

▶ **BREAKING NEWS 24/7 AT PALMBEACHPOST.COM**



West Palm launches aggressive bid for grocer
IN BUSINESS

Gay couple's book on 53 years together:



'WE DECIDED TO TELL THE TRUTH'
IN ACCENT



Area schools stand out in state rankings
IN LOCAL

YOUR WEATHER TODAY

Partly cloudy
HIGH: 77 LOW: 68
LIVE RADAR, PALMBEACHPOST.COM
WEATHER SPONSORED BY VAN'S COMFORTEMP

WEDNESDAY Partly cloudy 79/68
THURSDAY Partly cloudy 80/66
FRIDAY Partly cloudy 79/69
WEATHER PAGE, BACK OF SPORTS

The Palm Beach Post

Tuesday, January 31, 2012

REAL NEWS STARTS HERE

Final edition | One dollar

IN THE NEWS

Pythons killing off Glades mammals

A 10-year study suggests the exotic invader is behind a near disappearance of raccoons, opossums, marsh rabbits. **3A**

40 more Syrian civilians slain, activists report

Western and Arab countries pressure Assad ally Russia to call for him to yield power. **2A**

U.S. activists in Cairo seek refuge in embassy

Under criminal probe for democracy-rights work, six or more seek to avoid arrest. **2A**

GOP Senate candidate exits for House run

Ex-Ruth's Chris Steak House CEO Craig Miller leaves a crowded race, endorsing no one. **3A**

Experts: U.S. not ready for oil spill off Cuba

A congressional hearing near Miami Beach follows arrival of an oil rig in Cuban waters. **3A**

Afghans: Woman slain for failing to bear son

Her husband and his mother strangled her for delivering a third daughter, police say. **4A**

LOCAL

Lake Park manager resigns under pressure

Maria Davis exits with \$43,931 severance in the wake of an ethics probe over hiring a friend. **1B**

DCF: Jobs cuts mean more field investigators

To shift money, the agency will eliminate eight administrative jobs, one locally. **2B**

South Tech Academy principal put on leave

Jeanette Jimenez faces firing amid staff turmoil and falling grades for charter school. **2B**

Boynton's lawyer: Pick interim mayor Feb. 21

The city attorney offers a timeline to fill in for criminally charged Jose Rodriguez. **3B**

BUSINESS

Americans see bump in wages — and save it

December income rose 0.5 percent, but consumers spent at November's level. **6B**

Cancer treatment: A Boca hospital plans a \$120 million proton therapy center.

Waterfront repair pact: West Palm's boat show will proceed as planned March 22-25. **7B**

SPORTS

Packers connection: 'Greening' of the 'Fins'?

Will Philbin and Sherman hires move Miami from 'Dallas East' to 'Green Bay South'? **1C**

Peyton absent: Colts great is notably missing from Indy's pre-Super Bowl festivities. **1C**

Heat rallies: James and Wade each score 22 to beat the Hornets after a slow start. **1C**

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POST ON POLITICS Florida GOP primary

Romney, Gingrich unleash final Florida attacks

SPITE TO THE FINISH

Freddie Mac and Reagan are the themes of a whirlwind day.

By GEORGE BENNETT and JANE MUSGRAVE
Palm Beach Post Staff Writers

DUNEDIN — It was the Gipper vs. Freddie Mac on the final day of campaigning before today's Florida Republican presidential primary.

Newt Gingrich, trailing in polls and stung by accusations he has exaggerated his ties to conservative icon Ronald Reagan, dashed to five Florida media markets Monday accompanied by one of the Gipper's sons, Michael Reagan, to try to galvanize the right against front-runner Mitt Romney.

Gingrich was joined at two stops by Herman Cain, a tea party favorite who dropped out of the race in December and gave Gingrich a surprise endorsement Saturday night in West Palm Beach.

Romney, meanwhile, continued to hammer Gingrich for the \$1.6 million in consulting fees a Gingrich company was paid by Freddie Mac, the troubled government-

See GOP, 7A ▶



More details you need to know, 3B

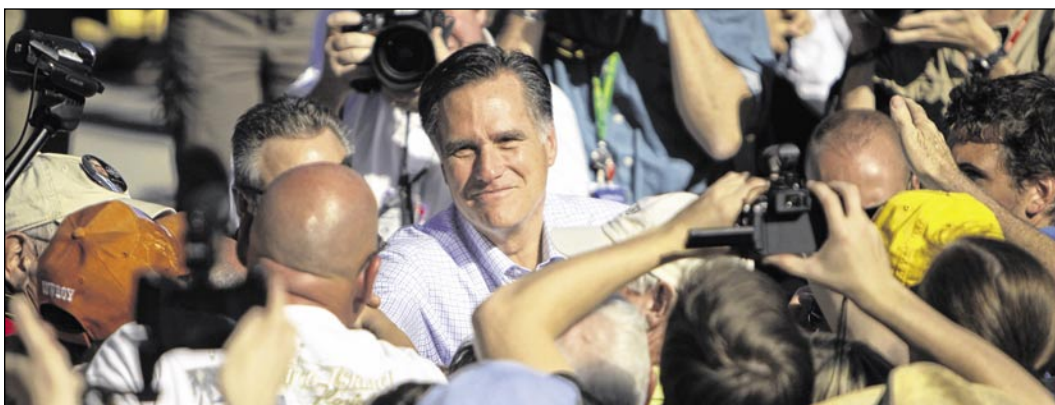
HOURS 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

LOCATIONS

Republican voters can find their precinct by logging onto the supervisor of elections' website: www.pbcelections.org.

