

C8 — The Berkshire Eagle, Friday, June 21, 1991

Region

In Massachusetts

Medicaid protesters blast Weld

BOSTON (AP) — Gov. William F. Weld said a group of handicapped advocates who have camped in the Statehouse for three days he wouldn't cut Medicaid money for personal care assistance. But the demonstrators weren't satisfied with his five-minute visit. "That was a pat on the head," said Bonnie O'Neil of Boston. "We had been criticized for his policy of not talking to demonstrators face-to-face. Bonnie Clark, who has polio, said the governor he wasn't aware of their concerns "because you have been avoiding us." "No, I haven't been avoiding you," Weld replied before leaving. The protesters also said for a formal meeting with Weld, but he only promised to arrange a conference with Health and Human Services Secretary David Forberg. Weld spokesman Jordan St. John said the Legislature's fiscal 1992 budget doesn't intend to cut about \$200 million in optional Medicaid services. One optional service, personal care assistance, which enables physically handicapped people to hire others to help them dress, cook, write and perform other day-to-day tasks. St. John said the administration didn't want to make so large a cut in Medicaid, but would have to wait until after a legislative budget conference committee resolves budget differences. "We'll have to wait and see what happens in the budget," he said.

Gasoline prices reverse direction

BOSTON (AP) — Retail gasoline prices declined slightly in Massachusetts last week for the first time in two months, the Division of Energy Resources reported yesterday. The average self-service price for a gallon of unleaded regular gasoline was \$1.24 a gallon. Two weeks ago, the price was \$1.26. The average full-service price for unleaded regular remained the same at \$1.27 a gallon. Energy Commissioner Paul W. Grover said prices have started to fall because of weak demand and higher refinery gasoline production.

Baby abandoned in bathroom

SPRINGFIELD (AP) — Officials are searching for the parents of a baby girl that was found abandoned in a hospital bathroom. Joseph Bradley, a spokesman for Eastern Medical Center, said Wednesday, no more than a few days old, was left on an shelf wrapped in a blanket and with a bottle of milk. She was discovered in a hospital mother before noon Wednesday, he said. After being determined to be a good physical condition, the baby was placed in the custody of the state Department of Social Services. "We don't have any ID photos," said Richard Murphy, assistant state director for the welfare agency. "We want to talk to the parents." Hospital officials said she had not been born at the hospital.

In New England

No power shortages foreseen

BOSTON — New England's recession has cooled power demand and electric companies say the region will probably not face supply shortages this summer, despite a sunny forecast. "We don't anticipate any problems at this point," William P. Shepherson, spokesman for the New England Power Pool, said yesterday. The power pool is a relative representing the region's 48 electric utilities. The pool's peak demand this summer is expected to be about 18,800 megawatts, down from the record summer peak of 19,800 megawatts in July 1986. A megawatt is one million watts. Capacity has increased dramatically from just over 20,000 megawatts in 1980, to 23,000, which provides a comfortable margin, Shepherson said. "The region does have a little bit of problems in the next 10 days, especially heat drives, however, because more than the usual amount of generating plants are off line for maintenance," he said.

Feds to hold regional auction

MERRIMACK, N.H. (AP) — Low and moderate income buyers get a shot at inexpensive housing tomorrow when the federal government holds its first New England regional auction, said today. The auction, which includes land, single and multi-family houses and condominiums, will be held at the Revolution Trust Corp. at the Best Western Hotel at 7:30 p.m. "The agency was established to dispose of assets from insolvent firms and savings and loans around the country. The money raised from the auctions returns to federal officials to help with the S&L bailout," said Ben Shapiro, Northeast director for Larry Latham Auctioneers. The auction kicks off the agency's four-day sweep through New England as it holds auctions Saturday and Sunday at the World Trade Center in Boston, and Monday in Stamford, Conn. A total of 200 properties throughout New England will be sold, Shapiro said. Interest has been exceptional, with more 1,200 bidders registered. "We've received in excess of 20,000 phone calls regarding the auction," he added. The two-day Boston auction is expected to draw 1,000 people. Shapiro anticipates 300 to 400 people to show up at the Merrimack auction.

