

FINAL SCORES

'I'm not the same man'

A year after the crash that cost him his image, marriage, a look at what's ahead for Tiger Woods, 1-2C



By Peter Morrison, AP

USA TODAY

NO. 1 IN THE US



Stuttering 'King' is eloquent

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By Laurie Sparham.

Helena Bonham Carter: Plays Queen Mother in The King's Speech.

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Marines in Afghanistan. Photo by Paula Bronstein, Getty Images

A taste of home for troops

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To spare her workers, boss fires herself

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By Jeffrey Camp



By Tim Loehrke, USA TODAY

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Shelby leaner, still as mean

Company will build fewer cars and concentrate on parts, speed shop, 3B

Abortion vote website raises questions

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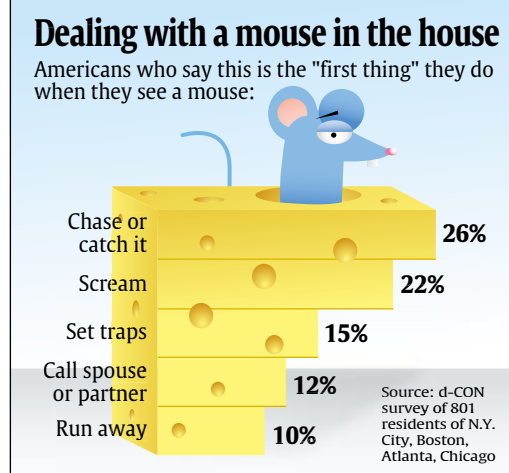
The Nutcracker in 3D is one example of classic fare getting spruced up with special effects, 7D.

American Dream not lost

Although optimism is down, slim majority holds hope for future, poll shows, 6A



USA TODAY Snapshots®



By Anne R. Carey and Veronica Salazar, USA TODAY

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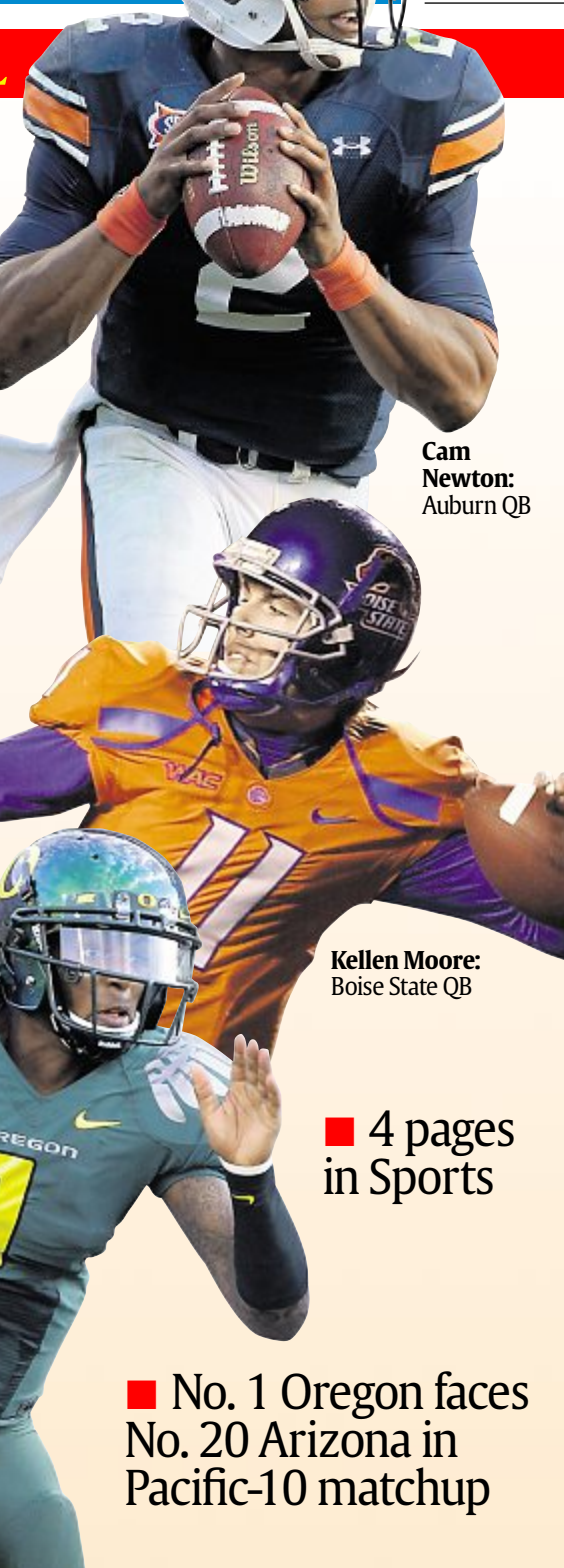
COLLEGE FOOTBALL

