



The LEADER

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TODAY'S OPINION:

THE ISSUE | Merrill Lynch executive walks away with a cool \$25 million.

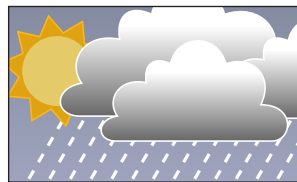
OUR OPINION | Barack Obama's administration should correct loopholes in bailout fund rules that allow companies to mismanage their money while Americans pay.

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TODAY'S LOCAL WEATHER



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Massa: Orientation not business as usual



ERIC WENSEL | THE LEADER

U.S. Representative-elect Eric Massa talks to reporters at *The Leader* about his plans once he gets into office.

Freshman congressman talks about what must change in Washington and S. Tier

BY BOB RECOTTA
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CORNING | U.S. Rep.-elect Eric Massa touched on numerous subjects during an interview at *The Leader* last week.

The Corning Democrat talked about his orientation, his legislative priorities, Barack Obama and the auto industry bailout.

The interview appears in question and answer form to give more insight into the freshman congressman and his detailed responses. Massa gets sworn in to office on Tuesday in Washington, D.C.

What have you been doing since the end of the campaign and how is the transition going?

"I went to Washington. I sat down in a room for freshman orientation. They came around and collected all the books and threw

"I went to Washington. I sat down in a room for freshman orientation. They came around and collected all the books and threw them away."

Eric Massa U.S. Representative-elect

them away.

Our freshman orientation was during the week the automobile crisis broke. The leadership in the House said 'Parking spaces? Office assignments, who cares?' and they literally threw us out into meetings all relevant to the automobile bridge loan bailout and saving the domestic auto industry. It really was not business as usual.

There was a terrible sense of urgency in Washington I have never seen before, and I am not a

total stranger to Washington. It was fascinating to watch from my point of view. Business as usual is not what's going on.

For me personally, I've been involved with interviewing personnel to build a constituent services staff, which is what I'm very focused on.

For us, the most important thing that we're going to do is constituent services - locating office space, getting offices built, connecting phones. All of those seemingly mundane things."

What are your legislative priorities?

"That's easy. The new administration has made it very clear Congress will work with them closely to stimulate this economy and to stave off a great depression, which is now what all the experts

SEE CONGRESSMAN | 8A

Muccini renamed deputy mayor

BY JEFFERY SMITH
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CORNING | Corning City Councilman Frank Muccini will remain deputy mayor in 2009.

Mayor Tom Reed will ask the City Council to confirm Muccini's appointment at 7 p.m. Tuesday night at City Hall.



MUCCINI

If approved, Muccini, R-5, will take his oath of office moments after the vote.

"It's very nice to be reappointed," Muccini said. "I'm glad the mayor has faith in me and Tom has done an excellent job in office. I look forward to supporting him again and I am sure he will continue to do an excellent job."

Muccini was first appointed deputy mayor last year. He is the senior Republican on the council, serving more than 20 years.

The appointment will last one year.

Muccini said he is looking forward to working with Reed and the rest of the City Council.

"I'm confident we will all work well together," Muccini said.

Israeli ground forces roll into Gaza

BY IBRAHIM BARZAK
AND JASON KEYSER
Associated Press Writers

GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP | Israeli tanks and troops launched a ground offensive in the Gaza Strip Saturday night with officials saying they expected a lengthy fight with Hamas militants in the densely populated territory after eight days of punishing airstrikes failed to halt rocket attacks on Israel.

Hamas vowed that Gaza would be a "graveyard" for Israeli forces.

"This will not be easy and it will not be short," Israeli Defense

SEE GAZA | 6A



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Palestinians collect belongings in the rubble of the destroyed house of senior Hamas militant Nizal Rayan after an Israeli airstrike hit a nearby mosque Friday in the Jebaliya refugee camp, northern Gaza Strip.

Analysis: Bush's personality shapes legacy

BY BEN FELLER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON | President George W. Bush will be judged on what he did. He will also be remembered for what he's like: a fast-moving, phrase-mangling Texan who stays upbeat even though his country is not.

For eight years, the nation has been led by a guy who relaxes by clearing brush in scorching heat and taking breakneck bike rides through

the woods. He dishes out nicknames to world leaders, and even gave the German chancellor an impromptu, perhaps unwelcome, neck rub. He's annoyed when kept waiting and

SEE BUSH | 6A

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In this June 2003 file photo, President George W. Bush holds up a striped bass that he caught while fishing off the coast of Kennebunk, Maine.

