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The LEADER

CORNING | NEW YORK

FRIDAY | JUNE 6 | 2008

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Kuhl program seeks to aid vets

THE LEADER STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C. | U.S. Rep. John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr. has formed the House Veterans' Mental Health Caucus...

The bipartisan congressional caucus was formed to help veterans deal with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury and other conditions.

The committee is also intended to help veterans with issues such as job training and readjustment, and to curb the suicide rate among veterans.

The caucus, co-formed with U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar, a Texas Democrat, will hold briefings with leading experts on veterans' health care...

Since 2003, approximately 40,000 U.S. troops have been diagnosed with a mental illness, said Kuhl, R-Hammond-sport.

The Canandaigua Veterans Affairs Medical Center, located in the 29th Congressional District, specializes in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and runs a national suicide prevention hotline...

Who might complicate Obama campaign?

BY CHRISTOPHER WILLS Associated Press Writer

SPRINGFIELD, III. | Who's Tony Rezko? William Ayers? Few Americans know, but they probably will by Election Day.



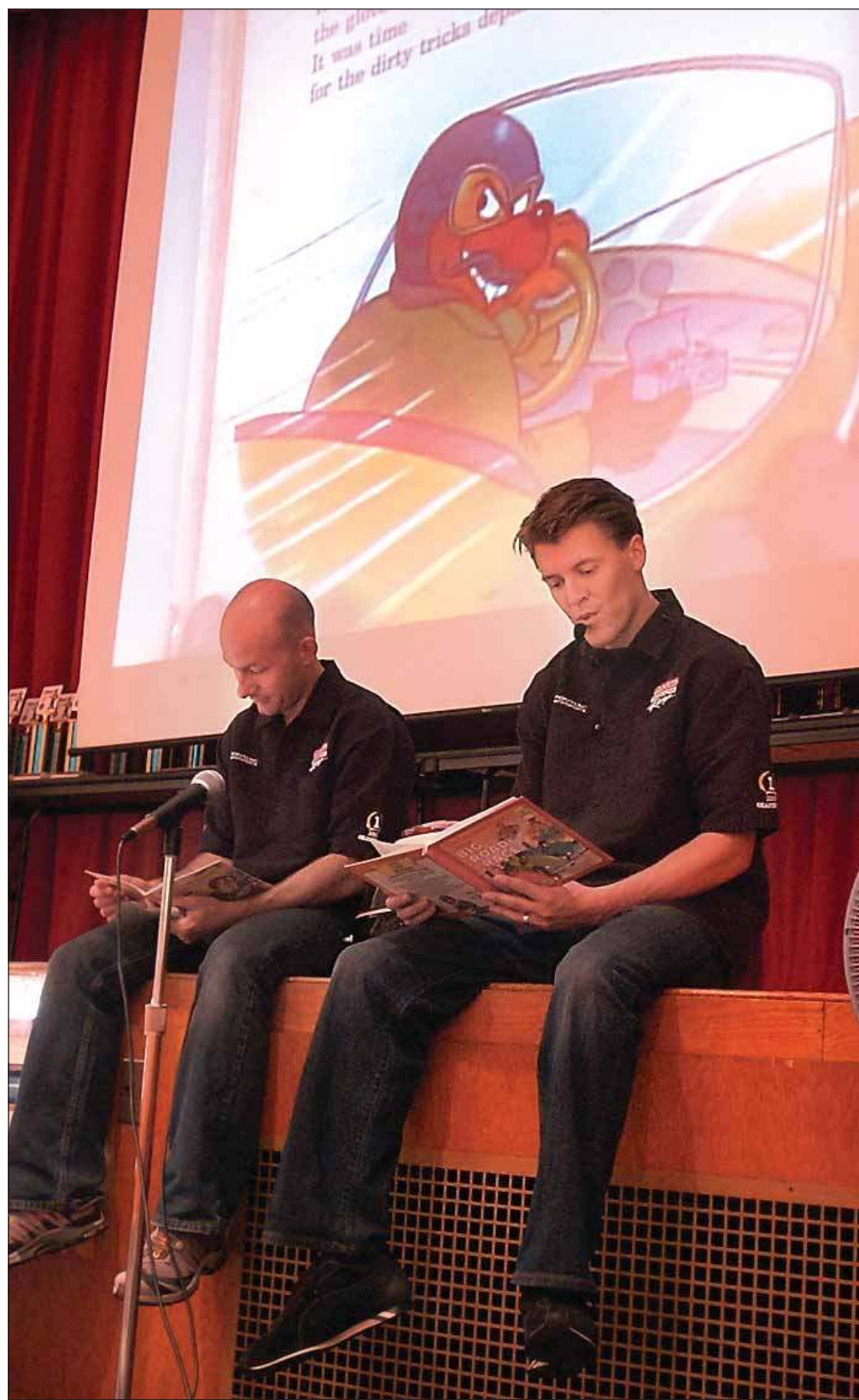
Rezko is a Chicago businessman, convicted of more than a dozen charges this week. Ayers is a professor - and former member of the radical Weather Underground. Both have ties to Barack Obama and may well show up in anti-Obama ads you'll be seeing before long.

