

Arsonists arraigned

Brothers charged in
synagogue fires

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Prep Baseball

Justin grabs
first in SCAL

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Seniors

Wayne McClure's been
there and done that

the Napa Valley Register

Saturday

March 18, 2000

► Examiner sold to free newspaper publisher/Below

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Smith & Wesson agrees to gun locks

By SONYA ROSS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON

In a deal heralded as a way to save children's lives, gunmaking giant Smith & Wesson agreed Friday to install locks on its weapons to make them more child-proof. In exchange, governments would drop lawsuits seeking damages for gun violence.

The agreement, reached after two months of negotiations involving the company, state and local officials and the Clinton administration, establishes an unprecedented "code of conduct" for selling and distributing handguns. President Clinton expressed hope that other gun companies will follow Smith & Wesson's lead.

"A decision to enter this agreement, we realized, would not be popular with everyone," Smith & Wesson President Ed Shultz said in a conference call broadcast at a news conference where the deal was announced. "But we believe ... it is the right thing to do."

In a letter posted on its Internet site, Smith & Wesson said that since 1997 it has provided a lock with every weapon shipped and that the weapons are shipped in lockable boxes. The company did not address whether the locks were

See LOCKS, Page 7A

Taiwan to face off against China under new president

By DIRK BEVERIDGE
Associated Press Writer

TAIPEI, Taiwan

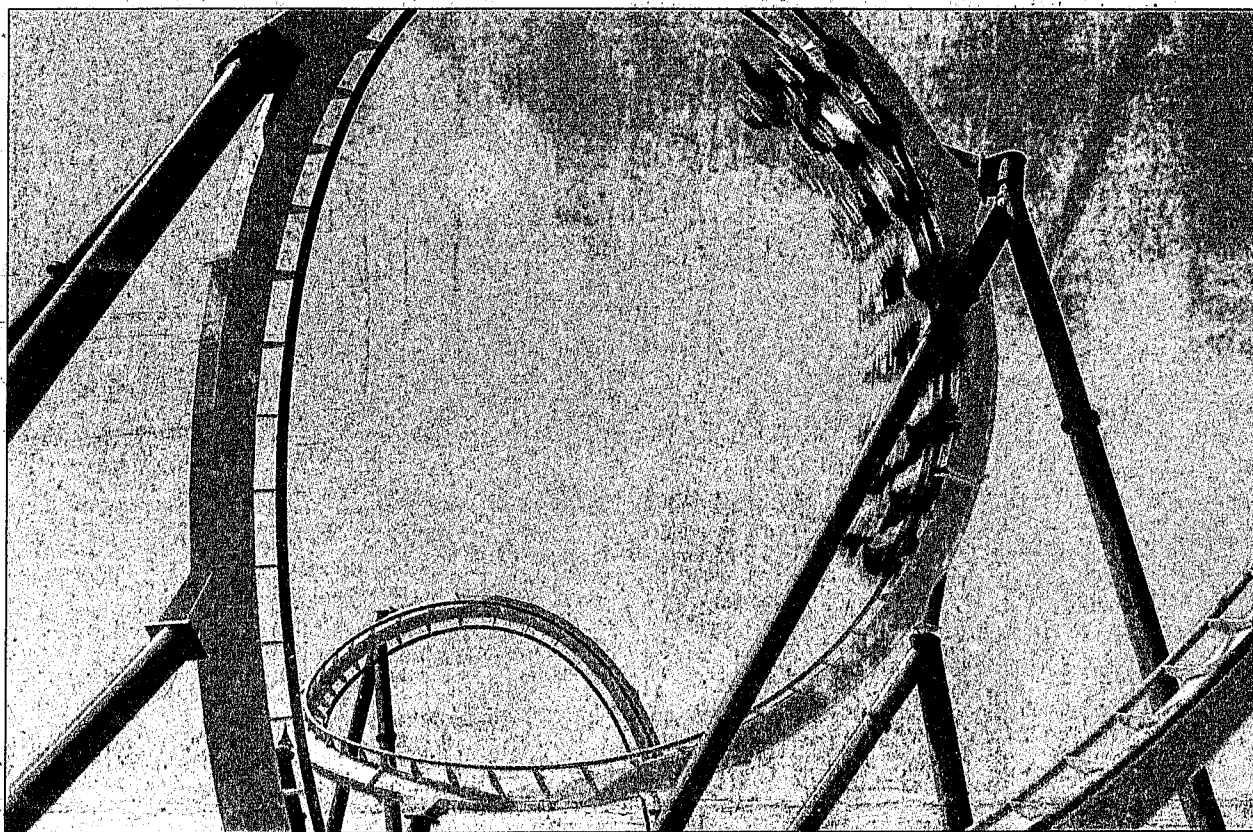
Taiwanese could shake the delicate status quo that has preserved peace between China and Taiwan in a vote Saturday that will give them an untested leader facing growing pressure to negotiate with a bellicose Beijing.

