



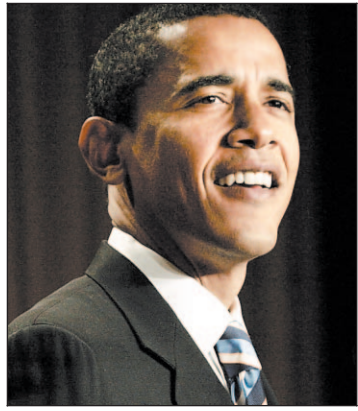
Chicago Tribune

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160TH YEAR — NO. 37 © CHICAGO TRIBUNE



Bloomberg News photo by Andrew Council. Sen. Barack Obama says to look at Trinity United Church's principles in their entirety.

Race is sensitive subtext in campaign

South Side church's tenets spark criticism of Obama by some conservatives

By Manya A. Brachear and Bob Sexter
Tribune staff reporters

The expected launch of Barack Obama's presidential campaign is still days away, but his quest to become the nation's first black commander in chief already is forcing a delicate examination of how candidates talk about race.

MORE INSIDE

■ Obama says he's trying to quit smoking.
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of other prominent black politicians.

But Obama also faces his own challenges in dealing with race as he seeks to frame himself as a candidate who can bridge historic divisions not only of race, but class and religion as well.

Even the simple act of choosing a church can become fodder in a national political campaign, where every facet of a

PLEASE SEE **OBAMA**, PAGE 9

Bears tell city to hold the hoopla

By Josh Noel
Tribune staff reporter

When the Seattle Seahawks lost last year's Super Bowl, the team thanked thousands of fans by hosting a boisterous rally on its home turf.

After the first of four consecutive Super Bowl defeats, 30,000 fans rallied to cheer the Buffalo Bills, the loudest applause coming for the kicker who missed a potential game-winning boot.

INSIDE SPORTS

■ What's next for the Bears?

While cities of less-storied sports history have gladly celebrated being No. 2, the Bears said Monday they want no part of such festivity. After getting thumped in the Super Bowl Sunday night, the team declined the city's offer to stage a welcome-home event, choosing instead to quietly deplane at O'Hare International Airport and begin the offseason.

Bears spokesman Scott Hagel

PLEASE SEE **PARADE**, PAGE 2

Remote Polish airstrip holds clues to secret CIA flights

By Tom Hundley
Tribune foreign correspondent

TRIBUNE EXCLUSIVE

SZYMAN, Poland — At the end of a narrow lane that slices deep into the pine forests of northern Poland, a sign in four languages improbably announces that you have arrived at an international airport.

The 6,500-foot runway—long enough to land a Boeing 777—lies under a blanket of snow. No

planes have landed here in months, and the front gate is locked.

But in late 2002 and 2003, there was a flurry of unusual activity at Mazury-Szczytno International Airport, a former military facility that happens to be near a Polish intelligence train-

ing complex where European investigators suspect the CIA maintained a secret interrogation and detention facility.

Planes began arriving from Afghanistan, all of them registered to American companies. Most of the planes were Gulfstreams, twin-engine jets popular with corporate executives. One was a Boeing 737.

These jets would park at the far end of the runway, where

they would be met by government vehicles. The planes would stay no more than an hour or two before taking off. Their onward destinations were also unusual: Morocco, Uzbekistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

"Everything was unusual, from beginning to end," said Mariola Przewlocka, who was the airport's manager from 2003 until 2005, when her job was

eliminated. "I was told to accept these flights even when the airport was closed."

Przewlocka said she assumed the flights had something to do with the intelligence complex at Stare Kiejkut, about 12 miles away.

Her suspicions seemed to be confirmed in November 2005 when Poland and Romania were

PLEASE SEE **POLAND**, PAGE 6



William Thompson uses an umbrella to fend off the cold wind as he sits near the Madison Street bridge.

Tribune photo by Charles Cherney

Tales from the cold front

By Emma Graves Fitzsimmons
Tribune staff reporter

Deputy Fire Chief Jerome Shelton heard the call on his department radio: An elderly woman had no heat in her South Side home.

During a dangerously cold bout of winter weather, the woman was hunkered down in her home with only two small space heaters providing warmth.

"I wouldn't want to see anyone in those conditions," Shelton said Monday. "I have a mother. I think most people that feel the way I feel about my mom would have done the same thing."

What Shelton did was open his wallet. He went to a nearby hardware store and bought Dorothy Robinson a heavy duty heater.

Robinson, 82, of the 9500 block of South Union Avenue, was grateful Monday night as temperatures again broke below 0 degrees. "God knows what you need," Robinson said.

Extreme cold is making life difficult around Chicago, and people are making do as much through kindness and a can-do attitude as with heavy coats and gloves.

The region will slowly emerge from its cold snap by midweek, but only after what could be five straight days with



Nathan Pena, 25, waits for a bus on Austin Boulevard in Oak Park Monday morning on his way to work. Pena's frosted glasses add to the pain.

Tribune photo by Chuck Berman

subzero readings—the longest stretch since 2000, said WGN-TV meteorologist Tom Skilling.

Cars are stalling. Pipes are bursting. People are as frustrated as they are freezing. But most are getting by.

Steve Stanfel came prepared, clad in two sweaters, two coats, a facemask, hat and goggles as he stood at the foot of

PLEASE SEE **COLD**, PAGE 4

The generous fire chief. The altruistic mechanic. The undaunted senior. The dogged skier.

CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Check back throughout the day for up-to-the-minute weather reports.

TOM SKILLING'S FORECAST

Snow (up to 3 inches)—and no warmth in sight; HIGH 10, LOW 1



Bush's budget beefs up defense

White House predicts a surplus by 2012

By Mark Silva
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Bush, seeking \$245 billion more for the nation's two wars at a time when Congress is challenging an escalation of U.S. military force in Iraq, proposed a \$2.9 trillion federal budget Monday that would significantly increase defense spending while restraining other areas of the government.

The president's plan for 2008 is much like the budgets he has presented for the past six years, averting new taxes and limiting spending in many "discretionary" areas while boosting defense spending. The \$481.4 billion requested for the Department of Defense would mark a 62 percent boost since Bush took office and an 11 percent increase over the current budget.

What is different is the political environment in which the president is delivering his newest spending plan. Leaders of the new Democratic-controlled Congress are challenging not only the president's escalation of force in Iraq but also his conduct of the war in general.

The White House, while insisting that its commitment to military force in Iraq is not open-ended, added a \$50 billion "placeholder" proposal for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the 2009 budget year, a fiscal acknowledgement that the conflicts will outlast Bush's tenure.

"Our priority is to protect the American people," Bush said Monday. "And our priority is to make sure our troops have what it takes to do their jobs."

The president's newest spending plan arrives as the Senate is working to craft

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MORE INSIDE

■ The Tribune's William Neikirk analyzes budget.
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■ How does the budget affect Illinois?
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INSIDE

NATION

Astronaut arrested, jailed in attack

Orlando cops say Lisa Nowak was upset that a fellow astronaut was seeing someone else. **PAGE 3**



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