High-stakes rivalry weekend

No. 2 Auburn looks to stay on title track vs. No. 11 Alabama

No. 19 Nevada vows to break losing streak against No. 3 Boise State

Darron Thomas: Oregon QB



Cam Newton: Auburn QB

Kellen Moore: Boise State QB

4 pages in Sports

No. 1 Oregon faces No. 20 Arizona in Pacific-10 matchup

Newton by Dave Martin, AP; Moore by Joe Jaszewski, AP; Thomas by Kirby Lee, US Presswire

Added urgency to Katrina cases

Prosecutors generally only have 4 or 5 years to file fraud charges

By Peter Eisler USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — As statutes of limitations loom, law enforcement officials are pushing to bring charges in the remaining cases of fraud linked to Hurricane Katrina.

A federal task force set up to police Katrina-related fraud has filed 42 cases this year, down from 124 last year and far off the peak of 409 in 2006, federal data show. More than half the cases filed so far in 2010 were launched just before the storm's fifth anniversary on Aug. 29, when the federal statute of limitations approached.

"It was obviously important to make sure these meritorious cases were brought in a timely fashion," says Jim Letten, U.S. attorney for eastern Louisiana and director of the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force. "The Katrina cases are winding down ... but we will continue investigating and likely will continue bringing some prosecutions in cases where the statute of limitations has not run out."

To date, federal prosecutors have charged more than 1,350 people with fraud, mainly for ripping off disaster aid and housing assistance programs. The cases have led to recoveries of more than \$40 million, and more than \$35 million in restitution, federal records show.

State and local prosecutors have opened at least

1,000 cases and won more than \$2 million in restitution, says Kurt Wall, criminal division chief in the Louisiana Attorney General's Office.

Prosecutors have a bit of breathing room because many of the suspected Katrina-related scams, from rip-offs of government aid programs to contracting scams, can still be tried because they took place months, even years, after the storm.

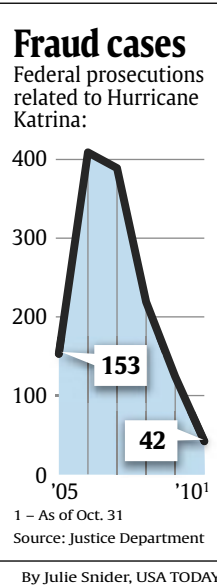
The statute for federal fraud prosecutions generally gives the government five years from the date of the crime to bring charges.

The Louisiana statute of limitations for such crimes generally expires at four years, so the pressure to bring charges in state and local cases is more immediate.

"It's an issue we are aware of and we are definitely (prioritizing) our cases," says Christopher Bowman, assistant district attorney for Orleans Parish, which includes much of New Orleans. "We are definitely starting to see a trail-off in complaints that are brought to our office, but ... I suspect we'll still be dealing with these types of Katrina-related damage cases for at least the next 12 months, maybe longer."

There are no solid estimates of how much money was lost to Katrina-related fraud, so it's impossible to know how many people got away with it or how much they stole, Letten says.

The federal cases announced in August ranged from frauds involving hundreds of thousands of dollars to relatively small-money scams. They included a Texas woman charged with wrongly collecting nearly \$395,000 and a Louisiana man accused of fraudulently obtaining Red Cross aid.



By Julie Snider, USA TODAY

Civilian soldier suicides alarming

Army: Figure nearly double last year's

By Gregg Zoroya USA TODAY

National Guard soldiers who are not on active duty killed themselves this year at nearly twice the rate of 2009, marring a year when suicides among Army soldiers on active duty appear to be leveling off, new Army statistics show.

