

Little things in life keep Arkansans slapping, itching/3E



Becker, Lendl win Wimbledon openers/1D

TCBY to allow franchisees to sell their frozen yogurt at non-retail locations/1C

Weather
Partly cloudy;
30% chance of rain.
Highs, 90s; lows, 70s.
Details/9A

Arkansas Gazette.

Tuesday
Final

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In the News

■ **John Prescott**, 35, who said he was a right-wing Republican, true to the flag and country, was told by city officials in Delray Beach, Fla., that he was violating a sign ordinance by wrapping his gasoline station in dozens of U.S. flags.

■ **Tom Peters**, the author of two best-selling business management books, donated \$20,000 to the American Civil Liberties Union in New Orleans to protest a Louisiana bill that would limit the fine for assaulting a flag burner to only \$25, saying such a law would encourage violence.

■ **Jack Klugman**, 70, the actor, who has lost partial use of his vocal chords to throat cancer, told friends in Los Angeles that his acting career is over, dashing plans for an "Odd Couple" television reunion special with Tony Randall for NBC.

■ **Boris N. Yeltsin**, president of the Russian federation, told Soviet television in Moscow that his republic would sharply restrict its payments to the national government as it pushes for greater independence, a move made after the Russian parliament said it had the right to overturn Soviet law.

■ **Robert Abrams**, the New York state attorney general, said that Fisher-Price, the toy maker, has agreed to place warnings on packages that its Little People figures present a choking hazard to children, adding that the toys have been linked to the deaths of at least five children nationwide.

■ **Michael McGee**, a black alderman battling a message maker opposed to renaming a Milwaukee street for the late civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., faced a possible censure for issuing a false warning that the firm's products were tainted with rat poison.

■ **Wilbert Lee Evans**, a Virginia death row inmate since 1981 who was convicted of killing a deputy sheriff, lost before the U.S. Supreme Court an appeal to halt his execution despite his plea that he had helped save the lives of 14 guards held hostage during a prison riot.

■ **Michelle L'Esperance**, the mother of the nation's first test-tube quintuplets, born in January 1988, said in Pontiac, Mich., that she and her husband, a prison guard who earns \$26,000 a year, were unable to pay their bills and were selling their belongings, including her fur coat, their horses and "everything," to make end meet.

■ **Stormie Jones**, 13, of White Settlement, Texas, the longest surviving heart-liver transplant patient who underwent her first operation in 1984, was admitted to a Pittsburgh hospital for tests to see whether her body was rejecting her second transplanted liver.

■ **Raymond Buckley**, earlier acquitted of 40 counts of molestation, again took the witness stand in Los Angeles in his second trial in the McMartin Pre-School molestation case and again denied molesting any children at his family's preschool.

Inside

President goes free

■ **Fang Liuh**, the Chinese dissident who, with his wife, sought refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Beijing after the crackdown on China's pro-democracy movement, is free./9A



Along/1E
Ann Lenders/9E
Bombeck/9E
Mudge/9E
Burnham/1B
Business/C
Comics/9-10E
Closeout/9E
Daily Record/9B
Editorial/1B-11B

Graham/9E
Ann Lenders/9E
Medicine/9E
Metro/Style/9E
Obituaries/9-10E
Other Days/9E
People/9A
Sports/1D
Television/9-7E
Weather/9A

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Arkansas

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Simmons put to death in the massacre of 16



Jeff Thompson/Gazette Staff

HOW IT ENDED: Hearse carrying Ronald Gene Simmons' body leaves Cummins Unit Monday night.

Open curtain silences witnesses

By Scott Bowles
Gazette Staff

CUMMINS UNIT — For witnesses at Ronald Gene Simmons' execution, perhaps the most startling image was not the execution itself, but his sudden appearance when the curtains whisked open without notice.

Before the execution, 14 people filed silently into the witness room. Twelve witnesses were expected, but Attorney General Steve Clark and an assistant, Leslie Powell, were present in case Simmons changed his mind and appealed.

This article is a first-person account by Arkansas Gazette reporter Scott Bowles, who witnessed the execution.

Prison director A.L. "Art" Lockhart gave brief comments to the witnesses after they took their seats, including directions not to speak to the press before or during the execution. As Lockhart spoke, Clark nervously rubbed his thumbs over the bag supplied to witnesses in case they became ill. A few witnesses whispered to one another, but they all fell silent at 9 p.m.

when the curtains opened without notice.

The light from the bare white room brightened the witness room. Simmons lay strapped in a gurney about eight feet from the first row of witnesses, his head to the witnesses' left, his feet to the right. Two intravenous bottles hung over his head.

He looked straight up, into the fluorescent lights of the chamber, blinking frequently.

