to donate.

"I thought, what else could I do?" she said.

Marissa Kanters of Seattle said she planned to hold a gathering of friends Tuesday night to talk about what happened.

"I'm deeply afraid this will be a catalyst to set off more violence," she said. "I just hope this means people will become less insular and sidetracked by Internet connections and TV, that they'll think about the world more."

At noon, about 1,400 people crowded into St. James Cathedral for a special Mass to honor the victims.

Coming out of the cathedral, a tearful Alice Gruber struggled for words to express her emotion.

"We never thought of something like that occurring here," said Gruber, whose husband is a pilot for Continental Airlines. "Now, we know how vulnerable we are."

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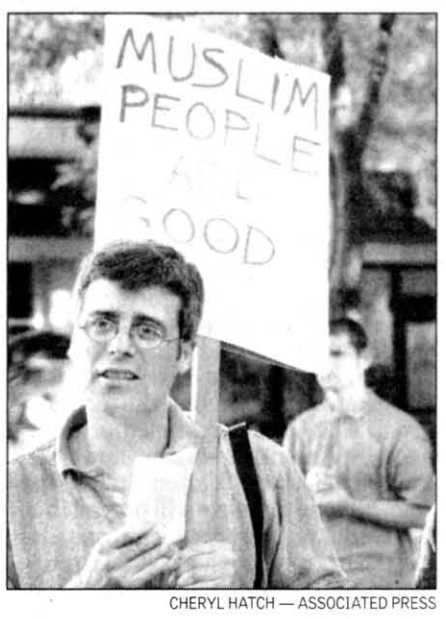
RALPH RADFORD — ASSOCIATED PRESS
Seattle security officer Mike Donnelly helps place concrete barriers around the base of the Space Needle. The landmark was evacuated, as was the city's tallest building, the Bank of America Tower.

SHOCK IN SEATTLE



CHERYL HATCH — ASSOCIATED PRESS
PROTESTERS: Jim Nelson of Seattle attended a rally Tuesday. He hoped to discourage negative stereotypes.

RALPH RADFORD — ASSOCIATED PRESS
OFFICIALS RESPOND: From left, Seattle Mayor Paul Schell, Fire Chief Jim Compton, Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske and Fire Chief Gary Morris hold a news conference Tuesday, urging the city's residents to keep calm.

CHERYL HATCH — ASSOCIATED PRESS
AIRPORT: Josephine Combs, 42, of Orlando, Fla. cries as she waits for her luggage Tuesday at the Seattle Tacoma International Airport. Combs was on a flight to Orlando that returned to Seattle.

Don't let the criminals shut down our freedoms

dan**gillmor**

In our fury, grief and horror, will we allow the criminals of Sept. 11 to wreck the American republic? They will have won if we do.

They committed an act of war. There is no other way to look at these acts of barbarism.

Now, as we hunt down their leaders and collaborators, and as we tend to the families of the dead and injured, we will be tempted beyond ourselves — tempted to abandon our rule of law and our Constitution.

If we do that, the criminals will have won.

These words feel hollow, somehow, in the wreckage of so many lives and America's buoyancy.

But in the next days and weeks we will find ourselves at a frontier. We will be asking ourselves whether we want — whether we can afford — to live in an open and free society. We will ask if the risks are worth the blood.

If we are wise, we will wait to ask those questions. We will wait until hot rage has eased into an abiding, icy anger.

We ordinary people should leave the hunting to the professionals, and focus on healing these staggering wounds.

We have been tested before.

I wasn't yet born on Dec. 7, 1941. But Tuesday may well have been a 21st-century Pearl Harbor — not just an outrage against our nation but a lesion to our souls and collective psyche.

America responded with just wrath against the Japanese government and military. The nation entered a long war that ultimately saved the world from despotism.

But America also responded with fear. We abandoned the Constitution when we imprisoned loyal citizens of Japanese heritage, only admitting the injustice so much later.

Now we are going to be tested again. In the short term, some will want to take out their rage on neighbors whose only offense is having an ethnic or religious background that is deemed suspicious.

What happened on Tuesday was an act of war. The American government and military should and will respond in kind.

If law enforcement and national security agencies declare war on the American people in the process, they will give the terrorists a gift. The despicable people who planned this will triumph if we add to the damage.

I've been watching TV reports from South Africa, in a land that has known much violence and injustice. Individual acts of heroism in my tortured nation have been the rays of light on this dark, dark day.

As America finds itself in coming days, the outward focus will be on bringing the Sept. 11 criminals to the justice they deserve, and bringing peace to the victims and their families and friends. We will learn soon enough whether liberty is up to this test, as I pray it will be.

In our homes and at work, amid our rage and sorrow and numbness, we can best meet this trial by showing our best selves — with acts of cooperation, love and kindness.

Dan Gillmor's column appears each Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday. Visit Dan's online column, eJournal **(www.siliconvalley.com/dangillmor)**. *E-mail dgillmor@sjmercury.com; phone (408) 920-5016; fax (408) 920-5917. PGP fingerprint: FE68 46C9 80C9 BC6E 3DD0 BE57 AD49 1487 CEDC 5C14.*

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