

Good Morning, here are today's top stories and the weather forecast for Tuesday August 10, 2010.

Albuquerque Weather: High 92

Rio Rancho Weather: high 92

Espanola Weather: high 90

Santa Fe weather: high 86

Belen/Los Lunas weather high 94

and now the news:

>>Canadian Prisoner's Trial For War Crimes To Begin Today

(Guantanamo Bay, Cuba) -- A U.S. military judge says that a Canadian prisoner's confession can be used as evidence against him in a military tribunal. The judge ruled that statements made by Omar Khadr [[KOD-er]] could be used when he goes on trial today for murder and terrorism conspiracy at the Guantanamo Bay U.S. Naval Base in Cuba. Khadr's lawyers had argued the statements were illegally obtained through torture. Khadr faces a life sentence if found guilty.

>>Taliban Claims To Overrun Two Outposts in Afghanistan

(Kabul) -- Four U.S. troops and one Afghan soldier were wounded yesterday when Taliban insurgents attacked three outposts in southern Afghanistan. A military spokesperson said the fighting had ended and that several attackers had been killed. The Taliban claims it overran two of the outposts. A few days before, two Marines were killed during an attempted prison escape in southern Afghanistan. A military statement concluded the Marines were killed while trying to subdue a prisoner.

>>Gates Unveils Cost-Saving Measures For Defense Department

(Washington, DC) -- Defense Secretary Robert Gates revealed measures yesterday to help reduce the cost of what he believes is unnecessary department spending. On the table are military base closures, a reduction in department staff and holding senior leadership at its current levels. Gates also said he is considering the consolidation or elimination of departments

such as the the U.S. Joint Forces Command. Gates noted the measures are not about cutting the budget, but rather about allocating resources properly.

>>House In Session To Consider Jobs Bill

(Washington, DC) -- Members of the U.S. House are interrupting their August recess to vote on a jobs bill today. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called members back after the Senate passed the more than 26-billion-dollar bill last week. With a new school year starting, the measure is aimed at helping needy states prevent layoffs of teachers and other public employees. Democrats view it as a crucial election-year jobs bill. Republicans call it a gift to teachers unions and warn the measure will add to the soaring federal deficit.

>>Rand Paul Campaign Threatens "GQ" Magazine

(Undated) -- The campaign for Kentucky Republican Rand Paul is threatening legal action against "GQ" magazine over a report that Paul kidnapped a woman during his college years and tried to make her smoke marijuana. The "Washington Post" quotes Paul spokesman Jesse Benton as saying "we will not tolerate drive-by journalism by a writer with a leftist agenda." Recent polling shows Paul with a lead over Democratic Attorney General Jack Conway in the race for the U.S. Senate. The pair are vying for the seat currently held by Republican Jim Bunning.

>>Mark David Chapman To Appear Before Parole Board

(Attica, NY) -- The man who killed John Lennon is up for parole again this week. Mark David Chapman is planning to ask for his freedom before a state parole board for a sixth time. The date of the hearing has not been made public, but it could come as early as today at New York's Attica Correctional Facility. Chapman gunned Lennon down outside the Dakota on Manhattan's Upper West Side on December 8th, 1980.

>>Statue Of Liberty To Close During Renovation

(New York, NY) -- Lady Liberty will receive renovations in the form of a 26-million dollar security upgrade. The Statue of Liberty will close for about a year following its 125th anniversary in October of 2011. Her crown, base and pedestal will be closed to the public during that time. When the security upgrades are completed, the statue will have fireproof staircases, an elevator and a new exit. Currently, the statue's only exit from the top of the 22-story observation deck is one narrow staircase.

>>Fugitive Couple Jokes They're Bonnie And Clyde

(Phoenix, AZ) -- An Arizona fugitive couple are calling themselves "Bonnie and Clyde" after the notorious Depression-era outlaws. John McCluskey of Mesa is the last of three escapees from an Arizona prison still at large after the capture of Tracy Province Monday morning. McCluskey's fiancée, Casslyn Welch of Mesa, is accused of tossing wire cutters over the prison

fence to help them escape. The pair is now wanted in connection with the killing of a couple found in a burned-out camper in New Mexico.

