



# CENTRE DAILY NEWS

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**WELCH POOL:** Dispute over bike path could limit scope of project

## Renovations hit red tape

By Ed Mahon  
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STATE COLLEGE — Backers of the \$5.4 million renovations to the William L. Welch Community Swimming Pool are hoping that warm weather this winter and cool heads this summer will keep their plans for a summer 2010 opening afloat.

The parks and recreation arm of the Centre Region Council of Governments has already pushed back the reopening date from

June 1, 2010, to July 1, 2010, a tight schedule that will be possible only if the pool can be constructed more quickly than was the smaller Park Forest Community Swimming Pool.

The latest holdup is a request by the COG recreation board, which operates the pool, for permission from State College Area School District, which owns the land, to relocate the Orchard Park bike path.

The recreation authority wants

to move the path farther west, and closer to two neighboring homes to create a shaded area and open up another 6,500 square feet of space to pool guests.

The move means the bike path would, at its closest, be 28 feet from the property of Ginger Suhey, 10 feet closer than it is now.

"I feel very strongly that we do have a responsibility to use our public properties for the general public," Lou Ann Evans said at a

school board meeting Monday, when she encouraged other board members to vote that night to move the path. "... We provide opportunities for our bikers and our walkers but we also make a better swimming pool project than we currently have. And I'm not sure what the big issue really is."

But the board put off any action, with several members saying they shouldn't have been

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### HEALTH CARE

## Democrats confident they'll pass legislation

By Steven Thomma and David Lightman  
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Despite the strains of sky-high costs and public skepticism, the government is moving steadily toward a vast health care overhaul that would at least partly fulfill a six-decade quest for universal coverage and could rein in soaring costs for everyone else.

The White House is ramping up its behind-the-scenes lobbying of Congress. President Barack Obama is signaling that he could drop some key principles of his campaign if necessary to jumpstart negotiations, opening the door to broad tax increases and a plan that could, he now concedes, push people into a government-run insurance program against their will. Senate Democrats also said last week that they were heading toward agreement again after a momentary stall.

"We have a lot of hard slogging to go, but ... I think that we are in good shape," White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel said Thursday.

Republicans, too, concede that the Democrats who control Congress and the White House are back on track to push an overhaul into law.

"They're going to be pushing their version of reform through. And they probably will get it done by the end of the year," said Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis. "Unfortunately, it doesn't look like it's going to be a bipartisan health care reform, or the kind that we've been proposing, because Democrats, quite literally, they have the votes."

The votes? Probably. The details? Not quite yet.

Two big questions still loom: How will the government pay for insurance for the 50 million people now uninsured, and will the government offer its own insurance to compete with 1,300 private insurance companies in hopes of driving down costs?

Obama thinks he's found a way to pay for almost all of a price tag estimated at \$1 trillion over 10 years: by cutting Medicare and Medicaid and by raising taxes on those making more than \$250,000 a year through limits on their itemized tax deductions.

But many congressional Democrats prefer to raise taxes on health insurance itself, which is now deducted from taxable income.

Some propose capping the deduction at \$13,000 to \$17,000 a year, so that the most expensive plans would be taxed and even discouraged.

Obama, who opposed taxing health coverage when Republican John McCain proposed it during their campaign, now says he's open to some version of it.

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## SONGS OF THE SUMMER



CDT photos/Melissa Doss

Above: Hannah Long, 3½, left, and sister Chloe Long, 5, of State College, dance with Araelia Summers, 4, of Mingo, during a performance at the Summer's Best Music Fest on Saturday in State College. The State College Downtown Improvement District and Northwest Savings Bank organized the 12-hour event that featured more than 25 performances on three stages. Right: Matt Harrison, left, and Van Wagner perform during the music festival.



## Soldiers say toxic chemical in Iraq made them sick

By Sharon Cohen  
The Associated Press

Larry Roberta's every breath is a painful reminder of his time in Iraq. He can't walk a block without gasping for air. His chest hurts, his migraines sometimes persist for days and he needs pills to help him sleep.

James Gentry came home with rashes, ear troubles and a shortness of breath. Later, things got much worse: He developed lung cancer.

David Moore's postwar life turned into a harrowing medical mystery: nosebleeds and labored breathing that made it impossible

to work, much less speak. His desperate search for answers ended last year when he died of lung disease at age 42.

What these three men — one sick, one dying, one dead — had in common is they were National Guard soldiers on the same stretch of wind-swept desert in

Iraq during the early months of the war in 2003.

These soldiers and hundreds of other Guard members from Indiana, Oregon and West Virginia were protecting workers hired by a subsidiary of the giant contractor, KBR Inc., to rebuild an Iraqi water treatment plant. The area, as

it turned out, was contaminated with hexavalent chromium, a potent, sometimes deadly chemical linked to cancer and other devastating diseases.

No one disputes that. But that's where the agreement ends.

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Clouds and sun;  
a p.m. t-storm

High: 74° Low: 58° A12

