

# Auburn Journal

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## Sled-dog weather



MICHAEL KIRBY/AUBURN JOURNAL

On a recent outing with his Alaskan malamutes, Saratoga's Steve LaBelle practices for the Foresthill Winter Classic sled-dog races at China Wall Off-Highway Vehicle area east of Foresthill. The free event runs Saturday and Sunday. Below, students including first-grader Joel Peterson, 6, left front, cross the road Monday in the rain, escorted by crossing guard Tim Lopez, at Auburn's Alta Vista Elementary School.

## Storm rains opportunities, challenges

By Gus Thomson  
Journal Staff Writer

Furries of television satellite trucks were heading east Monday toward Blue Canyon as winter's storm door opened wide once again.

The snow was falling at Blue Canyon — a handy place for television trucks to park off Interstate 80 — as well as throughout the Sierra down to 3,000 feet as Mother Nature produced a Groundhog Day blast of cold air.

The storm was welcome relief to Foresthill's Sharon Stahl, president of the Foresthill Sled Dog Committee putting on this coming



KARINA WILLIAMS/AUBURN JOURNAL

weekend's Foresthill Winter Classic. The last two years, the Sled Dog Classic had to be canceled because of a dearth of white stuff. This year, Stahl said she's happy to report that the storm — and at least two more expected to dump more snow on the ground by Saturday at race site China Wall Off-Highway Vehicle Area, 12 miles east of Foresthill — should give the event the winter conditions it needs.

Expected to attract 300 dogs and mushers from as far away as Colorado and Oregon, the races need 18 inches of snow to provide

See *Storm*, page A8

## Bush offers \$2.4 trillion budget proposal

### War costs could hit 'upper limit' of another \$50 billion

By Alan Fram  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush proposed a \$2.4 trillion budget on Monday slicing scores of programs from prisons to arts education in the face of record federal deficits and the costs of war. His budget chief warned a fresh request for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan could reach \$50 billion.



George Bush

The election-year blueprint would pour funds into the military, domestic security and some education and health initiatives. It provides the first dollars for what ultimately could be a hugely expensive effort to visit Mars, and renews his call for making permanent the tax cuts he has shoved through Congress.

See *Budget*, page A8

## Absentee ballots go out this week

By Gus Thomson  
Journal Staff Writer

The March 2 primary in Placer County is getting down to the knitty gritty, with most absentee voters expected to get their ballots this week.

The mass mailing of 46,000 permanent absentee ballots and no-precinct mail ballots signals the start of a heightened stage in an election that will culminate March 2. At that time, the county elections division that will be counting an estimated 120,000 votes for campaigns running the gamut from presidential nominations to board of supervisors races.

On Monday, the elections division at DeWitt Center also opened as a

See *Ballots*, page A8

## \$4.6 million settlement reached in lawsuit over wrongful death

By Ryan McCarthy  
Journal Staff Writer

A lawsuit filed after a truck landed on a car and killed a woman who sat inside waiting while her husband helped direct traffic around an earlier, minor accident on Interstate 80 east of Colfax was settled Friday for \$4.6 million.

Annamarie Archer was returning from a weekend trip to Reno with her husband, Michael, when she was

killed April 16, 2000 near Blue Canyon.

Attorney Robert Shannon, representing the trucking company NFI — among defendants named in the lawsuit — said Monday that the settlement includes an Archer family member who is a minor.

As a result, the civil case will undergo additional legal review

"There's always a 1 percent

See *Suit*, page A8

## Schools move toward healthier lunch menus

By Stephanie Swanburg  
Journal Staff Writer

NEWCASTLE — For most adults at lunchtime, the world is a buffet, offering choices from health-conscious greenery to fast-food gluttony.

For most students, however, the choices are somewhat more limited — although certainly not simple. In the Newcastle Elementary School, they boil down to brown-bag or hot lunch. But even that decision can have complicating factors.

Michael Aboyta, 14, usually buys his lunch. Tuesday, with tacos on the menu, was no exception.

"It's good most of the time," he said. "Plus, I'm too lazy to make my own lunch."

Victoria Villarreal disagreed with her classmate's positive outlook on cafeteria food. She ate the brown sack lunch her mother packed her, which included a burrito, grapes, trail mix and a cookie.

"Sometimes the stuff in the cafeteria is gross," she said.

Lila McAllister knows just how complicated school lunch decisions really are — especially to the finicky eaters who devour them. As director of child nutrition services for Placer



KARINA WILLIAMS/AUBURN JOURNAL

Eighth-grader Kaitlin Lewis serves hot lunch to classmates Jesse Campbell and Sean Brown on Tuesday. School lunch options, regulated by state and federal nutritional standards, are getting progressively healthier.

Union High School District, she comes up with the menu for several local schools, including Placer, Colfax, Del Oro and Chana High, Alta-Dutch Flat Elementary and most of the Auburn Head Start sites.

McAllister also planned menus for Newcastle, until the Loomis Union School District took over last fall.

"It's pretty interesting," she said. "It's more than just throwing together

See *Lunch*, page A8

### WEATHER



Scattered showers and chilly  
High 50, low 41.



Auburn Daily Journal

### LETTER QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Burning garbage, in particular plastics, releases high concentrations of toxic chemicals."

— Richard Goodwin, Weimar

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