



SHIELDS GETS NO SUPPORT AS RAYS' WIN STREAK ENDS

James Shields, above, finds himself on the mound against Toronto's Ricky Romero, who extended his scoreless innings streak to 20 innings in a 5-0 win for the Jays. The loss snapped Tampa Bay's seven-game winning streak. **Sports, 1C**

Police officer loses job over retaliation

A Tarpon Springs cop is verbally abused by a suspect, and an investigation shows that he damaged the man's bicycle 10 days later. He avoids being fired by resigning. **Tampa Bay, 1B**

Oscar-winner Karl Malden dies at 97



The veteran actor had landmark supporting roles in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *On the Waterfront*, then became an icon in American Express ads. **Etc., 2B**

Billy Mays will live on through ads

After observing a moratorium following his death on Sunday, some of the companies that Billy Mays pitched have decided that they will put his work back on television. **Tampa Bay, 1B**

Storm coach learns his job is gone

Tim Marcum isn't sure what the future of the Arena Football League is, but this much he knows: As of Tuesday, the Tampa Bay Storm's Hall of Fame coach doesn't have a job anymore. **Sports, 1C**

More turtles, more caution at beach

Sea turtle nesting in the area is way up over last year, and with that good news comes an added degree of responsibility for beachgoers. **Tampa Bay, 1B**

Car sales slip less than a year ago

In what passes for good news among automakers these days, the numbers for June show decline in sales are less than they were last June. The hope is that it is a sign of stabilization. **Business, 6B**

TODAY'S WEATHER

Thunderstorms

 8 a.m. Noon 4 p.m. 8 p.m.
 82° 85° 86° 80°
 70% rain chance.
More, back page of Sports

tampabay.com

Pinellas to Plains

Jim Verhulst of the *Times* is preparing to ride in the Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa for the fourth time. Even in nearly flat Pinellas County, he finds ways to train for the big hills of Iowa. Learn how at **blogs.tampabay.com/health**.

INDEX

Astrology	4F	Etc	2B
Business	6B	Lottery	2A
Classified	F	Movies	F
Comics	3F	Puzzles	4F
Crosswords	4F	Television	2F
Editorials	12A	Weather	6C

IN WEEKEND
30 BEST BARS AND CLUBS | **BEST DEALS ON HAPPY HOUR SNACKS**
NEARLY 50 EVENTS FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY

St. Petersburg Times

Florida's Best Newspaper

tampabay.com

Thursday, July 2, 2009 | 50¢

Girl, 2, strangled in crib by pet python

The giant snake escapes its enclosure and wraps around the child.



WILL VRAGOVIC | Times

Law enforcement officials remove an 8½-foot-long albino Burmese python from the home where it killed 2-year-old Shaiunna Hare in Oxford on Wednesday. The girl's mother's boyfriend owned the snake, along with a 6-foot boa constrictor.

BY MICHAEL KRUSE, STEPHEN NOHLGREN AND JAMAL THALJI
Times Staff Writers

The intruders can grow up to 26 feet and weigh more than 200 pounds. Their muscular coils can strangle everything from large animals to an entire ecosystem. Once they were unwanted pets. Now thousands of them are here.

They've infested the Everglades. They threaten native birds and mammals. They're taken on Florida's natural predator, alligators, and tried to swallow one whole.

Now, one of the giant snakes has killed a 2-year-old girl.

Shaiunna Hare was strangled Wednesday by the family's pet albino Burmese python,

according to the Sumter County Sheriff's Office.

Deputies say the nearly 8-foot, 6-inch yellow-tinged snake escaped its enclosure at night, slithered into her room, wrapped itself around her as she lay in her crib, repeatedly bit her and squeezed her to death.

The mother's boyfriend, Charles Darnell, awoke to find his pet missing. He found it in Shaiunna's room, on top of her. Darnell, who is not her father, freed the girl by stabbing the snake with a 6-inch knife and a meat cleaver.

Injured, the snake released the child and slithered away inside the home. In a call to 911 at about 9:40 a.m., an unidentified man sobs as he tells the operator what happened.

"The baby's dead," he says. "Our stupid snake" **» See PYTHON, 10A**



Source: ESRI, TeleAtlas Times

What's with all the rain?

The rain may ease over the holiday weekend, but keep umbrellas handy.

BY PAT FARNAN
Times Staff Writer

Just a month ago we were coping with drought: yellow lawns, dirty cars, record heat.