The race to succeed President Lee Teng-hui was too close to call as the three top candidates wrapped up their campaigns Friday night to the sounds of blaring air horns, fireworks and deafening applause.

But there was a very real possibility the ruling Nationalist Party could lose the presidency for the first time since Taiwan was separated politically from China when com-

See CHINA, Page 6A

Around and around they go ...



SEAN GALVIN/REGISTER PHOTOS

Guests of Six-Flags Marine World whirl thru the loops of the Vallejo amusement park's newest thrill ride, Medusa. The ride gives visitors almost four minutes of high speed action.

Napan tangles with Medusa

Roller coaster aficionado gets preview
of Bay Area's newest high-speed ride.

By BROOKE E. BRYANT
Register Staff Writer

VALLEJO

After seven months of preparation, New Technology High School senior Steve Silvas was finally ready to do battle with Medusa yesterday — the imposing, 65-mph roller coaster, not the mythological monster.

Silvas has followed the progress of the ride since it was a mere rumor circulating in the electronic universe of the Internet. When ride parts started showing up in the parking lot, he grabbed his dad's digital camera, snapped a few pictures and posted them to the web.

Now, half a year and infinite

updates later, his Web site is the definitive source of information for the newest addition to the Six Flags Marine World family — almost 4,000 feet of purple and yellow track that loops across the skyline in seven full inversions and a 150-foot drop. He estimates that there have been more than 10,000 hits to the site since its inception.

On Friday, Silvas strapped himself into the ride, watched as the floor fell away beneath him, and began the climb that would take him to a peak so high the Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the distance.

Silvas was allowed to preview

See MEDUSA, Page 6A



Steve Silvas, Napa, with a poster of the Medusa roller coaster.

The coaster that ate Vallejo

By KEVIN COURTNEY
Register Staff Writer

VALLEJO

It looks like the purple and yellow monster that ate Vallejo.

For months the looping coils of Marine World's new supercoaster have dominated the skyline for motorists going from Interstate 80 to the Napa Valley.

It looked big and bad. And now it has a name: Medusa, a hideous monster of Greek mythology.

Something like this would never fly as an entry icon to wine country.

See MONSTER, Page 7A

Hearst to sell Examiner to Bay Area free newspaper publisher

By MICHAEL WARREN
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO

The Hearst Corp. sold the San Francisco Examiner to the owners of a free city newspaper on Friday, clearing the way for Hearst's purchase of its century-old rival, the San Francisco Chronicle.

The deal, which is expected to meet Justice Department approval, gives Hearst control of the city's dominant newspaper and ends a

joint operating agreement in which the two papers have split profits 50-50 for the last 35 years.

"Our deal today is the fulfillment of a dream for my family, for myself, for my late father," said Ted Fang, who will be the publisher of the new Examiner.

Fang said he would switch the Examiner back to mornings when the two papers become fully independent in August, after a four-month transition period, and compete head-to-head with the Chroni-

cle.

Neither Hearst nor Fang would disclose the sale price, or say whether some profit-sharing agreement was part of the deal. Hearst, which is buying the Chronicle for \$660 million, said it would make a "substantial financial commitment to the continued publication of the Examiner."

The sale is expected to close by March 30, but it will be "business as

See EXAMINER, Page 6A



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Richard Hendrix, a production employee with the San Francisco Newspaper Agency, lays out the front page of the late Friday edition of the San Francisco Examiner. The Hearst Corp. agreed Friday to sell the flagship of its media empire, the San Francisco Examiner, to a company led by the publishers of a free distribution local paper. The deal was announced in the Examiner's crowded newsroom, seven months after Hearst announced plans to purchase the San Francisco Chronicle.



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WEATHER

Sunny and warm.
Highs in the 70s to
around 80. Increasing
clouds overnight. Lows
in the 40s.

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Denise Whited

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