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BC-MCT-SUNDAY-NEWS-BJT — wire editors (3250 words)

**McClatchy-Tribune News Service
News Budget for papers of Sunday, January 17, 2010**

Updated at 9:40 p.m. EST (0240 UTC).

Updates OBAMA-1YEAR-ADV17:WA

These stories are embargoed for Sunday release, except as noted. Please make sure you are adhering to embargoes on our stories in both your print and online operations.

TOP STORIES

Obama faces 2nd year filled with tough challenges

[OBAMA-1YEAR-1ST-LEDE-ADV17:WA](#)—There will be no parade this time for President Barack Obama. No grand speech from the west front of the Capitol, no fireworks, no glittery balls to kick off the second year of his presidency on Wednesday, as there were for the first.

Just a lot of hard work, an agenda full of unresolved problems and perhaps a more sober sense of just what's possible for the 48-year-old president, who's a little grayer now than he was a year ago.

He faces a country that's struggling to find its footing after a staggering recession, a nation that's starting to show signs of growth but is still losing jobs. He looks out at a world where he's made precious little progress.

He'll tackle those and other challenges with far less political capital than he had a year ago. As a result, his fellow Democrats approach midterm congressional and statehouse elections this year nervous about being tied too closely to his agenda.

1450 (with trims) by Steven Thomma and Margaret Talev in Washington. [MOVED](#)

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [GRAPHIC](#)

Obama aid to Yemen could risk backlash in Arab world

[USYEMEN-ADV17:WA](#)—President Barack Obama's decision to boost U.S. aid to Yemen to help the small Arabian Peninsula country fight al-Qaida risks tying the U.S. more closely to an autocratic ruler whose repression of economic and political grievances is strengthening the terrorists and pushing his impoverished nation toward breakup.

"Any association with the (Yemeni) regime will only confirm al-Qaida's narrative, which is that America is only interested in maintaining corrupt and despotic rulers and is not interested in the fate of Arabs and Muslims," warned Bernard Haykel, a Princeton University professor.

The State Department's latest international human rights report cited allegations that Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime tortures and assassinates suspected opponents, operates secret prisons and muzzles independent media.

1250 (with trims) by Jonathan S. Landay in Washington. [MOVED](#)

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [GRAPHIC](#)

Behind a famous photo, the story of how Elvis went to Washington

[ELVIS-NIXON-ADV17:LA](#)—The National Archives is like a safe deposit box for America's really important papers — the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, the \$7.2 million canceled check for the purchase of Alaska, the picture of Richard Nixon and Elvis Presley shaking hands in the Oval Office.

Copies of that photo — the president in his charcoal suit, the King of Rock 'n' Roll in his purple velvet cape — are requested more than just about any of the archives' treasures, including the Constitution.

Yet the story that led to their improbable meeting on Dec. 21, 1970, is as little known as the picture is famous.

2300 (with trims) by Faye Fiore in Washington. [MOVED](#)

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTO](#)

POLITICS

Democrats' Rocky Mountain high takes a tumble in Colorado

[DEMOCRATS-WEST-ADV17:LA](#)—It was less than 18 months ago that the Democratic Party declared the Rocky Mountain West its new base.

Barack Obama claimed the party's presidential nomination here, in a state where Democrats had won the governorship, both houses of the state Legislature, and were about to pick up both U.S. Senate seats.

Now President Obama and his party's approval ratings in the West are lower than elsewhere in the country. Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter Jr. abruptly announced this month that he would not seek re-election. The state's junior senator is trailing badly in the polls. Analysts think Democrats could even lose their majorities in the Legislature.

With the Latino population growing and progressive-minded transplants from coastal states moving in, Democratic strategists had hoped that the interior West would eventually become reliably Democratic territory.

There are signs, however, that the independent-minded region is rejecting the party's agenda.

1000 (with trims) by Nicholas Riccardi in Denver. [MOVED](#)

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [ARCHIVE PHOTO](#)

WASHINGTON

Demand overwhelms program to prevent homelessness

[ECONOMY-RENTERS-ADV17:WA](#)—In rural communities and urban areas alike, one of the least expensive and most

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unheralded new initiatives of the stimulus bill is quietly saving hundreds of thousands of Americans from homelessness.

Now housing advocates want Congress to boost the program's \$1.5 billion funding as the vast need for more assistance becomes evident nationwide.

