

News of South
King County, greater
Seattle and the state

SOUTH KING COUNTY EDITION

LOCAL NEWS

Special Edition

Editorial Opinion

William Raspberry
A school-reform program
that's ahead of the class
PAGE B 4



THE SEATTLE TIMES SECTION B TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2000

Dome down date: March 19 or 26

Neighbors told of implosion schedule; test blasts are tomorrow

BY JEFF HODSON
Seattle Times staff reporter

The date for imploding the Kingdome has been narrowed to March 19 or 26. The blast will likely take place about 8:30 a.m.

Nearby residents and business owners

were informed of the tentative dates yesterday, as contractors distributed fliers to the Kingdome's neighbors.

Early April was ruled out because the Seattle Mariners' home opener is April 4, and contractors would rather take down

the Dome before traffic increases at nearby Safeco Field.

"It seemed best to do it on one of those dead Sundays in March," said Pete Pederesen, a spokesman for the demolition project. He said Turner Construction, the

company in charge of building the new outdoor stadium to replace the Kingdome, is anxious to get construction in full gear as soon as possible.

Residents also were warned of a dust cloud that could linger for four to six minutes after implosion, depending on wind speed and direction. Authorities are working with nearby property owners on ways to protect their buildings from dust

and debris.

The contractors yesterday also announced test blasts, scheduled for 7 a.m. tomorrow, to prepare for implosion of the concrete stadium.

If all goes as planned, the test explosions will sound like a thunderclap or the backfiring of a car.

PLEASE SEE *Kingdome* ON B 2

Foes march against
plan that would make
farmworkers residents



Elisa Miranda, 18, joined about 75 others who marched from Capitol Hill to downtown Seattle yesterday to protest the "Bracero Bill," sponsored by Sens. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., and Bob Graham, D-Fla.



ANDREA J. WRIGHT / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Melissa Mercado, 7, of Seattle, joins in the farmworkers rally in front of the Federal Building in downtown Seattle.

Bracero Bill protested as exploitative

BY ELI SANDERS
Seattle Times staff reporter

The Spanish word *bracero* is rooted in the Spanish word for arm, *brazo*.

In the United States, it's a word that has long been tied to the plight of migrant farmworkers — the arms that pick this nation's apples, dig its potatoes and thin its sugar beets, often amid squalid conditions.

Yesterday, the word experienced a small but energetic revival in downtown Seattle as about 75 people marched to the Federal Building to

protest a bill before Congress that they have dubbed the "Bracero Bill."

"Hey-hey, ho-ho, Bracero Bill has got to go," they shouted, using the time-honored fill-in-the-blank chant to vent their frustrations.

Supporters of the legislation, sponsored by Sens. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., and Bob Graham, D-Fla., call it the "Guestworker Bill." It would make undocumented workers who work on farms 180 days annually for five consecutive years eligible to apply for legal permanent residence.

The proposal has broad support among Northwest growers, who depend on seasonal farm labor slumped by U.S. workers.

But its detractors, both in Congress and on the streets of Seattle yesterday, have called the bill everything from "unconscionable" and "unjust" to something akin in spirit to South African apartheid.

"All it is, is sweet-sounding lan-

PLEASE SEE *Farmworkers* ON B 2

'If these people would go out and spend one night with the migrant workers, they would be out marching with us.'

CARMEN MIRANDA

A former farmworker from Moses Lake, talking about the puzzled looks marchers were getting from bystanders

Rank-and-file Democrats make Gore support known

Candidates' wives offer
pitch to party at crab feed

BY DAVID POSTMAN
Seattle Times staff reporter

LACEY, Thurston County — If there was any question about who Democratic Party regulars were backing in the presidential race, it was answered clearly here when the candidates' wives made a rare, almost joint appearance a week before the Washing-

ton primary.

Last night, Ernestine Bradley, wife of former New Jersey Sen. Bill Bradley, spoke to hundreds of the state's Democrats about her husband's positions as most in the crowd continued to talk — and as the state party chairman, wearing an Al Gore campaign button on, stood to the side.

"It's so rude," said Bradley supporter Sen. Julia Patterson, D-SeaTac. "She could be first lady someday, and these people will say, 'Gee, I saw her but I was talking about the stock market and



Tipper
Gore



Ernestine
Bradley

didn't hear what she said.'"

And after Bradley left the state Democrats' annual crab feed, Tipper Gore entered the basketball arena at St. Martin's College to blaring disco music and a crush of adoring autograph-seekers, escorted by Gov. Gary Locke and his wife, Mona. In her brief speech, Gore made no reference to the race for

the Democratic nomination, but instead talked of the contest in November.

Washington's presidential primary is next Tuesday. While Democratic votes will not officially count toward the party's presidential nominee, the Gore and Bradley campaigns have said a win would be an important public-relations boost going into the March 7 Super Tuesday round of primaries.

The Democratic and Republican parties will hold presidential caucuses in Washington on March 7.

After losing the Iowa caucus and the New Hampshire primary, a win next week in Washington is much more important for Bradley. He is expected to visit the state Wednesday, his third visit in two weeks. Gore will arrive in Seattle on Saturday.

PLEASE SEE *Campaign* ON B 2

Wiping away health-care reform of '93

Lawmakers focus on reviving individual insurance plans

BY JIM BRUNNER
Seattle Times Olympia bureau

OLYMPIA — In 1993, Washington was in the vanguard of the national crusade for health-care reform, with state lawmakers approving legislation that made the lofty promise of providing health insurance to every citizen.

Times have changed, to say the least. The heart of the reform law was removed two years later, and lawmakers now are talking about eliminating many of the remaining provisions as they debate ways to revive the state's comatose individual-insurance market.

"It just plain didn't work, so how can we leave these things in effect? We're either going to have a private-enterprise system, or we're going to socialize it," said Sen. Alex Deccio, R-Yakima. "They don't mix."

But the Legislature's direction troubles consumer advocates and others who backed the original reforms. They say lawmakers are about to give away consumer protections just so insurers can make a profit.

"We're skating backwards," said Bob Crittenden, chief of Family Medicine at Harborview Medical Center and a former health-care adviser to Gov. Booth Gardner.

"I buy insurance to take care of my family. They sell insurance to make money. If they play by rules where we both gain, that's fine, but when they start playing by rules where they exclude everybody who

PLEASE SEE *Health care* ON B 2

Growth debate identity crisis for Covington

Warehouse stores in city or not?

BY STUART ESKENAZI
Seattle Times staff reporter

The city of Covington, a 6-square-mile snuggle of subdivisions and pastures between Kent and Maple Valley, is the kind of place you can wear bluejeans wherever you go and never feel underdressed. Of course, there aren't many places to go in Covington.

There's a Fred Meyer, QFC, Safeway and Hollywood Video. And embarrassed residents acknowledge that Covington is an outpost for nearly every fast-food chain in existence.

But it's not a menu of greasy chow that is causing indignation in this city of 13,500 these days. It's a controversy over whether to allow large warehouse retailers, such as Costco and Home Depot, to build stores at the city's crossroads.

"The community does not want to have people come into Covington to pick up their 10-pound jar of mayonnaise and then leave," said City Councilwoman Rebecca Clark, who supports putting strict growth controls in the city's comprehensive plan, which the council is scheduled to adopt next Tuesday.

Covington, less than three years after incorporating, is having its first identity crisis.

Some residents want the city to retain its small-town atmosphere and be pedestrian friendly. Others say creating a commercial mecca that will draw from outside the city is necessary to expand a faltering tax base.

PLEASE SEE *Covington* ON B 2



No Brodeur today

Nicole Brodeur
is on vacation.