

Good Morning, here today's top stories and the weather forecast for Monday August 23, 2010

Albuquerque Weather: High 90

Rio Rancho Weather: high 92 2

Espanola Weather: high 88

Santa Fe weather: high 83

Belen/Los Lunas weather high 92

and now the news:

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>>Gulf Coast Claims Facility Taking Over Oil Spill Claims Operation

(Kenner, LA) -- Beginning today, Gulf Coast residents affected by BP's massive oil spill must submit their claims to the independent Gulf Coast Claims Facility instead of the British petroleum giant. Attorney Kenneth Feinberg says he's been busy over the last few days trying to reassure residents that claims will be processed faster once he's in charge. Since the BP blowout on April 20th, many have complained the claims process has been very slow and they have not been fully compensated for their losses.

>>General Says It's Too Soon To Know If We've Won In Iraq

(Baghdad) -- America's top general in Iraq says it may be several years before we know if we've won the war. Appearing on CBS's "Face the Nation," Ray Odierno said a strong democratic Iraq would help bring stability to the Middle East, and if that happens in the next three-to-five years, he'd consider the operation in Iraq a success. Roughly 50-thousand American troops remain in Iraq. They'll be responsible for advising and assisting Iraqi troops as they take control of security over the next year.

>>FDA Trying To Get To The Bottom Of Salmonella Outbreak

(Undated) -- The FDA continues to investigate a nationwide Salmonella outbreak which triggered one of the largest egg recalls in recent history. Over half a billion eggs have been recalled in the past week. The recall began with Wright County Egg in Iowa. Hillandale Farms, also in Iowa, followed. Now an Orange County, California, egg distributor is recalling eggs sold to food wholesalers, retail centers and food service companies. There have been well over a thousand cases of Salmonella sickness reported in at least four states.

>>McConnell Talks Religion, Mosque

(Washington, DC) -- Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell says he takes President Obama "at his word" that he's not a Muslim. The Kentucky Republican spoke with NBC's "Meet the Press" after a recent Pew Research Center poll indicated 31-percent of Republicans wrongfully believe Obama is a Muslim. Obama is a Christian. McConnell added that local officials in New York City should take into account the views of Americans across the country in deciding whether to move forward with construction of a mosque two blocks from Ground Zero.

>>Tropical Storm Danielle Expected To Become A Hurricane

(Miami, FL) -- Tropical Storm Danielle formed yesterday far out in the Atlantic, but forecasters don't think it will hit the U.S. Danielle is growing stronger as it marches west, but a front is expected to steer the storm away from the East Coast. The current forecast models call for Danielle to intensify and become a Category 2 hurricane with winds near 110-miles-an-hour or stronger. The experts at the National Hurricane Center say Florida residents should still keep an eye on the slow-moving storm in case it changes course.

>>Killer Bear Put Down

(Columbia Township, OH) -- A 350-pound black bear that mauled one of its caretakers to death last week at Wildlife Adventures of Ohio has been euthanized. The bear attacked 24-year-old Brent Kandra as he went to feed it last Thursday. Kandra died the following morning. The bear's owner, Sam Mazzola, says he left it up to the victim's parents to decide the animal's fate. They chose to have the eight-year-old bear named Iroquois put down on Saturday.

>>Bedbugs Infest Empire State Building

(New York, NY) -- The Empire State Building is the latest place to get hit by New York's bedbug epidemic. The "New York Daily News" reports the critters were discovered in an employee changing room in the basement of the iconic building last week. Bedbugs are small parasitic insects with a taste for human blood whose bites can cause painful skin irritation. It's believed they were carried into the Empire State Building on an employee's clothes. Exterminators were brought in to get rid of the infestation over the weekend.

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>>Trailer Fire Leaves Two Dead

(Albuquerque, NM) -- Two people were found dead yesterday amongst the burned-out remains of a mobile home fire in southwest Albuquerque. City homicide and arson investigators were dispatched once emergency crews discovered the bodies of two victims of the blaze that destroyed a trailer home in the seven-hundred block of City View Drive. Neighbors told authorities the bodies were possibly that of a mother and her one-year-old son who lived in the home. City firefighters needed about 30 minutes to extinguish the fire.

>>Albuquerque Native Dies In Overseas Combat

(Albuquerque, NM) -- An Albuquerque native was killed last week while on duty in Afghanistan. The U.S. Defense Department said Army Private Charles High died when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle and caused it to roll over. The tour of duty was High's second since serving in the Army. He spent all of 2008 on a combat mission in Iraq.

