

DEPOSITS SAFE

Congress clears FDIC rescue

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SIXERS SUNK

Lose 4th in row, 107-97 to Cavs

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HOLIDAY QUIZ

Think you know Thanksgiving?

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The Press

OF ATLANTIC CITY

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CAPE MAY COUNTY EDITION

Area charities struggling to answer cries for help

By MICHAEL E. McCULLOUGH
And DENISE DI STEPHAN
Staff Writers

The economic slump means hard times for many families this Thanksgiving and has left local charities struggling to meet the demand for help.

Church groups and food banks throughout the region say the number of people seeking aid is

up significantly this year — in some cases doubling previous years.

At the same time, officials say donations are down, since people who gave to charities in years past are finding themselves in financial difficulty.

Many fear that if the trend continues, they could find themselves turning away people seek-

ing help.

Deborah Brannon of the Wildwood Interfaith Action Committee said it's already to the point where volunteers are spending their own money for much of the food they give away.

As donations and supplies at discount food banks dwindle, Brannon said she can see a breaking point.

"We haven't turned anybody away," she said. "But if the trend continues, there might come a time when we have to."

In Ocean City, firefighters and the Community Cupboard distributed turkeys and food to more than 100 families — more than twice last year's number.

And officials at the Buena-based Spanish Community Cen-

ter say they've been "swamped."

Lydia Munoz, executive director at the center, said the Atlantic City office is seeing 30 clients a day. By midday Wednesday, the Buena office had already distributed seven food baskets, she said.

"People aren't working and they need help," Munoz said. The situation in southern New

Jersey has not been as severe as other areas hit harder by the recession.

In Bridgeport, Conn., a group known as Area Congregations Together turned away about 100 families of the 250 who sought Thanksgiving food.

"It's unbelievable; it's tragic," she said. □ See Charity, Page A16

Kidnap feared in Middle

■ Missing: The search continues for Mark Himebaugh, 11, who was last seen by his mother on Monday afternoon.

By YVETTE CRAIG
Staff Writer

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP — Police Chief Raymond Saunders said he is beginning to lean toward the possibility that a missing 11-year-old Del Haven boy was abducted. Saunders said Mark Himebaugh's mother, Maurine, last saw her son around 3:30 p.m. Monday as he was walking home on Sun Ray Beach Boulevard while she ran an errand. He was going home after watching a brush fire on Bayshore Road.

When she returned home a half-hour later, he was gone. During the fire, officials blocked Bayshore Road and rerouted traffic down Sun Ray Beach Road, across Delaware Avenue, which is parallel to the beach, and up Eldredge Avenue, Saunders said.

"A lot of traffic was rerouted past the (Himebaugh's) house that afternoon," said Saunders. "Traffic that would not normally drive down this street drove past the house. Anyone could have picked him up."

"There is no sign that he ever got into the house after his mother saw him walking down the street. And even though we have followed several footprints along the beach, there is no clear evidence that they are Mark's."

Because of freezing temperatures recently, Saunders also believes if the missing child were in the immediate area, he would not be alive.

"As cold as it has been, if he is out here, then we are no longer looking for an alive child. We are looking for a body," said Saunders. "But, it also gives me some hope that if he's not in the immediate area, he could be out there somewhere else. He may not be safe, but there's a possibility that he's alive."

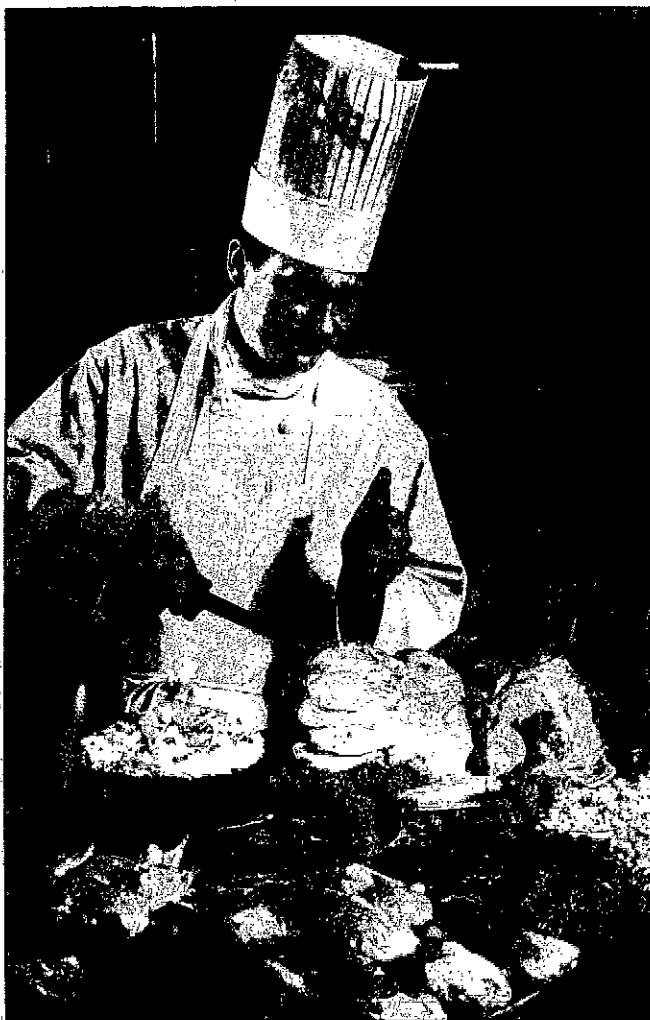
More than 100 calls have flooded the police station's telephone lines from people who believe they may have seen the missing child, Saunders said.