The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program is expected to help 600,000 people by moving some from homeless shelters into their own apartments and by providing rent payments to prevent others from being evicted.

Experts say the initiative breaks new ground in federal housing policy by focusing more resources on preventing homelessness and getting people back on their feet, rather than just feeding and warehousing the destitute.

1400 (with trims) by Tony Pugh in Washington. MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTOS](#) | [GRAPHIC](#)

House, Senate at odds over who should control insurance exchanges

[HEALTHCARE-EXCHANGES-ADV17:MCT](#)—The debate over whether the states or the federal government will have more clout in a proposed health insurance marketplace is escalating, and the outcome has big implications for consumers.

This issue is one of the key disputes in negotiations between leaders of the House of Representatives and the Senate as they meld their health care bills. The House, which would establish a national exchange run by the federal government, argues that setting a uniform program would help protect consumers. The Senate, which wants each state to create and run its own exchange, says that the states have more experience overseeing insurance plans and know their residents' needs better.

1000 (with trims) by Mary Agnes Carey in Washington. MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#)

Despite prevention efforts, U.S. military suicides rise

[MILITARY-SUICIDES-ADV17:WA](#)—Eight years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq have etched indelible scars on the psyches of many of the nation's service members, and the U.S. military is losing a battle to stem an epidemic of suicides in its ranks.

Despite calls by top Pentagon officials for a sea change in attitudes about mental health, millions of dollars in new suicide-prevention programming and thousands of hours spent helping soldiers suffering from what often are euphemistically dubbed "invisible wounds," the military is losing ground.

1150 (with trims) by Halimah Abdullah in Washington. MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#)

Financial panel's head wastes no time in going after bankers

[ECONOMY-ANGELIDES-ADV17:WA](#)—Phil Angelides wants some answers: With millions of Americans out of work and millions losing their homes, why is Wall Street is having a record year, with record profits and record bonuses for top executives?

As the chairman of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission, Angelides has a good perch to ask his questions. It's a special panel similar to the Sept. 11 Commission, charged with writing the official history of what caused the nation's financial systems to fall apart in 2008.

650 (with trims) by Rob Hotakainen in Washington. MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTOS](#)

THE WORLD

Suicide attack reveals threat to Obama's Afghanistan plan

[USAFGHAN-ATTACK-ADV17:WA](#)—The suicide attack on a CIA base in Afghanistan has exposed the collaboration among militant Islamist groups on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and aggravated tensions between the U.S. and Pakistan, Washington's most important ally in its war against al-Qaida and the Afghan Taliban.

Officials of both countries and independent analysts said the attack in Khost, Afghanistan, 10 miles from the Pakistani border, increases the likelihood that the Pakistani military will bow to pressure from Washington and expand its anti-Taliban offensive along the border.

Pakistan's reluctance so far to act more aggressively on its side of the border threatens to jeopardize the Obama administration's plan to begin withdrawing some U.S. troops from Afghanistan next year.

1050 (with trims) by Saeed Shah in Islamabad. (CANADA OUT) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#)

In Seoul, a sanctuary for mistreated foreign brides

[SKOREA-SHELTER-ADV17:LA](#)—Cao Thi Nguyen and her baby were marooned in a strange land without family or options.

The young woman, who moved here from Vietnam two years ago to marry a South Korean man, had been kicked out of her home after a fight with her husband's family.

Unable to speak Korean, the slight 29-year-old wandered the streets of Seoul for months until she found a refuge designed to help the growing number of foreign brides in the country — nearly half of whom report suffering domestic abuse.

Myeongrak Village, a motel-turned-shelter with a capacity for 14 residents, serves women exclusively, providing food and medical costs and a chance at self-reliance.

700 by Ju-min Park in Seoul. DIVERSITY. MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTO](#)

BEST OF NEWSFEATURES

The following Newsfeatures moved earlier in the week and are suitable for Sunday publication:

Pioneering nonprofit is saving lives in Afghanistan

[MEDICALCORPS:LA](#)—Peering through a gap in her black veil, Bibi Totia watched anxiously as the doctor examined her fussing grandson in a crowded refugee camp near the Pakistan border.

The doctor diagnosed flu and handed her a prescription for an antibiotic from the free pharmacy.

"God bless you," she said, clutching the precious piece of paper to her chest.

