

NEW ENGLAND IN BRIEF

Vitale's trial is delayed until December

March 14, 2009

The trial of accountant Richard Vitale, who was once a financial adviser to former House speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi, has been postponed from June to December. Vitale's lawyer, Martin Weinberg, asked Suffolk Superior Court Judge Peter Lauriat for more time so he could file motions in the case, including a motion to dismiss and motions to suppress evidence. Vitale is charged with secretly lobbying DiMasi and other legislators on behalf of his client, the Massachusetts Association of Ticket Brokers, which paid him \$60,000 in 2007 to push legislation that would remove the state's cap on ticket prices. He is charged with 10 violations of lobbying and campaign finance laws.

South End husband held in alleged attack

A South End man was held on \$10,000 cash bail yesterday after witnesses told police he tried to cut off his wife's head, according to the Suffolk district attorney's office. Zi Wen Chen, 49, was arrested Thursday morning outside his Shawmut Avenue home after he allegedly attacked his 46-year-old wife with a butcher knife during a dispute over finances. Police officers found the woman covered in a bedsheet and crying near the corner of Shawmut Avenue and West Dedham Street while two men wrestled with Chen, the district attorney's office said. Chen had chased the woman out of a nearby building, grabbed her by the hair, and dragged her back while swinging a knife back and forth at her neck, apparently trying to "cut her head off," witnesses said.

MASHPEE

Soccer coach accused of raping student

Stephen Weixler, a girls' soccer coach at Mashpee High School, was arraigned in Falmouth District Court yesterday on two counts of statutory rape for allegedly having oral sex with a female member of the junior varsity squad. Weixler, 22, allegedly performed the act in his car at Cape Cod Beach on or around Sept. 1, according to Chief Rodney Collins of the Mashpee police. Weixler was released on \$2,000 bail. In a statement yesterday, Mashpee superintendent Ann Bradshaw said Weixler "has been removed from the building and we are taking steps to terminate him." Weixler's attorney, Thomas G. Guiney, described the charges as very serious and said his client was devastated by them.

CAMBRIDGE

New Orleans mayor says progress made

New Orleans is successfully reinventing itself more than three years after it was devastated by Hurricane Katrina, Mayor C. Ray Nagin said yesterday in an upbeat speech to about 100 people gathered for the Harvard Black Law Students Association annual spring conference. "Today we are finally at the point where we are at near pre-Katrina levels," Nagin said. About 75 percent of the city's residents have returned since the 2005 hurricane, and real-estate values and employment levels have grown every year since then, Nagin said. (AP)

CHICAGO

Hub man seeks DNA to prove Capone ties

The lawyer for a Boston man who believes he is Al Capone's grandson filed a motion Thursday for an attempt to get DNA samples so he can prove his familial tie to the Chicago gangster. David M. Hundley filed a legal motion on behalf of Christopher Capone asking that Mount Carmel Catholic

Cemetery and the Archdiocese of Chicago guarantee Al Capone's body remains undisturbed pending possible disinterment. Christopher Capone, 37, has tried without success to obtain DNA samples from known male descendants of the gangster. (AP)

BRENTWOOD, N.H.

Pam Smart accomplice gets term reduced

A man who was involved in one of New Hampshire's most notorious murders as a teenager will become eligible for parole three years ahead of schedule. Patrick Randall was convicted of second-degree murder for holding down Gregory Smart while his friend shot Smart in the head 19 years ago. This week, a judge cut Randall's minimum sentence by three years, making him eligible for release in 2015. Prosecutors objected, pointing out that Randall was involved in a jailhouse assault 15 years ago. Pamela Smart is serving life without parole for recruiting her teenage lover, William Flynn, and his friends to kill her husband. (AP) ■

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