



BRYAN DENTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Dwindling Hope After Landslide in Afghan Village

Anguished survivors dug for bodies Abi Barak, Afghanistan, on Sunday, but more than 2,000 are thought to be dead. Page A4.

X Still Marks
Sunken Spot;
Gold Awaits

By WILLIAM J. BROAD

The discovery of sunken gold conjures up visions of instant riches: Swiss bank accounts and lazy afternoons on faraway beaches, daiquiris in hand.

But the quest to salvage the S.S. Central America — which went down in 1857 in a hurricane off South Carolina carrying 425 souls, as well as thousands of coins, bars and nuggets of California gold — has produced a quarter-century of broken dreams and legal nightmares.

The bones of the side-wheeler were discovered in 1988, nearly a mile and a half down. The finder hauled up glittering coins and boasted of treasure worth \$1 billion.

But paralysis ensued as waves of insurers and angry investors filed rival claims. Recovery of the shipwreck languished as courtrooms echoed with charges of fraud. In 2012, the finder became a fugitive.

Now, with the legal obstacles cleared, a private company working with a court-appointed receiver has become the first to revisit the shipwreck in two decades. It is, the team was delighted to find, still heavy with treasure.

On April 15, the company, Odyssey Marine Exploration, lowered a robot into the depths of the Atlantic Ocean and hauled up five gold bars weighing 66 pounds — worth about \$1.2 million as metal and more as artifacts. That step, the company says, opened a new chapter in the saga of the Central America that will include raising the rest of the gold and exploring the deteriorating shipwreck. “We

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At Derby Day With Murdoch,
Paul Goes Through His Paces

By JASON HOROWITZ

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — On the afternoon of the Kentucky Derby, Rand Paul, the state’s junior Republican senator and likely presidential candidate, spilled out of an elevator in the exclusive Jockey Club Suites of Churchill Downs with an entourage of women with flower-adorned hats, men in seersucker suits and Rupert Murdoch.

Mr. Paul’s guest was a special one. The libertarian brand of politics championed by Mr. Paul and his deep reservations about American intervention overseas have prompted more than a bit of wariness in The Wall Street Journal’s editorial pages, on Fox News and in other influential media outlets owned by Mr. Murdoch. For Mr. Paul, the would-be candidate, and Mr. Murdoch, arguably the most powerful broker in Republican politics, Saturday’s day at the races was filled with betting, losing, drinking and a

long chat over kettle corn. It was part getting-to-know-you and part political audition, and marked a potential turn in the race for president.

That Mr. Murdoch, no novice when it comes to matters of political imagery, allowed himself to be paraded for six hours around the boisterous and bourbon-drenched grounds like a prize horse behind a proud jockey, amounted to a message to more establishment Republicans that, as Mr. Murdoch put it, “I’m very open minded.”

“I thought it would be fun to have him come down,” said Mr. Paul, who wore a powder blue houndstooth blazer, pink tie and Ray-Bans for the occasion.

“I’ve never been to the Kentucky Derby,” explained Mr. Murdoch, who said Mr. Paul invited him about a month ago. “I said absolutely.” He added, “It’s a

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JABIN BOTSFORD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Rand Paul, left, with Rupert Murdoch at the Kentucky Derby on Saturday. Mr. Murdoch attended at Mr. Paul’s invitation.

Rush for Deals
Before Top Art
Goes to Auction

By CAROL VOGEL

In many ways this year’s spring auctions, which begin on Tuesday, follow a familiar pattern: hefty catalogs, more and more art to sell, the promise of multimillion dollar prices for blue-chip names.

But a close reading of those catalogs shows that at least half of the postwar and contemporary art so lavishly pictured has a committed buyer already lined up — before the auctioneer even steps onto the podium.

Thanks to the growing number of collectors willing to spend more than \$25 million on a single Picasso or Rothko, along with the increasing perception of art as investment, this season more buyers are jumping at the chance to put bids in early, becoming what are called guarantors of desired works.

