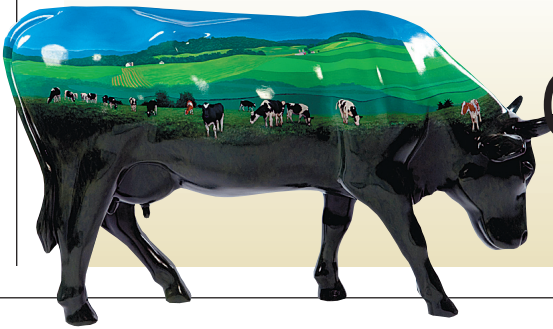
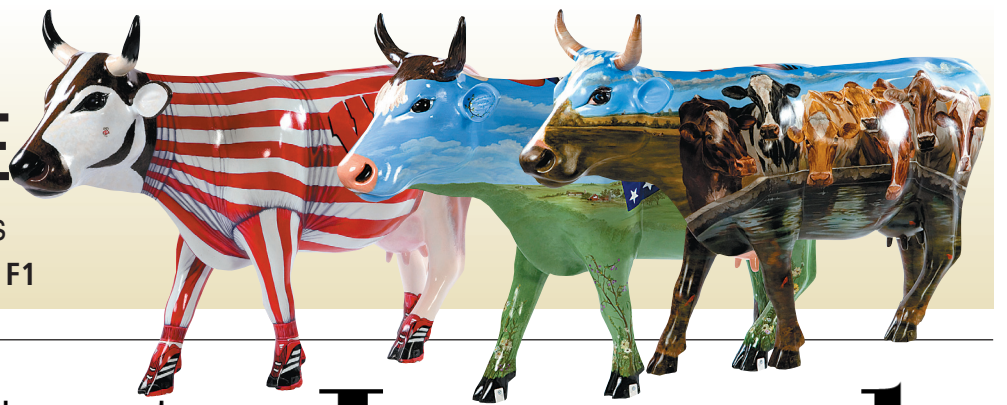


**Mallards  
open 2006  
with a  
6-1 loss**



## THE COWS COME HOME

Madison's cow art exhibit hits  
the streets Saturday **DAYBREAK F1**



★★★



# Wisconsin State Journal

WWW.MADISON.COM/WSJ

FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 2006

MADISON, WISCONSIN

## Isabel won't whine after just missing prime time

Madison seventh-grader is pleased with her performance in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, won by a New Jersey girl.

By **DOUG ERICKSON**  
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The minute she heard the word, Isabel Jacobson knew there was trouble ahead.

"Symminct" just isn't used much in daily conversation. The adjective describes material composed of a mix of fine and coarse particles.

"I had no idea how to spell it," said Isabel, 13, who nonetheless gave it a shot live on

ESPN Thursday during the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. "It was a wild guess."

The obscure word ended Isabel's shot at the national title — she spelled it "cimminct" — but the Madison seventh-grader lasted much longer than she anticipated.

She tied for 14th with seven other competitors who were ousted in Round 7. Her finish was the highest for a Wisconsin contestant since 1991, when Joanne Lagatta of Clintonville won the national honor.

The competition began Wednesday with 275 students. Isabel, who won the state bee in March, was one of 46 to make the ESPN-televised portion of the competition Thursday during the day. She was the last to be knocked out before the 13 finalists went on to compete live on ABC Thursday night.

"I'm feeling good about how I did," Isabel said by phone from her hotel room. "I wasn't crushed because I wasn't expecting to get that far."

She had been feeling fortunate during much of the day because many competitors

Please see **BEE**, Page A9

### Isabel's results

#### Spelled correctly:

Round 2: affenpinscher  
Round 3: tangential  
Round 4: phlogogenic  
Round 5: langlauffer  
Round 6: meningococci

#### Missed:

Round 7: symminct

Note: Round 1 was a written test in which Isabel correctly spelled 22 of 25 words.

### More on the bee

- Read an excerpt from Isabel's spelling bee blog / **Page A9**
- Read the entire blog at [www.madison.com/post/blogs/bee](http://www.madison.com/post/blogs/bee).
- Editorial: A good example for academic achievers / **Page A8**
- Some have action riding on the bee / **Page A4**

# Bembenek evidence withheld, two say



Associated Press archive photos; most recent photo of Bembenek by Ira Robins, 2002

**1982** A jury finds Laurie Bembenek, 23, guilty of first-degree murder in the death of her then-husband's ex-wife, Christine Schultz. The verdict is reached after four days of deliberations. Bembenek is sentenced to life in prison.

## Her lawyer says information shows her innocence

By **DEE J. HALL**  
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Information from sworn statements by state crime lab officials shows that Laurie Bembenek did not kill Christine Schultz, who was murdered 25 years ago this week, Bembenek's lawyer said.