These days, presidential candidates can expect to have every personal relationship, new or ancient, inspected like a crime scene on "CSI." Then, if there's political hay to be made, a version of the details is quickly out.

SEE OBAMA | 8A

INSIDE

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JASON COX | THE LEADER

Alex Gurney, (right) codriver of the Rolex Sports Car Series #99 GAINSCO/ Bob Stallings Racing team, along with Jon Fogarty, read "Berenstain Bears and the Big Road Race" to children at Watkins Glen Elementary School Thursday morning.

Racing stars have great stories to tell

BY MARY PERHAM leaderbath@yahoo.com

WATKINS GLEN | Roughly 300 elementary school students were practically hopping from the excitement of having champion Grand Am drivers in the Watkins Glen Elementary School auditorium Thursday morning.

But the thrill of race cars wasn't why the kids were riveted to what Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty said.

The two men, defending champions of the Grand-Am - Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen, sat themselves down on the edge of the

stage, slipped their helmets off to the side and opened up "The Berenstain Bears and the Big Road Race," followed by "Just Say Please" by Mercer Mayer.

It wasn't the first time the men have read to children in class settings, but

SEERACING | 8A

NYSEG urges customers to conserve

Temps move into 90s this weekend

THE LEADER STAFF

ELMIRA | Summer-like weather will be in the region for the next couple of days with temperatures hitting the low 90s.

While that may be welcome news for some, the hot weather could cause some problems for the region's largest energy supplier.

It could also pose some health threats to those who get too much exposure.

NYSEG is urging its customers to conserve power through early next week when temperatures are expected to return to more seasonal ranges.

The reason is that the weather will create a spike in electrical use, especially from air conditioners, at a time when a major transformer in the Elmira area is out of service.

"We are continuing to take all the feasible steps to lessen potential problems that could result from the loss of the bulk-power transformer and the additional stress it will put

See the full weather forecast on page 8A.

on our electricity delivery system," said Keith Lorenzetti, NYSEG director - regional operations. "Anything customers can do to conserve electricity and help lessen the stress on the electricity delivery system over the next few days will be a big help."

NYSEG customers can conserve energy by:

- Using fans instead of air conditioners where possible.
Setting air conditioner thermostats at 78 or above.
Closing shades and blinds to keep rooms cooler.
Limiting use of electric water heaters, stoves, dishwashers, dryers and pool equipment.
Turning off unneeded lights and appliances.

The Steuben County Office of Emergency Management issued a warning Thursday that heat indexes could exceed 100 degrees. They urge residents to limit their exposure, drink plenty of water and avoid strenuous activity.

Kuhl says he's willing to debate

BY JOE DUNNING jdunning@the-leader.com

WASHINGTON | U.S. Rep. John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr. said he's willing to debate his challenger, Democrat Eric Massa, but can't yet commit to any specific date or location.

Massa, D-Corning, sent a letter to Kuhl dated Wednesday asking him to agree to one debate in each of the eight counties that make up the 29th Congressional District.

It mirrored a recent challenge Sen. John McCain made to Sen. Barack Obama to hold several town-hall-style debates leading up to the presidential election in November. Massa said he did not receive a response to a pre-

vious letter sent to Kuhl on Jan. 28 suggesting debates.

"I hope that you will join me in sending a clear message to the voters of the 29th Congressional District that neither

of us is afraid to be held accountable for our positions and beliefs," Massa wrote. "The working families of the 29th Congressional District deserve answers. The time for a positive exchange of ideas is now."

Kuhl, R-Hammond-sport, said Thursday in a teleconference from Washington that it's premature to begin scheduling debates because neither candidate is guaranteed a spot on the November ballot.

SEE DEBATE | 8A

Accused 9/11 mastermind: I welcome death

BY ANDREW O. SELSKY Associated Press Writer

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, CUBA |

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the reputed mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks, told a military judge at his arraignment Thursday that he wel-

comes the death penalty as a way to martyrdom and ridiculed the proceedings as an "inquisition."

In his first public appearance since his capture five years ago, Mohammed wore dark-framed prison-issue glasses, a turban and a bushy, gray beard, and was notice-

ably thinner - a stark change from the slovenly man with disheveled hair, unshaven face and T-shirt from the widely distributed photograph taken after his seizure in Pakistan.

He and four other

SEE 9/11 | 8A



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS In this photograph of a sketch by courtroom artist Janet Hamlin, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, right, and Waleed bin Attash, two of the Sept. 11 attacks co-conspirator suspects, attend their arraignment Thursday.



TODAY'S LOCAL WEATHER



HAZY, HUMID, HOT WETM 18 Storm Team seven-day forecast | 8A

YOUR GUIDE TO TODAY'S LEADER

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