WHAT YOU NEED TO VOTE

- You had to be registered in Florida by Jan. 3.
- A valid, current form of identification with your photo and signature on it such as a driver license, passport, or debit or credit card.



PAUL SANCYA/The Associated Press

Mitt Romney greets supporters in Dunedin, where he blasted his rival over Freddie Mac consulting fees.



MATT ROURKE/The Associated Press

Newt Gingrich campaigns in Fort Myers, one of five stops where Ronald Reagan's son Michael appeared.

PRIMARY'S IMPACT ON GENERAL ELECTION

Will attack ads haunt nominee?

Intraparty wounds tend to heal by November, but 2012 could be different.

By JOHN LANTIGUA
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

The Florida primary battle between Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich has been bloody.

The two front-runners for the GOP presidential

nod have ripped into each other repeatedly and enthusiastically, calling each other liars, dishonest about their past political positions and evasive about how they made their money.

Romney has called Gingrich "Goldilocks," saying the former U.S. House speaker is a complainer, unhappy with the political bed he made for himself in the

past and a whiner when he is challenged on his record. And Gingrich has labeled Romney a liberal, which in GOP-speak is equivalent to the Big Bad Wolf.

But campaigns are almost always nasty. The crucial questions are: Is this year any worse than other primary years? And

See ADS, 6A ▶

POST EXCLUSIVE Tourism revenue

County hails \$1.9 million bed tax deal

Online travel firms agree on an amount owed to the tax collector.

By JENNIFER SORENTUE and JOHN KENNEDY
Palm Beach Post Staff Writers

More than a dozen online travel companies have agreed to pay Palm Beach County \$1.9 million to end a 2½-year legal battle in which they were accused of not turning over their fair share of county tourism development taxes.

Tax Collector Anne Gannon said Monday she has settled a lawsuit she filed in 2009 alleging the companies, including Expedia, Orbitz and Travelocity, were not giving the county all of the tourism taxes that they collect for hotel rooms they book here.

The "bed tax" of 5 cents per dollar is levied on hotel stays of less than six months. The money is used to help market the county as a tourism destination and pay for cultural programs and beach restoration.

Roughly \$1.3 million of the companies' \$1.9 million payment will be used for tourism-related expenses, county officials said. The rest will pay for Gan-

See TAXES, 4A ▶

POST EXCLUSIVE

Health Care District

Watchdog sues health district over her firing

By STACEY SINGER
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

The former compliance officer for the Palm Beach County Health Care District, RoxAnne Harris, has sued the agency, claiming the district fired her in retaliation for launching an investigation that included the handling of email archive security.

The suit comes after the Health Care District board split 3-3 on Jan. 11 on whether to accept a tentative mediated settlement of \$85,000 with Harris. Several board members had wanted more explicit language requiring Harris' confidentiality.

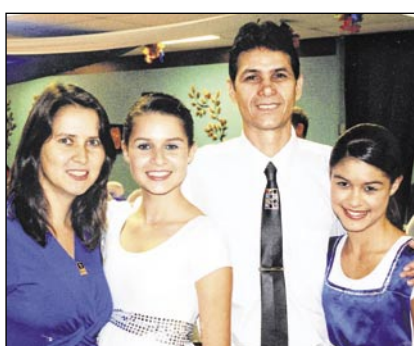
Instead, Harris has sued. Represented by Joseph Sconzo, a retired FBI agent who investigated public corruption before going into private legal practice in 2010, Harris does not explicitly detail in her lawsuit what federal and state laws she believed had been broken, or who at

See LAWSUIT, 9A ▶

INTERSTATE 75 ACCIDENT

Scott orders probe of I-75 disaster

FHP defends its decision to reopen the highway amid smoke and fog.



Special to The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Three members of a Georgia family were killed in the crash: (from left) mother Adriana Carmo; daughter Leticia, 17; and father Jose, a pastor. Daughter Lidiane (right), 15, was critically injured.

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
The Associated Press

GAINESVILLE — Gov. Rick Scott on Monday ordered an investigation into the Florida Highway Patrol's decision to reopen an interstate highway shortly before a series of horrific crashes left 10 people dead.

Scott also directed the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to investigate any other circumstances that led to Sunday's crashes on Interstate 75 south of Gainesville.

The FHP had closed the road for more than three hours early Sunday after heavy smoke from a nearby brush fire and fog

See CRASH, 9A ▶

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