

**SPORTS** Sox hang on to take first game of World Series **B1**

**BUSINESS** Retail jobs still lagging in Pittsburgh area **F1**

Sunday  
Coupons worth \$75

**NFL SUNDAY**  
Marvin Lewis brings credibility back to Bengals **C1**

# PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

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## Clock ticks on West Penn Allegheny feud

*Anesthesiologists want more pay, and threaten to break their contracts.*

BY LUIS FABREGAS  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

The doctors say it's about fair pay. Their bosses say it's about a black-and-white contract. As their arguments intensify,

the spat between West Penn Allegheny Health System and its anesthesiologists has emerged as one of the most rancorous, talked-about feuds in Pittsburgh medical circles in recent years.

It's the topic du jour in operating rooms and doctors' lounges, in hospital cafeterias and at Sewickley dinner parties.

"The doctors are talking about it quite a bit," said Dr. Carol Rose, a longtime anesthesiologist at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and former president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society. "There have been rumblings coming from West Penn Allegheny for about a month now."

At issue are matters of money and principle, of back-room conversations between high-powered doctors and money-conscious administrators.

The doctors' group, known as Western Pennsylvania Anesthesia Associates, threatened to quit earlier this month after the hospital network rebuffed its demands for a fatter paycheck. The group includes 56 anesthesiologists and 160 nurse anesthetists, according to James Mermigas, the group's director of clinical operations.

Surprised executives at West Penn Allegheny headed to court to stop them from quitting. They told an Allegheny County judge the group's two-week notice wasn't time enough to replace them. They argued the doctors have four contracts — at four different West Penn Allegheny hospitals — and they can't just get up and go.

Judge Paul Luty told them to find a mediator and solve the dispute by Oct. 31.

As the clock ticks and they struggle to ease tensions, the end result could impact not only the

doctors' paychecks but also the bottom line of the resurging West Penn Allegheny.

The second-largest hospital network in the region — which controls 20 percent of Allegheny County's health care market — has made a comeback, posting an \$18.8 million profit in 2004 after losses of nearly \$100 million five years ago.

SEE WEST PENN • A8

## EYEING HAVANA



EDUARDO VERDUGO/AP

A group of young men jump into the water Saturday off Malecon Boulevard in Havana ahead of the expected arrival of Hurricane Wilma. Cuban civil defense officials said more than 400,000 people fled their homes in low-lying areas on the island.

## Wilma continues to punish Mexico; Cuba, U.S. next

*At least three are dead in what is called a 'catastrophic situation.'*

BY WILL WEISSERT  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CANCUN, Mexico — Hurricane Wilma punished Mexico's Caribbean coastline for a second day Saturday, ripping away storefronts, peeling back roofs and forcing tourists and residents trapped in hotels and shelters to scramble to higher floors. At least three people were killed.

Waves slammed into seaside pools and sent water surging over the narrow strip of sand housing Cancun's luxury hotels

■ With so many storms this season, forecasters had to turn to the Greek alphabet to name Tropical Storm Alpha. **A15**

and raucous bars, joining the sea with the alligator-infested lagoon. Downtown, winds tore banks open, leaving automatic teller machines standing in knee-deep water.

Wilma weakened to a Category 2 hurricane by midafternoon as it inched northward, with sustained winds of 100 mph, but it was expected to pick up speed today after moving out over the Gulf of Mexico. It was likely to sideswipe Cuba before hitting Florida, probably Monday.

SEE WILMA • A15



DARRON R. SILVA/NAPLES, FLA., DAILY NEWS/AP

Benjamin Bruce, 7, carries a sandbag he filled Saturday at the Bonita Springs Fire Station in Florida. Bruce's family lives in Naples Park and was filling sandbags for their home and their neighbors' homes in preparation for Wilma.

## U.S. has critical moment to better Egyptian relations

*Both nations rely upon one another but each seems to keep the other at arm's length.*

BY BETSY HIEL  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

CAIRO — At street rallies in this capital, pro- and anti-government protesters accuse each other of the same sin — being "agents of America."

A few hours' drive away, Egyptian troops train beside U.S. forces, including Pennsylvania guardsmen.

For a quarter-century, the United States has based its plans for a stable Middle East on Egypt, the Arab world's most populous country.

Ever since a 1979 treaty with Israel that temporarily estranged it from other Arab nations, Cairo has been Washington's key counterweight to the region's Islamic militants and anti-U.S. regimes.

In return, Cairo has pocketed more than \$2 billion annually from Washington, second only to Israel in U.S. foreign aid.

But events have strained the



DANA SMILLIE/TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Col. Kevin Peter of the Pennsylvania National Guard speaks after a field training exercise in the desert south of El Alamein as part of the Bright Star 2005 combined forces training operations.

close ties: the Sept. 11 attacks, the Iraq war, President Bush's push for Arab democracy, the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict — and, now, bolder domestic opposition to President Hosni Mubarak's 24-year rule.

SEE EGYPT • A12

## In Pa., little done to stop gas gouging

*The law is sketchy, and there are few workers to check pumps' accuracy.*

BY MIKE WERESCHAGIN  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Ray Patterson isn't sure what to expect anymore when he approaches the gas pump.

"I saw prices go up three times in one day," said Patterson, 49, of Braddock.

"That was when (Hurricane) Katrina was doing her thing."

He also became wary about being cheated after noticing wild price differences among area gas stations, even those owned the same company.

Just after the hurricane, he stopped filling up at his usual station because he became leery about the quality of the gas.

SEE GOUGING • A10

### MORNING BRIEFING

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