For nearly a quarter of a century, Totia has relied on the doctors of the International Medical Corps to care for her family, first as a refugee in Pakistan and now as a refugee in her own country, Afghanistan.

Although less well known than the Nobel-winning Doctors Without Borders, the Los Angeles-based nonprofit shares a reputation with its gutsy counterpart for working in places where no one else will go.

1450 (with trims) by Alexandra Zavis in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. (Moved Monday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTO](#)

College preparatory program aims to raise achievement among black male teens

[BLACKTEENS:BZ](#)—The Woodlawn High students were divided into three groups stationed at chalkboards, writing out questions. What year was the microscope created? What do you view microorganisms on? And finally: Describe the similarities of prokaryotes and eukaryotes.

"That is an excellent question," said James Martin, drawing the attention of the 25 students in his class. The teens — all black male freshmen — were giving one another "critical thinking" problems in various subjects as part of a semiweekly, in-class tutorial.

Martin's class is a pilot project being conducted by Advancement Via Individual Determination, or AVID, a national college-preparatory program for students who are capable of more challenging work but need additional resources to reach their potential. Woodlawn High in Baltimore County is among six schools across the country participating in the AVID Center's African-American Male Initiative, which aims to raise achievement among those students.

1300 (with trims) by Arin Gencer in Baltimore. DIVERSITY. (Moved Monday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTOS](#)

For some, a sapphire has not been their best friend

[BLACKSAPPHIRE:LA](#)—The boy brought home a dull-colored half-pound stone he found on the hillside, and his father, Harry Spencer, thought of the perfect place for it. They would use it as a doorstep.

The year was 1938, and their home was a modest shack in a sparsely populated, dusty stretch of gem-mining territory in central Queensland, Australia. The stone sat at the foot of the back door for 10 years, until a jeweler recognized its potential and flew it across the Pacific. In L.A., it was polished to reveal a six-pronged, mesmerizingly beautiful star — or so goes the story that is passed down about the largest known star sapphire in the world.

The Black Star of Queensland would make its way around the world, weaving in and out of spotlight and obscurity.

Some profess the stone has a certain magic, bringing luck to the fortunate few who have touched it. One owner said it brought on the darkest period of her life, leaving memories she never wanted to revisit.

Eventually, as many prized things do, it landed in L.A. Superior Court, at the center of allegations of deception, unkept promises, and a lover's betrayal.

2200 (with trims) by Victoria Kim in Los Angeles. (Moved Tuesday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTO](#)

China's 'black jails' shove complaints into the dark

[CHINA-BLACKJAILS:LA](#)—Using a crude sawed-off stick as a cane, Shi Yaping waited outside a government office, competing with a throng of petitioners to air her grievance over a neighborhood dispute.

The 59-year-old had traveled here from the central province of Hubei to take advantage of a centuries-old Chinese custom that grants citizens the right to bring unsettled complaints to a regional panel of inquiry.

Yet Shi knows well the perils of speaking her mind in China, where undercover police and mercenary thugs wait to pounce. She has twice been snatched off the street, held incommunicado on the assumption that she would eventually abandon her cause and go home.

Shi is a victim of the secretive realm of "black jails" — unlawful detention facilities that have sprung up across China to discourage persistent petitioners considered pests by government officials.

1250 (with trims) by John M. Glionna in Beijing. (Moved Wednesday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTOS](#)

Connected, not just online: Media may be even more social than some think

[CPT-SOCIALMEDIA-ISOLATION-ADV10:PH](#)—Facebook. Twitter. MySpace. Cell phones. Blogs.

Time thieves, all of them. Or at least that's how they've sometimes been portrayed in news media, common lore and even the occasional scholarly study.

Not the real thing, not really human contact. Trivial, superficial connections that take up time we once spent with real friends, family, community. Americans are already isolated enough: We're the lonely crowd. We bowl alone. Social media just add to the Great American Isolation, right?

Not so, says a study from the Pew Internet and American Life Project. Titled "Social Isolation and New Technology" and published in the fall, it suggests that the reverse may be true: Social media make you more social, more involved, not less.

1400 (with trims) by John Timpane in Philadelphia. (Moved Wednesday.) MOVED

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Itching for battle, U.S. troops in Iraq stage fight nights

[USIRAO-FIGHTNIGHTS:WA](#)—Hard rock thumped through the speakers and nonalcoholic beer flowed as more than 1,000 amped-up American soldiers crowded around a makeshift boxing ring one evening earlier this month at a U.S. base in southern Iraq.

