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Regional district rejected

■ Schools: Voters in three of the four Wildwoods turn back a proposal to form a single district.

By THOMAS BARLAS
Staff Writer

A proposal to regionalize school districts in the Wildwoods came to an abrupt halt Tuesday, with voters in three Five Mile Beach municipalities overwhelmingly rejecting the measure.

Residents in North Wildwood, Wildwood Crest and West Wildwood rejected a proposal to form a single school district for youths in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The proposal was approved by Wildwood.

The proposal, put before Five Mile Beach residents Tuesday in the form of a referendum question, needed to be approved by voters in all four of the Wildwoods for regionalization to occur.

The final result left a major regionalization proponent charging the vote was an attack on Wildwood's school system, and a major regionalization opponent hoping the issue is "dead."

The final tallies showed that residents in:

■ North Wildwood rejected the proposal by a 536-210 vote.

■ Wildwood approved the proposal by a 427-54 vote.

■ Wildwood Crest rejected the proposal by a 1,022-125 vote.

■ West Wildwood rejected the proposal by a 69-19 vote.

Regionalization proponents who met at the Wildwood Board of Education offices Tuesday expected the measure to fail, but were stunned, and a little angered, by the final vote totals.

"The whole thing was an attack on Wildwood," said Wildwood Board of Education member Ernest Troiano, one of the organizers of the regionalization movement.

Residents in North Wildwood, Wildwood Crest and West Wildwood inaccurately saw the referendum as an attempt to "bail out" Wildwood's schools, he said.

"I'm just sorry that it didn't pass," Troiano said. "People didn't know the facts."

"It was for the kids," said Alan I. Gould. "The whole thing was for the kids."

Gould, a Wildwood Crest resident, served as the spokesman for an ad-hoc committee formed to study regionalization possibilities.

Troiano also charged the Wildwoods.

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Bush backpedals on tax cut

DEMOCRATS CONSIDER MIDDLE-INCOME TAX RELIEF



Sen. Al Gore, left, D-Tenn., and Rep. Thomas Downey, D-N.Y., appear as witnesses before a Senate Finance Committee hearing Tuesday on Capitol Hill concerning middle-income tax cuts, using models to demonstrate different tax rates.

Congress tries to finish year's work

But Bush dare on tax-cut plan may delay recess

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress' drive to adjourn for the year slowed to an imperceptible crawl Tuesday night as Democrats debated whether to accept a challenge from President Bush and craft a year-end tax cut.

Major bills to build highways, aid the Soviets and protect bank deposits awaited action.

After nearly 12 hours in session, lawmakers had little to show for their work, particularly on a day that they hoped would bring an end to their labors for the year.

A crime bill that contained a waiting period for handgun purchases and expanded the

federal death penalty was kept off the House floor as leaders sought the votes to enact it. Bush and Republicans were opposed, as were some liberal Democrats.

Lawmakers sent Bush legislation extending unemployment benefits beyond an extension voted two weeks ago.

And the House voted 409-21

to slap conditions on renewal of normal trading status with China for next year — a symbolic vote since the Senate isn't expected to act on the measure until 1992.

The tax talk came after Bush, under attack from the GOP right wing, expressed enthusiasm for a House Republican plan including a capital

See Bills, Page A10

■ The president urges Congress to vote on the GOP tax-break plan before adjourning for the year.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House shifted gears Tuesday as President Bush voiced enthusiastic support for a tax-cut package by House Republicans, launching a you-go-first war with Democrats over action or adjournment.

The president urged Congress to vote on the GOP package before leaving town for its year-end break.

House Speaker Thomas S. Foley immediately accused Bush of gamesmanship, and said if the president "wanted serious consideration of a tax cut, he should call on lawmakers to stay and deliberate over Thanksgiving."

As Congress worked into the night, Democrats said Foley was considering bringing the House back into session Dec. 10 for public hearings comparing Democratic tax proposals with the GOP plan.

That idea got a cool reception from Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole, who said, "It seems to me we are not going to resolve anything by staying here next week or coming back in December."

And Bush said there was "no point in Congress sticking around, in my view... Congress has been here all year long."

With the 11th-hour tax-cut proposals given little chance for consideration Tuesday, Foley said he would keep the House in session if Bush gave the word.

"The president either wishes us to conclude our business and adjourn this session of Congress or he does not. I will abide by his desires," Foley said.

The political maneuvering came as new poll data showed Bush's popularity sinking along with Americans' confidence in

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Sinatra show leaves Sands singing with a record win



SINATRA

By DANIEL HENEGHAN
Staff Writer

ATLANTIC CITY — Old Blue Eyes can still bring in the green.

Frank Sinatra's appearances at the Sands Hotel Casino last week thrilled not only those who saw his show, but also casino officials, who reported a big boost in winnings for the week and record revenues for last Saturday night.

"There's nobody who represents

gaming and the fun around gaming better than Frank Sinatra," said Bradley H. Stone, president of the Sands.

Stone said Tuesday that Sinatra's appearance turned a usually slow week here into a blockbuster.

Though he's nearing 76 — and some say his voice isn't what it used to be — Sinatra's four shows still pulled in many of the Sands' biggest customers.

And with the big players there, Lady Luck happened to be on the house's side. Stone said the gaming hall won a record \$2.1 million Saturday — its biggest one-day win ever.

Gamblers bought \$6 million in chips Saturday and lost nearly 26 percent of that — well above the usual 15 to 16 percent, Stone said.

For the week, revenues rose about 30 percent over last year.

An appearance by Sinatra creates some unusual problems for a casino. For example, while employees are accustomed to dealing with high rollers, a Sinatra appearance fills every gaming table, every room and every restaurant with preferred customers.

"You never have enough suites when Sinatra is here," Stone said.

Middle Twp. boy missing; hundreds help with search

By WYETTE CRAIG
Staff Writer

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP — With only a speaker and footprints as clues, more than 100 volunteers and police searched Tuesday for an 11-year-old Del Haven boy missing since Monday afternoon.

Mark Himebaugh of Sun Ray Road was last seen at home by his mother, Maureen, around 3:15 p.m. He was due home by dark for dinner and for a planned visit to a friend's home with his family.

"As time goes on it gets scarier and scarier," said Maureen Himebaugh, sitting near a photograph of her son while wringing her hands in her lap. "I just want Mark to come home."

She said her son, a student at the Alternative School at the Crest Haven complex, has no history of running away. She said he is taking medication twice a day for a chemical imbalance.

He is about 4 feet tall and weighs 65 pounds. He was last seen wearing a blue sweatshirt, gray pants, a gray jacket and white sneakers.

News spread quickly of Himebaugh's disappearance. The community joined in a massive search for him along with police, fire and rescue.

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Middle Township police search door-to-door for an 11-year-old Del Haven boy.

INSIDE

■ Bob Johnson, who coached the Pittsburgh Penguins to a Stanley Cup just six months ago, dies of cancer — Page D1.

■ U.S. closes Clark Air Base in the Philippines in aftermath of volcanic damage — Page A9.

WEATHER

TODAY: Mostly sunny, high in mid-40s.

TOMORROW: Partly sunny, high around 50.

More weather on Page C3.

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