Auction house experts and seasoned collectors see this rush to get into the mix as fueling a speculative fever more typical of day trading on the Nasdaq than the once-refined pastime of buying art for aesthetic pleasure. Many of today’s new buyers, these sources say, are more interested in the art of the deal than in the art itself.

Guarantees to sellers have long been part of the auction business, traditionally made by the houses themselves to secure trophy artworks. Now, betting on rising prices, more outside backers are joining in.

At auction time, if the final hammer price is higher than the one promised by the guarantor, that person makes money — generally around 20 percent of the

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Kiev Struggles to Break
Russia’s Grip on Gas Flow

Ukraine’s Plan to Skirt Moscow Energy
Giant via Slovakia Falls Short

By ANDREW HIGGINS

CHASLOVTSY, Ukraine — As Ukraine tries to contain a pro-Russian insurgency convulsing its eastern region, a perhaps more significant struggle for the country hinges on what happens beneath the ground here in a placid woodland in the far west, on the border with Slovakia.

This is where about \$20 billion worth of Russian natural gas flows each year through huge underground pipelines to enter Europe after a nearly 3,000-mile journey from Siberia. It is also, the pro-European government in Kiev believes, where Ukraine has a chance to finally break free from the grip of Gazprom, Russia’s state-controlled energy behemoth.

In an effort to do this, Ukraine has for more than a year been pushing hard to start so-called reverse-flow deliveries of gas from Europe via Slovakia to Ukraine, thus blunting repeated Russian threats to turn off the gas tap.

An agreement signed last week between Slovak and Ukrainian pipeline operators opened the way for modest reverse-flow deliveries of gas from Europe, where prices are much lower than those demanded by Gazprom for its direct sales to Ukraine.

But the deal, brokered by the European Union and nudged

along by the White House, fell so far short of what Ukraine had been lobbying for that it left a nagging question: Why has it been so difficult to prod tiny Slovakia, a European Union member, to get a technically simple and, for Ukraine and for the credibility of the 28-nation bloc, vitally important venture off the ground?

Some cite legal and technical obstacles, others politics and fear of crossing the Kremlin, but all agree that a major obstacle has been the power and reach of Gazprom, which serves as a potent tool for advancing Russia’s economic and geopolitical interests, and is ultimately beholden to President Vladimir V. Putin.

Gazprom not only dominates the gas business across the former Soviet Union, but also enjoys considerable clout inside the European Union, which gets roughly a third of its gas imports from Russia and is itself vulnerable to Russian pressure.

All the same, a fog of mystery surrounds the reluctance of Slovakia to open up its gas transit corridor — through which Russia pumps a large portion of its gas to Europe — for large reverse-flow deliveries to Ukraine.

Built during the Soviet era to link Siberian gas fields with Eu-

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DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Barry and Candace Crupi’s son Johnathan died of a heroin overdose at their home on Staten Island. He was 21.

Heroin’s New Hometown

Narcotic Takes Hold on Staten Island

By J. DAVID GOODMAN and MICHAEL WILSON

The obituaries have a certain sameness to them: full of praise and regret for lives cut short, marked by telltale details and omissions. The deaths occurred at home, or at a friend’s house elsewhere on Staten Island. The mourned were often young and white, and although how they died was never mentioned, nearly everyone knew or suspected the cause.

A 23-year-old man, a cello student in high school and the son of an elevator company vice president died in March. A former high school hockey player who delivered newspapers died in 2013 at 22. Another 23-year-old man who was working construction died at home in July 2012. Family members and autopsy reports revealed that they died from heroin or combinations of drugs including heroin.

Staten Island, long a blue-collar bastion of police officers and other New York City workers, is confronting a heroin epidemic.