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SANTA FE — Gov. Bill Richardson's administration announced last month that it would enact budget cuts of 3.2 percent to help deal with a projected state revenue shortfall of about \$200 million.

The cuts will come into clearer focus this week, after Richardson's budget directors present their cost-cutting plan to legislators and the State Board of Finance decides whether to approve the cuts.

The process for trimming spending isn't widely understood, partly because of an unusual provision in this year's \$5.6 billion budget that requires spending to be adjusted based on revenue levels.

Here are a few pertinent questions and answers to keep in mind during New Mexico's current round of budget cuts:.

How will budget cuts be implemented?

A decision on how the cuts, which are expected to total about \$150 million, will be enacted still hasn't been made. Richardson gave executive agencies under his control a deadline of last Friday to submit initial budget-trimming plans.

A plan of action will be presented by the administration to the Legislative Finance Committee on Wednesday. On Thursday, the Board of Finance will be asked to officially approve the decreased spending.

Richardson will ultimately determine how executive branch agencies implement the cuts. He has said he wants to avoid unpaid furlough days and employee layoffs if possible.

Agencies that aren't under the executive's control, such as public schools, the judiciary and the Legislature, will have the authority to choose how their spending cuts should be done.

Which agencies and programs will be affected?

Knowing this is an election year for all 70 House members, lawmakers didn't want to have to come back to Santa Fe for a budget-cutting special session this fall, as they were forced to do last October.

Instead, they inserted a provision in this year's spending bill that requires Richardson to adjust state spending in the event revenue projections are higher — or lower — than expected.

The only exemptions from this provision were Medicaid and developmental disability support programs.

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Mayor Richard Berry on Monday launched a new tip line and reward program aimed at fighting corruption and improving efficiency at City Hall.

The project, called "Efficiency, Stewardship and Accountability," or ESA for short, allows city employees, vendors or others to report tips anonymously to Albuquerque's inspector general, Janet McHard. Her team can investigate the tips on its own or work with police to follow up on them.

Berry noted that the Office of Inspector General operates independently of the mayor and City Council.

"We want people to have a direct line," Berry said. "They don't have to worry about political barriers."

McHard, who's a certified fraud examiner, said anonymous reporting hot lines are one of the best ways to combat fraud. Tipsters can report anonymously or leave their names through the city program. Ongoing investigations will remain confidential, she said.

"You have my promise (tips) will all be considered. They will all be evaluated," McHard said.

The effort includes a \$25,000 reward program. Employees who suggest a successful way to save money will be eligible to win up to \$1,000 for their departments, which can be used on plaques, lunches and the like.

A team of firefighters, for example, won recently for saving money by tightening controls over the Emergency Medical Services pharmacy. The city estimates it's saving \$275,000 a year because of the changes.

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AUSTIN, Texas - Texas Gov. Rick Perry has hand-delivered a letter to President Barack Obama warning about the "dire threat" from drug violence along the U.S.-Mexico border. Perry, dressed in a tan suit and cowboy boots, handed the letter to Obama adviser Valerie Jarrett Monday after greeting Obama at the airport in Austin. Obama is in Texas for fundraisers and a speech to students at the University of Texas. Perry, a Republican, clapped when Obama descended from Air Force One and then shook hands with the Democratic president. In his letter, Perry said there was "mounting evidence of spillover violence" from Mexico and asked Obama to send more resources to the region to "step up and finally do what is needed to secure our borders."

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Christians from around the country gathered near the White House on Friday to pray for God to heal America and that its people would turn back to Him. Pastor Jose King of the Church of God of Prophecy in Washington, D.C. was one of several Christian leaders and intercessors who gathered in LaFayette Park, formerly known as the President's Park. The park is located across the street from the White House.