The lawyer, Mary Woehrer, contends that Bembenek's conviction should be overturned because, "Put together, there's no evidence left to convict this woman. The whole case was based on fabrication."

Two state Crime Laboratory officials acknowledged key omissions in testimony and reports they generated in the Bembenek case.

The two analysts, deposed last summer, acknowledged that some evidence Bembenek's attorneys call important to the case was withheld, including:

- Indications that Christine Schultz may have been sexually assaulted.

- Tests done in 1981 linked the murder to a Milwaukee Police Department gun — not the weapon that prosecutors alleged Bembenek used.

Two of three crime lab officials deposed — including the head of the state Crime Laboratory in Milwaukee — also gave conflicting sworn statements about missing bullets that were used to help convict Bembenek, now 47.

The depositions — obtained by the State Journal this week — were gathered as part of Bembenek's \$60 million federal lawsuit alleging officials conspired to frame her for the murder of Christine Schultz, the ex-wife of the man Bembenek was then married to. The suit, filed in 2004, alleges that officials violated Bembenek's civil rights by falsely prosecuting her for the May 28, 1981, murder of Schultz, who was found in her home bound, gagged and shot in the back at close range.

Please see **BEMBENEK**, Page A6



**1990**

Bembenek escapes from Taycheedah Correctional Institution and heads to Canada after losing an appeal. She's captured and returned to prison.



**1992**

Bembenek is released after agreeing to plead no contest to a second-degree murder charge.



**2004**

Bembenek files a DNA-based appeal in Milwaukee County Circuit Court. A judge rules the new DNA and ballistics evidence don't warrant another trial. That decision is under appeal.

## Mayor to recommend city water head stay

His contract has been rewritten to include "precise" performance standards.

By **RON SEELY**  
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Mayor Dave Cieslewicz said Thursday he intends to recommend that the Madison City Council renew the contract for David Denig-Chakroff, general manager for the city's embattled water utility.

But the contract, Cieslewicz said, has been extensively rewritten to include a number of performance standards which will require Denig-Chakroff to address many of the problems with management and water quality that have been raised in recent weeks.

"I think they are very precise and very direct," Ald. Lauren Cnare, 3rd District, a member of the Board of Water Commissioners, said of the performance standards. "I think it would be hard not to comply with them and keep your job."

Denig-Chakroff's salary under the proposed contract would be \$113,364, which is similar to other city department heads. He currently makes \$112,173.

Please see **WATER**, Page A9

### Our water woes

- Brown tap water, contaminated with the mineral manganese, focused public attention on the Madison Water Utility with complaints dating back to 2004.
- A Wisconsin State Journal investigation showed management at the utility had been close-mouthed on a number of occasions about problems with our water. The inquiry, published in April and May, also revealed dozens of contaminants, including viruses, in the city's wells; inadequate record-keeping; and failure to adequately maintain and replace aging infrastructure.
- Last week, Mayor Dave Cieslewicz announced a 10-point plan intended to correct problems with the utility.

## Budget cuts into school services

By **SANDY CULLEN**  
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Next year, Madison's Spring Harbor Middle School will have to close its library for seven to 10 hours a week, and possibly more, because of budget cuts that have reduced its librarian to part time and eaten away at support staff.

But what really gets to Principal Gail Anderson is having to eliminate the drama classes that all of the school's sixth-graders now take, along with electives in drama and creative expression for eighth-graders next year.

"That really broke my heart," said Anderson, who helped design the magnet school that opened 10 years ago to alleviate crowding at Toki and Jefferson middle schools.

Please see **SCHOOL**, Page A9

**5 ON THE FLY**

**1 Ebert's cancer:** Film critic Roger Ebert will undergo cancer surgery again. "It's not life-threatening, and I expect to make a full recovery," said Ebert, 63.



**2 Women surge:** Women now earn the majority of diplomas in fields men used to dominate — from biology to business — and have caught up in pursuit of advanced degrees. **Business, E1**

**3 Comedic help:** Comic Relief is returning after an eight-year hiatus to help children and animals recover from Hurricane Katrina.

**4 Baby boy:** It's a boy for Oscar-winning actress Rachel Weisz and her fiance, director Darren Aronofsky. The couple had their first child Wednesday in New York.

**5 'Simple Life':** "The Simple Life," which stars Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie, returns Sunday at 9 p.m. on E!



Partly sunny,  
isolated t-storms



HIGH  
**77**  
LOW  
**53**

Business	E1	Daybreak	F1	Movies	F2	Opinion	A8
Classifieds	D1	In Depth	A7	Nation&World	A3	Sports	C1
Comics	F4	Local	B1	Obituaries	A4	Television	F5

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