Thirty-six people died from heroin overdoses in 2012, the highest number in at least a decade, according to the most recent

available city health department records; the death rate was higher than the city’s other four boroughs had seen in 10 years. The amount of heroin seized by the Police Department on Staten Island has jumped more than 300 percent from 2011 to 2013, and this year shows no sign of abating: Through April 13, officers seized roughly 1,700 glassine bags of heroin, up from about 1,200 bags over the same period in 2013. That number does not include the 347 bags seized on Wednesday in raids at an auto-repair shop and its owner’s home.

Drug treatment facilities and addiction programs team with patients; informal support groups for addicts’ relatives have had to find larger meeting spaces. And last month, the city authorized nearly all Staten Island police and emergency medical workers to carry naloxone, a drug to counteract heroin overdoses.

“You’ve got kids falling apart. You’ve got families falling apart,” said William A. Fusco, the director of Dynamic Youth Commu-

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Libertarians Trail Meter Readers, Telling Town: Live Free or Else

KEENE, N.H. — In most places, the parking enforcement officer reflects the municipal compact. Armed only with a gadget that can spit out a ticket at the forgotten drop of a dime, the officer quietly serves civic and commercial life by ensuring that meters are fed.

In most places, yes. But not here in charming Keene, where

parking officers figure in a philosophical tug of war between a small band of activists who live by the motto “Free Keene,” and the great majority of residents who were unaware that their city was in bondage.

Keene’s two parking officers, both women, are often videotaped by young adults known as “Robin Hooders.” They track the whereabouts of the officers by two-way radio, feed expired meters before \$5 tickets can be writ-

ten, and leave a business card saying that “we saved you from the king’s tariff.”

Welcome to Sherwood Forest, N.H., where these acts of charity have led to some donations and gratitude, but also to sidewalk tensions, harassment allegations and litigation. They are part of a broader effort by about two-dozen activists, most of them from someplace else, to unshackle Keene from the “violent monopoly” of government and its en-

forcers, including these parking officers who work in weather fair and foul.

The mundane matter of parking has become so contentious that a third parking officer, an ex-soldier who served in Iraq, quit last year because, he says, he could no longer take the close-up videotaping and the taunts that “I had condoned the droning of brown babies.” So contentious that the mayor, the city manager,

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INTERNATIONAL A4-13

Ukraine Losing More Control

As the prime minister visited Odessa, Ukraine, a mob stormed a police station, freeing 67 pro-Russian militants. Above, a woman crying at the site of a deadly clash in the city. PAGE A12

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A C.I.A. Weapons Cache

Once-classified documents give clues on a depot where the C.I.A. has stockpiled weapons to distribute to resistance fighters around the globe. PAGE A14

Young Blood vs. Old Age

Studies show that blood from the young may aid in age reversal and could lead to Alzheimer’s treatments. PAGE A15

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Gary S. Becker, 83, Dies

The Nobel-winning economics professor provided research that illuminated areas of everyday life. PAGE B8

BUSINESS DAY B1-7

New Bloomberg Politics Site

Two veteran journalists, John Heilemann and Mark Halperin, will join Bloomberg to start a site focusing on American politics and policy. PAGE B1

Model of Modern Media Frenzy

V. Stiviano’s role in the Donald Sterling scandal shows the media ecosystem at work, David Carr writes. PAGE B1

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Hitting Himself Close to Home

In Season 4 of his TV show, Louis C. K. doesn’t shrink from laughs and insights at his own expense. PAGE C1



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Of Fur and Feathers

Spring in Prospect Park can be a time of conflict between bird-watchers and dog owners, especially those who let their pets off the leash, as hundreds of species of birds migrate north. PAGE A18

SPORTSMONDAY D1-7

Swat Sends Nets to Round 2

Paul Pierce blocked Toronto’s final shot, sealing the Nets’ 104-103 victory in Game 7. They face Miami next. PAGE D1

Penguins Shut Out Rangers

Henrik Lundqvist’s 32 saves were not enough as Pittsburgh’s 3-0 win tied the teams’ series at one game each. PAGE D7

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Charles M. Blow

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