"To pray for the president, to pray for the Congress, to pray for the senators, and to pray for a revival in America to cover not only America," King said. "From America, this sends a message to the other countries around the world that when we pray here in America, I believe it is going to impact the world." "It is very, very important, because God spoke His Word in 2 Chronicles 7:14, 'If My people, that are called by My Name, will listen, obey, and come together, and humble themselves, that He will heal our land, and He will forgive all our sins, and He will deliver us from every destruction,' Christians pointed to the fact that America was founded on the Word of God, and they prayed that Americans would return to God. "We just thank You, and we give You the praise, and the glory, for Who You are, and what You have done, and all You're doing, and what You shall do. In Jesus' Name, we pray, Amen," Reinhart prayed.

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>>Murdered Christian Aid Worker Loved Afghanistan

(Undated) -- Daniel Terry was part of the Christian aid team killed in Afghanistan last week. United Methodist News Service says the 64-year-old Daniel Terry spent 40 years of his life working as a volunteer with those most in need in Afghanistan. The United Methodist Board of Global Ministries supported his work there for 30 years. Thomas Kemper is chief executive of Global Ministries and said of Terry, quote, "He loved the country with a passion and worked tirelessly on behalf of its most marginalized communities."

>>Houston City Council Prayer Case Dismissed

(Houston, TX) -- A lawsuit brought against the City of Houston claiming prayers before council meetings were unconstitutional has been dismissed. Kay Staley and Ray Hill filed suit against the City of Houston for allowing prayers before city council meetings. The plaintiffs also sued City Councilwoman Anne Clutterbuck for reciting the Lord's prayer at a city council meeting. Clutterbuck was represented by Liberty Institute whose president and CEO, Kelly Shackelford described the ruling as a "great victory for religious freedom." The suit was dismissed with prejudice and cannot be re-filed.

>>Progressive Churches Pray Against Arizona Immigration Law

(Undated) -- Progressive churches across the country are in the midst of a prayer and fasting initiative to protest a controversial Arizona immigration law. Called the "Isaiah 58 Solidarity Vigil and Fast for Arizona," the groups are pushing for national liberalized immigration. The initiative was conceived by the Interfaith Immigration Coalition. Some of the organizations involved in the initiative include, Jim Wallis' Sojourners, United Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, and Episcopal Church agencies, Pax Christi, and the Islamic Immigration Center.

>>Inter-Religious Meeting For Muslims And Christians Set

(Geneva, Switzerland) -- An inter-religious dialogue between Muslims and Christians is set for November. Christian Today says the World Council of Churches will host the event in Geneva. The leaders will address key issues facing Muslim-Christian relations. WCC's Mathews George Chunakara says about 70 top leaders from these communities will discuss inter-religious disputes and possible solutions. One of the issues on the agenda is the recent violence against Christians in Nigeria, in which several hundred people were killed.

>>Muslim Parents In Switzerland Fined Over Kids Swim Class

(Basel, Switzerland) -- Five Muslim families in the Swiss city of Basel were fined for refusing to allow their daughters to attend compulsory swimming classes in school. According to the Swiss news agency ATS, the parents refused on "religious grounds." Christoph Eymann leads Basel's education department and says all the girls were under the age of 10 and the class included both boys and girls. The school system only offers separate classes for students who have reached puberty. The fines came to \$380 per child.

>>Ministers Trade Places To Stress Similarities

(Chicago, IL) -- More than a dozen Chicago ministers traded places with each other in an attempt to stress their similarities last Sunday. The Reverend James MacDonald, who heads Harvest Bible Chapel, took the pulpit at Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago. The "Chicago Tribune" reports MacDonald told churchgoers, quote, "What we have in common in Christ is so much bigger than anything that separates us." Eleven ministers from the largest area churches generated the swapping idea to raise awareness of the Harvest Crusade, a September event that draws more than 200 churches.

That's the news, I'm Frank Haley, cjf for God's Glory alone.