Eighty-six non-active-duty Guard soldiers have killed themselves in the first 10 months of 2010, compared with 48 such suicides in all of 2009.

The reason for the rise in suicides among these "citizen soldiers" is not known. It may be linked to the recession, says Army Col. Chris Philbrick, deputy commander of an Army task force working to reduce suicides.

Philbrick said investigations into the suicides of soldiers not on full-time-active status have found that some were facing stressful situations such as home foreclosures, debt and the loss of a job.

Other factors have played a role in the suicides, including relationship problems, depression, substance abuse, combat stress and mild brain injuries, Philbrick says.

The rise comes as the rate of suicides leveled among full-time active-duty Army soldiers, National Guard members and reservists following years of increases, Philbrick says. Among that group, there were 132 confirmed or suspected suicides in the first 10 months of this year compared with 140 such suicides for the same period in 2009.

That positive trend among active-duty troops was more than offset by the rise in suicides among non-active-duty National Guard members.

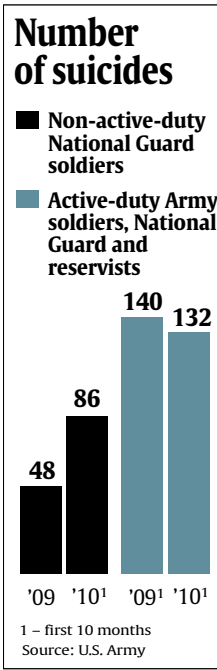
There were 252 confirmed or suspected suicides among active and non-active Army members through October of this year. There were 242 such deaths in all of 2009.

Active-duty soldiers have greater access to programs and mental health resources, Philbrick says. New efforts aimed at reducing suicides among that group may be beginning to have an effect. "We do whatever we can to drive down these numbers," Philbrick says. "But it doesn't happen overnight."

The Army has launched a series of programs aimed at breaking down a stigma among soldiers against seeking mental health treatment. It has also initiated two studies — a \$50 million, five-year investigation by the National Institute of Mental Health in 2009 and this year, a \$17 million research consortium — aimed at understanding why the suicides are happening and how to stop them.

Army suicides have been climbing since 2007, bringing the rate to 22 per 100,000 soldiers. The rate among civilians within the same age group is 20 per 100,000. The Marine Corps has seen an increase since 2008 and its rate is 24 per 100,000. But there, too, the trend may be downward.

There were 45 confirmed or suspected cases of suicides among Marines through October of this year compared with 53 suicides for the same period last year, Marine Corps statistics show.



By Julie Snider, USA TODAY

At L.L. Bean and beyond, high hopes for sales



Retailers seeing signs of an upturn this season

By Jayne O'Donnell USA TODAY

In Part 2 of this series, giant outdoor retailer L.L. Bean and small online gift retailer UncommonGoods let us see how they prepare for a potential economic rebound.

FREEMONT, Maine — L.L. Bean's factory is whirring with activity, much of it centered around the iconic waterproof Bean boot, which after almost 99 years on the market is a hot item on college campuses across the nation. Different workers cut the leather, smooth the edges, sew the leather tops, secure the leather to the bottoms and attach the metal eyelets — at the rate of more than 500 pairs a day.

Thanks also to brisk sales of personalized dog beds, Christmas stockings and tote bags, the second shift here has tripled in size, to 50 workers, and will help

fill about 185,000 orders a day during the peak shopping days next month.

"It's really what we live for," Bean's director of customer satisfaction Rich Donaldson says of the holiday season. "The busier we are, the more overwhelmed we are, the happier we are."

This year, Donaldson and his colleagues could be the happiest they've been since 2007, when many pre-recession shoppers were scooping up \$200 ski jackets and \$150 boots without batting an eye. In 2008, L.L. Bean's sales fell, marking the start of the two-year tumble that affected most of the retail industry. Now, the factory here is running at its highest rate in 15 years.

The holiday shopping season officially starts today, but retailers and manufacturers including L.L. Bean have been



Iconic: Bean boots are made at L.L. Bean's manufacturing facility in Maine.

Please see COVER STORY next page ▶