Simmons was covered from chin to toe in a white sheet with his arms bared and

See REPORTER/6A

Last words cryptic

By Karen Rafinski
Gazette Staff

Ronald Gene Simmons, the worst mass murderer in Arkansas' history, was executed at 9:12 p.m. Monday.

He was pronounced dead at 9:19 p.m. after three injections into his arms of lethal chemicals. Simmons, 49, did not resist the execution and gave a brief, confusing final statement.

"Justice delayed finally be done is justifiable homicide."

He was executed for the slaying of 14 members of his family and two Russellville residents in December 1987.

Since Simmons had not appealed his death sentence, Simmons could have stopped the execution merely by saying he wanted to appeal his death sentence.

Simmons was executed in front of 14 witnesses. Two of them — Attorney General Steve Clark and one of his assistants, Leslie Powell — were added at the last minute.

Department of Correction spokesman David White said there was no conversation when Simmons was moved from his cell to the death chamber shortly before 9 p.m. "He was very quiet," White said.

Bill Simmons, The Associated Press bureau chief in Little Rock, and Scott Bowles, an Arkansas Gazette reporter, who witnessed the execution, described it this way:

The curtains on the witness room were opened at 9 p.m. and Simmons was lying on a hospital gurney with a leather strap across his head. He was only a few feet from the executioners' closet. A sheet covered Simmons from his gray beard to his toes. His blue eyes were open and he blinked a few times.

"Bill Simmons, the Arkansas Gazette reporter, who witnessed the execution, described it this way:

"Mr. Simmons appeared to me to be as natural as

See SIMMONS/6A

SPECIAL REPORT

- The people he was convicted of killing/6A
- 'Maybe now the hearing can start'/6A
- List of witnesses chosen to view execution/6A
- What Simmons did during his final hours/6A
- Four spectators show support for execution/7A
- Firefighters recall the death of a comrade/7A
- Victims' relatives want peace now/7A
- TV special addresses meetings with anchor/7A

3,318 learn licenses suspended

Parking fines overdue

By Scott Van Laningham
Gazette Staff

People who have ignored overdue parking tickets in Little Rock now face a stiffer penalty: they are losing their driving privileges.

Notices have been mailed recently to 3,318 people who owe more than \$100 in overdue parking tickets, telling them their licenses have been suspended.

The notices are coming from the state Office of Driver Services in response to an order from Little Rock Municipal Traffic Judge Bill Watt.

Charles Lacerfield, manager of driver control at the state office, said Monday that notices had been mailed to people who were on a list compiled by Watt's office in February.

The notices are getting people's attention. Watt and Lacerfield said their office received numerous calls Monday from people who received the notices during the week-end.

Watt has estimated that the majority on the list owe fines totaling \$1 million.



Associated Press

LEADERS MEET: President Bush greets African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela at the White House on Monday.

Mandela gets challenge

Bush questions ANC's tactics, receives retort

By Scott Van Laningham
Gazette Staff

WASHINGTON — President Bush delivered a face-to-face challenge to Nelson Mandela on Monday to renounce "violence and armed struggle."

It was the first time in Mandela's 17-year career that any leading political figure has questioned him in public.

In an extraordinary exchange, the world's most famous dissident stood on the South Lawn of the White House and coolly responded that Bush did not fully understand the situation in South Africa.

It was the most contentious public moment yet on the world's

Court lets state keep comatose patient alive

By Knight News Service

WASHINGTON — Ruling for the first time in a "right to die" case Monday, the Supreme Court gave states the authority to bar the removal of food, water or other life-sustaining treatment from permanently unconscious patients whose wishes are unknown or unclear.

By a 5-4 vote, the justices upheld Missouri's authority to keep a 32-year-old comatose woman, Nancy Beth Cruzan, barely alive despite her parents' desire to withdraw a hospital feeding tube that they say preserves their daughter as "an unconscious shell in a room full of strangers."

With the feeding tube intact, doctors estimate that she can live another 30 years.

Arkansas has a right-to-die law, passed in 1987, that allows people to have life-sustaining equipment disconnected. The person must make the decision in writing when he is mentally competent.

Also, a person can designate a proxy to make the decision later. If the person has not made a written decision about disconnecting life-support systems, and also has not nominated a proxy, the doctor presides. State law lets

Notification for abortion ruled legal

By Knight News Service

WASHINGTON — States may require that pregnant teen-agers notify one or both of their parents before they may obtain an abortion, the Supreme Court ruled Monday.

But noting the need of exceptions for split or troubled families, the justices said a Minnesota law requiring notification of both biological parents would be constitutional only if pregnant teenagers can bypass one or both parents by seeking a judge's permission for an abortion.

Without the judicial bypass law, the Minnesota requirement is unconstitutional, the court ruled.

At the same time, the jus-

See O'CONNOR/6A

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