Suddenly, flood advisories are popping up like mushrooms.

What happened? And is the July 4 weekend about to be spoiled?

You may get a reprieve. Most forecasters see a 40 percent to 50 percent chance of rain through the weekend, nothing like the Wednesday morning monsoon that dumped up to 4 inches.

"Keep an eye on the sky over the long weekend," said Mike Clay, chief meteorologist for Bay News 9. "It's that time of year."

But the factors that caused all the rain for 10 days likely will re-emerge next week. Why?

The primary culprit is the Bermuda High, a vast weather system that significantly affects Tampa Bay weather.

This time of year, the high normally is centered over Bermuda, stretching hundreds of miles. It turns clockwise, bringing easterly winds across Florida.

Those winds heat up as they **» See RAIN, 11A**

Rainfall totals

Parts of the Tampa Bay area were deluged with heavy rain on Wednesday, producing a record for the day in Tampa. More rain is expected today.

Tampa	4.72 inches
St. Petersburg	1.33
Clearwater	2.69
Brooksville	0.48

Source: National Weather Service

What's happening?

Get a visual idea of why you can't get outside without getting soaked. **Graphic, 11A**

Unexpected deluge

Tampa Bay area residents knew rain was coming but not how much. **Story, 1B**

Photo gallery

Can't get enough of the rain? Check out photos at **links.tampabay.com**

Alone and adrift, girl survives crash

After her plane went down, she clung to debris for hours before being rescued.

Times wires

MORONI, Comoros — The lone survivor of a Yemeni jetliner crash, who clung to wreckage for 13 hours before being rescued, lay in a hospital bed with a broken collarbone Wednesday,

asking for little — except to see her mother.

But relatives said 14-year-old Bahia Bakari was too traumatized to be told her mother was feared dead, along with 151 others on board the Yemenia air-

ways flight.

The girl was thrown from the plane and into the waves, where she heard voices but saw no one in the darkness, her father told a French radio station.

"She is a very, very shy girl. I never thought she would survive like that," Kassim Bakari said of his daughter, Bahia, in an interview with French RTL

radio from his suburban Paris home. "When I had her on the phone, I asked her what happened and she said, 'Daddy, I don't know what happened, but the plane fell into the water and I found myself in the water ... surrounded by darkness.'

"I could hear people talking, but I couldn't see anyone. I" **» See SURVIVOR, 5A**

Q&A | Heart disease

A question of the heart

Cardiac disease can be hard to detect, but knowing risk factors helps.

BY IRENE MAHER
Times Staff Writer

TV pitchman and Tampa resident Billy Mays died unexpectedly Sunday at age 50. The suspect: heart disease, according to the Hillsborough County medical examiner. Yet Mays reportedly had no idea he had a problem.

The same day, Jeff Swanagan, who turned around the financially floundering Florida Aquarium, died of an apparent heart attack at age 51.

Last week, local lawyer Glenn Burton died at 51 of cardiac arrest after collapsing at the wheel of his

car. And of course, Michael Jackson died one week ago today at 50, from cardiac arrest. Autopsy results, including whether he was abusing prescription drugs, are pending.

It may seem shocking when a man's heart gives out at such an early age. But physicians say they see it all the time.

Dr. Peter Wassmer, a St. Petersburg cardiologist with the Heart and Vascular Institute of Florida, answered questions a lot of us have been asking.

What causes a sudden cardiac death in someone who had no symptoms?

"We've known for years that in

a lot of cases the first symptom of heart disease is death. In 20 percent of those cases it's the younger men, less than 60, that this happens to, not the older men, in their 70s and 80s. These younger men probably had a lot of risk factors. What really happens is there's plaque in the coronary vessels that ruptures. The body tries to seal up that rupture with blood clots. That blocks the vessel, and the heart suddenly goes into a bad rhythm, known as fibrillation, and that's what they die from." **» See HEART, 6A**



DIRK SHADD | Times

Greg Kilker, 49, of St. Petersburg gets checked out by registered nurse Santeadra Jackson at St. Anthony's Hospital on Wednesday. Kilker, whose father died of a heart attack at age 46, has been on prescription medication for more than 10 years.

More matters of the heart on Pulse

For a graphic explanation of the plaque buildup that can lead to a heart attack, statistics on heart failure and more, go to **Pulse, 6A**.