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The LEADER

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Kuhl: I'm not a friend of Big Oil

BY JOE DUNNING
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WASHINGTON | U.S. Rep. John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr. refuted a claim Thursday that he's a friend of Big Oil.



KUHL

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has accused Kuhl, R-Hammond sport, of voting on bills that protect the oil companies and work against American consumers. In return, oil companies have contributed \$29,600 to Kuhl's campaigns.

"Maybe that explains why Representative Kuhl is working harder to protect their obscene profits than to lower the price of gas for struggling families in New York," said Doug Thornell, committee spokesman.

The committee points to an energy bill Kuhl voted against earlier this year that seeks to end taxpayer subsidies for

SEE KUHL | 8A

Housing aid bills face veto by Bush

BY JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON | The House on Thursday passed a massive homeowner rescue plan to provide cheaper, government-backed mortgages to half a million debt-ridden borrowers and bolster an economy crippled by the housing crisis.

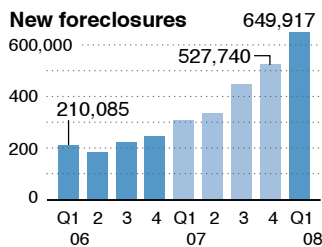
Defying veto threats from President Bush, the House approved the measure by a vote of 266-154, with 39 Republicans — mostly from areas suffering worst from housing woes — supporting it.

It would let the Federal Housing Administration take on up to \$300 billion in new mortgages so that financially strapped borrowers facing foreclosure could refinance.

SEE HOUSING | 8A

Foreclosures rise

Nationwide foreclosure filings for the first quarter of 2008 increased 23 percent from the previous quarter.



SOURCE: RealtyTrac AP

TOWN BOARD MEETING



ERIC WENSEL | THE LEADER

A Bath resident speaks during Thursday's public hearing on a proposed development plan for the town.

Bath's comprehensive plan comes under fire

BY ROB PRICE
GateHouse News Service

BATH | The second draft of a comprehensive development plan for the Town of Bath came under heavy criticism Thursday during a public hearing attended by nearly 100 people.

Objections to the plan focused on the deletion of dozens of specific recommendations made by an ad hoc committee charged with writing an initial draft

of the plan.

After the committee submitted its draft to the Bath Town Board in 2007, a second, smaller committee that included two board members revised the document, removing the individual recommendations the initial committee had developed while retaining general guidelines for future development.

What was left is a considerably pared-down plan critics warned would not offer

sufficient guidance for future action by the town board.

"You've emasculated the plan that was presented to you," said town resident Tom Daulton.

"Deciding not to incorporate (the recommendations) in the plan is ludicrous ... This community deserves better," added village of Bath resident David Walczak.

SEE PLAN | 8A



ERIC WENSEL | THE LEADER

The Bath Town Board listens to a Bath resident voice her opinion Thursday evening during a public hearing on a proposed development plan for the town.

Cohocton wind farms Opponents demand investigation

BY MARY PERHAM
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BATH | Wind farm opponents have called on Steuben County District Attorney John Tunney to investigate their wide-ranging allegations against a county agency, municipalities and individual officials.

In a May 5 letter to Tunney, Cohocton Wind Watch's chief spokesman James Hall demanded an investigation into what he feels are alleged criminal actions. Those include false claims, filing false instruments, bribery of public officials, larceny and fraud.

Those accused of illegal actions are: the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency, SCIDA Executive Director James Sherron, town and planning board members in several towns including Cohocton and Prattsburgh, and wind developers EcoGen and First Wind (formerly UPC).

Construction of roughly 50 turbines in Cohocton by First Wind began last fall. First Wind also has plans for a 36-turbine project in Prattsburgh and Naples.

EcoGen's initial plans for a 50-turbine farm in Prattsburgh were approved two years ago by SCIDA, but the developer has taken no further public action since then.

Allegations by Cohocton Wind Watch against include:

- The wind developers knowingly provided and submitted false statements and false instruments for permits and during environmental studies.

- The developers have improperly influenced public officials through cash bribes, lucrative lease terms, bogus real estate transactions, purchase of personal property, and contingent real estate purchase offers.

SEE INVESTIGATION | 8A

Accused shooter found dead Thurs. Police: Apparent suicide

BY JOHN ZICK
jzick@the-leader.com

WOODHULL | A Woodhull man accused of shooting his wife last year was found dead early Thursday morning in an apparent suicide, state police at Painted Post said.

Troopers found Steven Vanzile dead at approximately 6 a.m. Thursday at a Lyon Road home, minutes after a caller dialed 911 to report he was unresponsive and possibly deceased. He was pronounced dead at the scene by Steuben County Coroner Michael Powers.

It is unclear who called 911. Also, state police would not say if anyone was living with Vanzile.

State police Sr. Inv. Curt

Eaton said Vanzile's death has not yet been officially classified, although it is not considered suspicious.

Vanzile's body was sent to Monroe County for an autopsy. The results could be available as early as today, Eaton said.

"Before (the medical examiner) makes a determination, we won't make any determination," Eaton said.

A call to Vanzile's attorney was not immediately returned.

Vanzile was charged with second-degree attempted murder, first-degree assault, first-degree reckless endangerment, menacing police and three counts of first-degree criminal use of a

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Foreign aid arrives in Myanmar; U.S. snubbed

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

YANGON, MYANMAR | Myanmar's military regime allowed in the first major international aid shipment Thursday, but it snubbed a U.S. offer to help cyclone victims struggling to recover from a tragedy of unimaginable scale.

Five days after the storm, the junta continued to stall on visas for U.N. teams and other foreign aid workers anxious to deliver food, water and medicine to survivors amid fears the death

toll could hit 100,000.

Among those stranded in Thailand were 10 members of the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team. Air Force transport planes and helicopters packed with supplies also sat waiting for a green light.

"We are in a long line of nations who are ready, willing and able to help, but also, of course, in a long line of nations the Burmese don't trust," U.S. Ambassador Eric John told reporters in Thailand's capital, Bangkok. "It's more than frustrating.

It's a tragedy," he said. Each day of delay means "a lot more people suffering," he said.

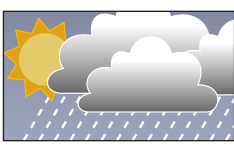
Myanmar's isolationist regime issued an appeal for international assistance after winds of 120 mph and a

SEE MYANMAR | 2A

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Relief supplies for Cyclone survivors are unloaded from a helicopter Thursday in a village in the hard-hit Irrawaddy delta in Myanmar.



TODAY'S LOCAL WEATHER



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