

He's fired

New Bedford native Tarek has been booted from 'The Apprentice.' **A2**



Waste woes

How to handle your pets when they think outside the litterbox. **B1**



The Standard-Times

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Chief search down to three

By **AARON NICODEMUS** and **CURT BROWN**
Standard-Times staff writers

NEW BEDFORD — Mayor Scott W. Lang and a 21-member committee of police officers and community leaders have interviewed three candidates to be the next chief of police, all currently members of the New Bedford Police Department. A decision is expected in about two weeks.

After The Standard-Times learned the names of the three police chief finalists through a source within the Police Department, Mayor Lang confirmed them.

The candidates are, in alphabetical order:

■ Capt. Kevin M. Hegarty, the supervisor of the Uniform Division on the 4 p.m. to midnight shift;

■ Capt. Richard M. Spirlet, who is the department's public information officer and its liaison to neighborhood groups; and

■ Capt. Ronald Teachman, who is in charge of planning and research for the department and the liaison to the city's licensing board.

The interviews, conducted

See **CHIEF** A5

No extra cash for schools in Freetown

Voters approve budget as written

By **BRIAN FRAGA**
Standard-Times correspondent

FREETOWN — Despite the efforts of some parents and School Committee members to garner more money for schools, voters at last night's annual Town Meeting approved the municipal budget recommended by both the selectmen and Finance Committee.

The \$18.461 million budget for fiscal 2007 allocates \$10.784 million for the School Department, including line items of \$3.56 million for Freetown

See **FREETOWN** A5

INSIDE TODAY

WEATHER Cloudy and cool; high 52, low 42. **B6**

LOTTERY Daily Number: **3018**; more lottery, **A2**.

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U.S. immigrants unite



JOHN SLADEWSKI/Standard-Times special

New Bedford shows strong support at rally

By **AARON NICODEMUS**
Standard-Times staff writer

NEW BEDFORD — "The giant has come alive!" shouted Adrian Ventura in Spanish to a crowd of 500 to 600 on the steps of the Hastings Keith Federal Building in downtown New Bedford yesterday.

"This struggle is going to continue. If they throw us out, we'll come back!"

Mr. Ventura of New Bedford and Guatemala was one of millions taking part yesterday in the nationwide Day Without Immigrants. To illustrate their impact, immigrants in the United States were asked not to go to work or school, and boycott shopping for the day.

While there were major work and traffic disruptions in many major cities yesterday, including Providence, Day Without Immigrants caused relatively minor business disruptions on the New Bedford waterfront. Several fish processing plants closed for the day, while several others operated at less than capacity.

Mr. Ventura is part of a growing group of immigrants working and living in the city. Once relegated to the shadows, afraid to speak out for fear of being deported by immigration officials, these immigrants have begun asserting themselves as part of a national movement demanding immigration reform for the country's estimated 11 million undocumented workers.

Mayor Scott W. Lang, who was scheduled to appear but missed the rally, has estimated that 8,000 to 12,000 undocumented workers live and work in New Bedford.

"The people, united, will never be defeated!" the crowd chanted in Spanish and English. "Si se puede!"

See **IMMIGRANTS** A5

"We are asking for dignity, justice, residency and citizenship. We are making history today."

JOSE SOLER,
Greater Southeastern
Massachusetts Labor
Council

Many of the city's immigrants gather at the Hastings Keith Federal Building to rally for fair immigration policies. A crowd of more than 500 gathered at the steps of the downtown building to rally as part of the Day Without Immigrants.



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/The Associated Press

Protesters march down Market Street in favor of immigration reform in San Francisco yesterday in one of several rallies nationwide.

Hundreds of thousands walk out

By **GILLIAN FLACCUS**
Associated Press writer

LOS ANGELES — Hundreds of thousands of mostly Hispanic immigrants skipped work and took to the streets yesterday, flexing their economic muscle in a nationwide boycott that succeeded in slowing or shutting many farms, factories, markets and restaurants.

From Los Angeles to Chicago, Houston to New Orleans, the "Day Without Immigrants" attracted widespread participation despite divisions among activists over whether a boycott would send the right message to Wash-

ington lawmakers considering sweeping immigration reform.

"We are the backbone of what America is, legal or illegal, it doesn't matter," said Melanie Lugo, who with her husband and their third-grade daughter joined a rally of some 75,000 in Denver. "We butter each other's bread. They need us as much as we need them."

Police estimated 400,000 people marched through Chicago's business district. There were two major rallies in Los Angeles, the first of which the mayor's office estimated drew

See **WALKOUT** A5

A NATION RALLIES

Thousands took to the streets in Mexico City to support their countrymen in the U.S., while demonstrators in Boston called on President Bush and congressional leaders to pass reform toward citizenship status. **A10**

Perjury case opens with flurry of accusations

By **ROB MARGETTA**
Standard-Times staff writer

BOSTON — Both the prosecution and defense in the perjury and obstruction of justice trial of Fall River Police Officer David LaFleur opened the proceedings yesterday by saying that someone lied.

For Assistant U.S. Attorney Brian T. Kelly, that person is Officer LaFleur.

In his opening statement to the jury, Mr. Kelly said that the officer protected and did favors for Southeastern Massachusetts crime boss Timothy Mello in exchange for thousands of dollars. When called to testify in front of a federal grand jury in 2002, Officer LaFleur denied taking part in any illegal activities, perjuring himself, the prosecutor said.

"This is a fairly simple case, ladies and gentlemen," he said. "It's a case about a corrupt Fall

River police officer." Officer LaFleur has been on unpaid leave since his indictment in 2004.

But in his opening, defense attorney R. Bradford Bailey countered by saying Mr. Mello himself is the liar, along with Vincent Schieri, a Mello associate and the cousin of Officer LaFleur.

Both Mr. Schieri and Mr. Mello are scheduled to testify against Officer LaFleur. Mr. Mello is currently imprisoned after admitting in 2004 to running a crime organization that pressured drug dealers, intimidated witnesses, elbowed its way into the New Bedford waterfront and dominated illegal gambling in South-Coast.

"Who here has a motive to lie?" Mr. Bailey said. "Who has had an incentive to lie and still does? Is it the cop who will lose his job or

See **PERJURY** A6

MIXED EMOTIONS

New York Yankees centerfielder Johnny Damon tips his helmet to a mixture of boos and cheers before his first at-bat in Boston since leaving the Red Sox this offseason. For more coverage of the Red Sox' win, see **Sports**, **C1**.



ELISE AMENDOLA/The Associated Press