"Our switchboard has lit up like a Christmas tree," said Saunders. "We've gotten calls as far away as Pennsylvania. We've even had calls from people who thought they've seen him at the Deplford Mall. We are following all credible leads."

Anyone with information about

□ See Missing, Page A12

A TIME TO GIVE THANKS



Jim Stanor, a chef at the Smithville Inn in Galloway Township, carves one of the many turkeys the inn will serve to some 2,000 dinner guests it expects for Thanksgiving, a day Americans set aside to commemorate the Pilgrim's good harvest of 1621 in Plymouth, Mass.

Staff photo by Scott C. Steiner

Congress shelves tax cut

□ Speaker of the House urges caution despite other Democratic leaders' recommendations for a quick pre-Christmas vote on a cut to spur the lagging economy.

Los Angeles Times Service

WASHINGTON — House Democrats, faced with a sharp division in their ranks, derided Wednesday to defer immediate approval of a tax cut for middle-income Americans but scheduled extensive hearings in December on a series of tax bills to prepare for action early next year.

In a face-saving deal with House Republicans, the Democratic leadership also promised to allow votes on an economic growth package by March 15 in the wake of President Bush's State of the Union message to Congress in late January.

Despite the nearly unanimous recommendations of other Democratic leaders for a quick pre-Christmas vote on a tax cut to spur the lagging economy, Speaker Thomas S. Foley, D-Wash., chose a cautious approach, virtually guaranteeing there will be no December session of the House to take up tax legislation.

The delay means the Democrats will not move now to seize the opportunity to get out in front of Bush on new economic action and cash in on public appeal for relief. However, it avoids the risk of hasty steps that might have to be revised later or cause a damaging shock to the jittery stock and bond markets.

"If you do something precipitously, you might trigger adverse consequences in the economy,"

□ See Shelves, Page A6

■ Bill banning machines that make 'junk' calls goes to Bush — Page A11.

Thrift regulators file suit against ex-Action officers

By PETER KEY
Staff Writer

The federal government has filed a lawsuit seeking at least \$15 million in damages from 11 former directors and officers of Action Savings Bank, a defunct Somers Point savings and loan association.

The government is also seeking \$2 million in damages from Action's former chairman and chief executive officer, Robert D. Dominguez.

The Resolution Trust Corp., the federal agency charged with disposing of the assets of failed S&Ls, filed the suit in U.S. District Court on Nov. 14.

The RTC took over Action on Nov. 15, 1990, and ran it until Oct. 25, 1991, when it sold six of

□ See Action, Page A10

Senate filibuster kills sports-betting bill

Associated Press

NEWARK — Supporters of sports betting in New Jersey no longer have to wait about half a year to get their way.

The U.S. Senate Wednesday killed an anti-gambling bill that would have given Garden State a year to develop a referendum allowing sports betting, or the state would fall under a federal ban of such gambling.

The bill, released Sunday night, included a nationwide ban on betting on sporting events but exempted Nevada, Oregon and Delaware and gave New Jersey a one-year exemption.

The measure won narrow passage early Wednesday only to be killed in the Senate by a Republican filibuster.

The state Legislature may still decide to hold a referendum on

the measure, New Jersey's federal lawmakers agreed.

"New Jersey's options were protected either way," said Rep. Robert G. Torricelli, D-N.J.

He and Rep. William Hughes, D-2nd, supported the New Jersey exemption, but Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., and the New Jersey Coalition Against Sports Betting fought against it.

Bradley, who wanted New Jer-

sey to be included in the nationwide ban, did not immediately return calls to his office.

Thomas D. Carver, president of the Casino Association of New Jersey, has predicted sports betting could be worth \$30 million annually to the state.

Hughes predicted the Legislature would bring the issue to voters within a year as the anti-crime bill would have allowed

INSIDE

■ Man claiming to have lived with Merv Griffin loses lawsuit — Page A8.

■ U.S. rejects call for delay in peace talks by holdout Israel — Page A20.

Complete Index on Page A2.

WEATHER

TODAY: Partly sunny, high in the lower 50s.

TOMORROW: Mostly cloudy, high in the mid-50s.

More Weather Page C3.

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