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SHOOTING IN NORTHVIEW HEIGHTS



Michael Henninger/Post-Gazette

Residents comfort a family member (in red shirt) of Jerome Williams, who was shot and killed Monday by city police officers near Penfort Street in Northview Heights.

Police shoot, kill youth, 15, following failed burglary

Boy fired on police during foot chase; two others sought

By Vivian Nereim and Bill Schackner
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Two police officers shot and killed a 15-year-old boy Monday when he fired a gun at them after a botched burglary in Northview Heights,

according to Pittsburgh Police Chief Nate Harper.

Jerome Williams was pronounced dead at the scene. Two other teenaged boys involved in the burglary escaped.

The confrontation began at about 3 p.m., when a woman called 911 to report that two to three people with guns had broken into her home. Two officers responding to the scene chased three boys as they fled the home, but Jerome turned toward them

■ See video coverage from the scene at post-gazette.com.

and ignored their orders to drop his gun, Chief Harper said.

Instead, Jerome fired multiple shots at the officers, he said. One or both of the officers fired multiple shots back, and the boy was fatally struck in the head.

Jerome's relatives could not be reached for comment.

The exchange of gunfire

erupted by a wooded area near Lamar Street. Police said Jerome ran there from Mount Pleasant Road, the street where the home was burglarized and the main artery of Northview Heights, a public housing community.

Residents said they heard about 20 shots fired.

Monday night, police were still searching for the two other boys. The woman whose home was burglarized

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ELECTION 2010

Gubernatorial hopefuls debate

Session in Hershey mostly cordial; Sestak a no-show in Senate debate

By James O'Toole
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

HERSHEY — The candidates for governor traded criticisms on who could best cut spending and spur the state's economy last night as their first general election debate kicked off the stretch drive to the Nov. 2 election.

Before a business-friendly audience, both candidates said they would not raise state taxes while contending that their opponent was failing to tell the full story of their fiscal positions. With the national campaign climate seeming to favor the Republicans, the burden was on Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato to shake things up, but their generally civil exchange before the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry offered no apparent catalyst for a dramatic change in the dynamics of their race.

Mr. Onorato repeatedly mocked Attorney General Tom Corbett for what he characterized as shifting interpretations of the Republican's months-old pledge not to raise taxes. Mr. Corbett took the Democrat's boast that he had not raised property taxes in seven budgets as an occasion to remind the audience that Mr. Onorato, in enacting a tax

on alcoholic drinks to fund the Port Authority, had "created the largest single largest tax increase in the history of Allegheny County."

Mr. Onorato characterized the Republican tax pledge as a "hokey gimmick," insisting that his belt-tightening record in office avoided the need to sign a similar pledge. Mr. Onorato repeatedly said he would not raise taxes, with the exception of enacting a "competitive," severance tax on Marcellus Shale natural gas deposits.

Mr. Corbett said such a tax would inhibit development of the gas industry. He argued that the state would still reap revenue from the burgeoning industry through royalty payments for drilling on state land and through the taxes levied on the growing income of private landowners.

The candidates split on whether the state could afford new spending for education. Mr. Onorato said that by prioritizing and making cuts in other areas, the state could increase its share of basic education funding, a trend that he said would save the state money in the long run. Mr. Corbett said that the state simply could not afford basic edu-

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Bradley C Bowser

Robert French, director of Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, left, and James Powers, director of Pennsylvania Homeland Security, right, are sworn in at the start of Monday's state Senate committee hearing.

Security bulletins called 'unsubstantiated gossip'

Lawmakers, officials question anti-terror contract at hearing

By Tracie Mauriello and Tom Barnes
Post-Gazette Harrisburg Bureau

HARRISBURG — At best, security bulletins provided by a state contractor were useless compilations of news reports and Internet postings.

At worst, they were inflammatory memos that wasted police officers' time, confused recipients, provided inaccurate information and branded peaceful activists as potential threats to public safety.

That's what panelists and lawmakers said Monday during a three-hour hearing of the Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

Chairwoman Lisa Baker, R-Luzerne, called the hearing to delve into a controversial \$103,000 contract with

the Institute of Terrorism Research and Response, which provided security bulletins meant to warn of potential threats to the infrastructure.

Ms. Baker said she was "absolutely stunned" on Monday after hearing that the Pennsylvania State Police had been questioning the contract for 10 months and had — to no avail — alerted Homeland Security Director James F. Powers Jr. to numerous inaccuracies and inflammatory entries in the bulletins.

"I liken it to reading the National Enquirer. Every once in a while they have something right, but most of the time it is unsubstantiated gossip," testified Maj. George Bivens of the state police's Bureau of Criminal Investigations.

He said the bulletins resulted in a waste of police effort to address nonexistent threats based on biased analyses by amateur investigators.

Sen. Jim Ferlo, D-Highland

SEE **SECURITY**, PAGE A-14

Southwest appears primed for takeoff

Discount airliner's bid to buy AirTran could bump off US Airways as dominant carrier

By Mark Belko
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Southwest Airlines could knock US Airways off its long-held perch as the region's dominant carrier with its proposed \$3.4 billion acquisition of AirTran Airways.

In Pittsburgh, the acquisition,

announced Monday, also could reduce the number of nonstop flights available to Orlando, Fla., Fla., a popular vacation destination now served by both airlines. But it's unlikely to cause great upheaval for local travelers.

Perhaps the biggest change would be symbolic, with Dallas-based Southwest likely becoming

the airport's dominant carrier, a position held by US Airways since at least the early 1980s.

"It would be the first time in many, many, many years that US Airways wasn't the dominant passenger count carrier,"

SEE **SOUTHWEST**, PAGE A-11

U.S. raises stakes in Pakistan campaign

By Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — The CIA has drastically increased its bombing campaign in the mountains of Pakistan in recent weeks, U.S. officials said, strikes that are part of an effort by military and intelligence operatives to try to cripple the Taliban in a stronghold being used to plan attacks against U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

As part of its covert war in the region, the CIA has launched 20

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Most Americans uninformed about religions, survey says

By Ann Rodgers
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Atheists/agnostics, Jews score best on religious-knowledge survey

Average number of correct answers of 32 questions:

Atheist/agnostic	20.9
Jewish	20.5
Mormon	20.3
White evangelical Protestant	17.6
White Catholic	16.0
White mainline Protestant	15.8
Nothing in particular	15.2
Black Protestant	13.4
Hispanic Catholic	11.6
Total average	16.0

Source: Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, May 19-June 6, 2010
Post-Gazette

Atheists/agnostics, Jews and Mormons scored best in a national quiz on religious knowledge, getting about 20 out of 32 questions right, according to a survey from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Mid-level performers were white evangelicals, white Catholics and white mainline Protestants, while those who said they were "nothing in particular," black Protestants and Hispanic Catholics scored lowest.

While most Americans claim religion is very important to them, "large numbers of Americans are uninformed about the tenets, practices, history and leading figures of major faith traditions — including their

own. Most people also think the constitutional restrictions on religion in public schools are stricter than they really are," according to "The U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey."

The bilingual survey interviewed 3,412 adults. Most questions were multiple choice. The average score was 16 of 32.

The highest number of people, 89 percent, knew that public school teachers can't lead classroom prayers. But only 23 percent knew that public school teachers can read from the Bible as an example of literature.

Among other high scores: 85 percent knew that atheists don't believe in God, 82 percent knew that Mother Teresa was Catholic and 71 percent knew that

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