Squam lakers take aim at skiers

HOLDENESS, N.H. (AP) — Water skiing should be restricted to early morning and late afternoon to preserve Little Squam Lake's tranquility, some property owners argue. The Squam Lake Association won't propose time restrictions, but will support them if suggested by landowners, says President Philip Preston. Preston said people are trying to keep the Squam Lakes from being taken over by big boats, as much of Lake Winnepesaukee and Cape Cod have been. "The same among many people is that there are 12 hours of daylight and the lakes are being used during all of those hours for water skiing," he said. "People wanting to use the lake for different uses are getting into a tussle."

In New York

Union sues over prison keepers

ALBANY (AP) — A public employee union yesterday went to court in an effort to stop state prison officials from taking personal protection keepers away from civilian employees in 13 prisons. Civilian non-security jobs in several state prisons are given keepers that they can use to call for help. But the issue for the keepers was not included in the new state budget approved by the Legislature. "It's unacceptable that in the wake of the Seidport prison revolt, corrections officials are thinking about removing these personal devices," said Bard Conwell, president of the Public Employees Federation. "They are indeed our members' lifeline to security staff," he said. Inmate at Seidport state prison, a special disciplinary prison, held guards hostage for more than a day last month. James Platano, a spokesman for the Department of Correctional Services, said the Legislature and not the department cut the keepers from the budget. The keepers are worn by teachers, nurses, counselors and other civilians. The department uses the keepers at four other prisons, said PEF. PEF asked a state Supreme Court justice to issue a temporary restraining order preventing the state from recalling the safety device. PEF has also filed an improper practice charge with the state Public Employment Relations Board about the keepers.

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Cape Cod town tangles with church
Orleans historic group vetoes plans for gothic steeple



Community of Jesus compound on the shores of Rock Harbor in Orleans includes this traditional clapboard frame house. The non-denominational Christian group wants to build a 104-foot tall stone gothic church near the site.

ORLEANS (AP) — The line drawn between church and state has become blurred in this town on Cape Cod Bay, where officials say building a 104-foot tall gothic-style church isn't necessarily protected by freedom of religion. The Community of Jesus, a non-denominational Christian group of about 25 members, wants to build the new 104-foot church at their compound on the shores of historic Rock Harbor. But many of the town's officials and residents don't want that kind of church built in their decidedly Cape Cod-style community, where some of the traditional clapboard houses feature water's edge.

Three wards reject it
"What we got here is a quaint seaside community and this church would be at least 30 or 40 feet taller than anything else in town."

Community of Jesus does not want church. The question for us is not really the fact that it's a church. It's the size of the building and its location. We believe the commission could approve the project, subject to conditions, or deny it.

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Orleans Historic District Commission, which also turned down the project. The Old King Highway Historic District Commission, which also turned down the project.

The Cape Cod Commission is reviewing plans for the church, and was expected to hold several public hearings before issuing a decision, probably later this summer.

Sumner Kaufman, chairman of the commission subcommittee investigating the church's impact on the region, said that the Cape Cod Commission Art does not want church. The question for us is not really the fact that it's a church. It's the size of the building and its location. We believe the commission could approve the project, subject to conditions, or deny it.

Parlane, a conservation agent with the commission. The commission also found conflicts with wildlife protection and the ground-water supply. MacFarlane said "it was unclear to the commission if these things would be affected."

"It was just really significantly larger and more massive than anything else in Rock Harbor," MacFarlane said. The religious community opposed that committee's ruling to the Old King Highway Historic District Commission, which also turned down the project.

The Cape Cod Commission is reviewing plans for the church, and was expected to hold several public hearings before issuing a decision, probably later this summer. Sumner Kaufman, chairman of the commission subcommittee investigating the church's impact on the region, said that the Cape

State will put liens on toxic scofflaws

BOSTON (AP) — Massachusetts companies that have failed to pay for hazardous waste cleanups will have liens placed on their assets under a state plan to recover more than \$6 billion in delinquent bills. Officials plan to sue the firms for triple the amount they owe. "We have been more than fair with these companies and have given them ample opportunity to settle their debts with us," said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Daniel S. Greenbaum. "As long as they refuse to do what more than a hundred of their counterparts

have done already, we are going to make them pay in other ways." More than 120 companies that owed money for contamination cleanups have already paid their bills under a one-time amnesty program. But nearly 60 others have allowed the deadline to pass without contacting the state about paying. "The good news is that, so far, one-third of the companies that owe hazardous waste cleanups have paid up before the expiration of their individual grace periods," Environmental Affairs Secretary Susan F. Tierney said yesterday.

The bad news is that the many others still refuse to pay the bills they owe."

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