"Let's get ready to ruuuumble!" the emcee bellowed, kicking off Contingency Operating Base Adder's first Friday Night Fights, where American servicemen, special forces and private contractors beat each other bloody in mixed martial arts bouts that are spreading fast on U.S. installations throughout Iraq.

850 (with trims) by Hannah Allam in COB Adder, Iraq. (Moved Wednesday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTOS](#)

In Iran, opposition appears to spread into heartland

[IRAN-OPPOSITION:LA](#)—Mohammad knew he had to be careful in approaching his old classmate Hamed, the one from the conservative Iranian family. They come from a small city, after all, and word gets around.

When they ran into each other in their hometown of Birjand last summer, the pair hadn't seen each other for nine years. As they caught up on old times, the conversation turned to Iran's disputed election between President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and challenger Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

A clever and highly ambitious young man whose dream until seven months ago was to go abroad, get rich and have drinks by a pool in Miami, Mohammad found himself drawn into political activism after the election — and trying to recruit friends and acquaintances to join him.

1250 (with trims) by Borzou Daragahi in Beirut. (Moved Thursday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#)

Asian carp: One man's invader is another man's dinner

[ENV-CARP-EATS:TB](#)—Asian carp may indeed be poised to destroy commercial fishing as we know it in the Great Lakes, but Reggie McLeod likes his smoked or pickled.

The Vietnamese community cooks carp in coconut milk with lemon grass and chili peppers. The Polish like to draw out the pungent fishy odor by soaking it in milk and onions.

The humble Asian carp, which by some accounts is now within six miles of Lake Michigan, didn't ask to be at the center of a legal and political firestorm.

There's no question this ugly, stinky fish has an image problem in the United States. But so many varieties of carp, including the feared Asian carp, have been popular in ethnic cuisines for so long that some can't help but see the crisis as the culinary opportunity of a lifetime.

1000 (with trims) by Joel Hood in Chicago. (Moved Thursday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTOS](#)

A mad scheme to kill a scientist

[SCIENTIST-SCHEME-ADV10-1ST-LEDE:LA](#)—Like the disturbed genius in Hollywood's "A Beautiful Mind," Walter K. Sartory was a brilliant mathematician with a grave mental illness. It made him the perfect victim.

Sartory worked for 30 years at Tennessee's Oak Ridge National Laboratory. His work on nuclear weapons remains classified, but he published pioneering papers on reactor design, medical centrifuges and other subjects. He won a top award at the lab and held three patents.

Sartory was treated most of his life for paranoid schizophrenia. He believed the CIA trained ants to spy on him. He battled social phobias so acute that he turned down a high-paying job rather than submit to an interview.

When Sartory retired in 1992, he shut himself in a tiny apartment and used algorithms to invest on Wall Street. The savant built a \$14 million portfolio.

Then, Last February, old friends phoned police to say the 73-year-old recluse had vanished.

Sartory had been abducted, drugged and duct-taped to a chair, police later concluded. He surrendered his financial accounts but died after he was denied the medicine that kept his panic attacks at bay.

Exploitation of the elderly, and of the mentally ill, is a sad but growing trend.

But few cases present such a grim mix of pulp fiction and Greek tragedy as the lonely death of Walter Sartory.

2150 (with trims) by Bob Drogin in Hebron, Ky. (Moved Friday.) MOVED

[TEXT](#) | [HTML](#) | [PHOTO](#)

In India, those stricken with cancer make a life on the streets

[INDIA-CANCER-ADV10:LA](#)—In this makeshift cancer ward, there's little risk of enduring bedsores, fussy nurses or tasteless hospital food.

In fact, on some days, the cancer patients living on the sidewalk in front of Mumbai's Tata Memorial Hospital have no food at all.

At any given time, there's a floating population of several hundred patients awaiting treatment, with barely a rupee to their name. Many have lived for months, even years, in makeshift tents that hug the hospital walls and gates.

They recline, surrounded by their medicine bottles, religious icons and tattered luggage, waiting for a hard-won appointment at this, one of India's few state-of-the-art charitable hospitals.

1600 (with trims) by Mark Magnier in Mumbai, India. (Moved Friday.) MOVED

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