>>Pine Cone Toss Gets Man Tossed In Jail

(Anthony, NM) -- An Anthony, New Mexico man was thrown in jail after he allegedly chucked an eight-inch pine cone at a sheriff's deputy yesterday. Authorities with the Dona Ana County Sheriff's Department say 22-year-old Pedro Gonzalez was drunk when he threw a pine cone at an officer's head after pepper spray was used to subdue the suspect. Police had responded to a call that Gonzalez was intoxicated and had attempted to get inside his mother's house in the seven-hundred block of Church Street. Gonzalez was arrested and charged with battery of a police officer.

>>UNM Hospital Named 'Most-Wired'

(Albuquerque, NM) -- According to the American Hospital Association, University of New Mexico Hospital is one of the "most-wired" hospitals in the U.S. The survey compared nearly 13-hundred hospitals around the country. The association says to be considered among the 100 "most-wired" hospitals, they need to use technology such as electronic patient monitoring systems and computerized medical records. This is the seventh-straight year that UNM Hospital has made the list.

>>Police Find Drugs, Ammo Inside Doc's Home

(Albuquerque, NM) -- Police conducting a routine welfare check last week made a shocking discovery when they found weapons and drugs inside the home of a doctor in northeast Albuquerque. Police say they recovered 52 rifles and ten-thousand rounds of ammo as well as marijuana plants and heroin inside the home of optometrist Phillip Simmons near Juan Tabo and Spain streets on Thursday. Police were there doing a welfare check after Simmons failed to show up for work. Authorities say they found Simmons laying unconscious inside the home, possibly as a result of drug overdose.

>>Film Festival Opens Wednesday

(Albuquerque, NM) -- The Albuquerque Film Festival begins Wednesday at several locations around the city. In an effort to celebrate writers and artists, the festival showcases independent films from around the world. A pass that's good for all five days of the festival costs 99-dollars

or patrons can view the films for ten-dollars apiece. Screenings take place at several venues around the city including the Kimo Theater, the Guild Cinema, the Southwest Film Center and the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino.

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>>Franklin Graham Weighs In On President Obama And Islam Debate

(Undated) -- Evangelist Franklin Graham says that President Obama was "born a Muslim" following a poll that shows the number of Americans believing the President is Muslim is rising. ABC News says Graham weighed in on the issue with what was described as "lukewarm endorsement" of Mr. Obama's Christian faith. Graham told CNN's John King he thinks the President's problem is that he was born a Muslim, his father was a Muslim and the seed of Islam is passed through the father similar to the seed of Judaism being passed through the mother. Graham believes the president renounced the prophet Mohammed and Islam and has accepted Jesus Christ. Graham says, quote, "I cannot say that he hasn't. So, I just have to believe that the president is what he has said."

>>Pro-Life Advocates Needed For Princeton Debate

(Princeton, NJ) -- People from both sides of the abortion issue will engage in a "vigorous debate" at Princeton University. "Zenit" reports the event is set for October 15th and 16th. Jennifer Miller is executive director of Bioethics International and is co-chairing the conference. She points out that most of those who registered are from the pro-choice side of the issue and there is a need for a greater pro-life presence for a "fruitful conference and dialogue." The conference is titled "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Fair Minded Words: A Conference on Life and Choice in the Abortion Debate."

>>Miss USA Steps Into Mosque Controversy

(Undated) -- Add Miss USA Rima Fakhri to the ever-growing list of people weighing in on the controversy over the building of a mosque near Ground Zero in lower Manhattan. In an interview broadcast on Friday's "Inside Edition," the 24-year-old Lebanese born Muslim woman said she doesn't believe the mosque should be built just two blocks from where so many lives were lost on 9-11. "We should be more concerned with the tragedy than with religion," Fakhri said. She's due to compete in today's Miss Universe pageant in Las Vegas.

>>Despite City Rejection, Group Vows To Burn Quran

(Gainesville, FL) -- Members of a Florida church say they still plan to torch Qurans on September 11th even after the local city government denied a burn permit. The Dove World Outreach Center in Gainesville has garnered national scorn after its pastor announced this month plans to burn copies of the Islamic holy text. The city went beyond simply denying the burn permit with Mayor Craig Low telling the "Gainesville Sun" the church is quote, "a tiny fringe group and an embarrassment to our community."

That's the news, I'm Frank Haley, c/jf for God's Glory alone..