



On The Rebound

You can still get the venerable Chuck Taylor black canvas, but a new generation is sporting a kaleidoscope of motifs and a variety of fabrics.

BY NELL McNEELY, Page 11

**UPSETS?
YOU BET**
NCAA TOURNAMENT COVERAGE, Sports

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

and The Tampa Times

Allains Guilty Of Abuse

GIRL WAS STARVED, JURY FINDS

By NELL McNEELY
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BROOKSVILLE — Nearly two years after disputes removed an emaciated 10-year-old foster child from their makeshift western Hernando County home, Arthur and Lori Allain were found guilty Friday of child abuse and neglect.

The couple's six biological children sobbed silently and held one another while the court clerk slowly read each guilty verdict. The children's parents showed no visible emotion in the limited courtroom.

As a half-hampered Lori Allain, 49, she turned to her children and mouthed, "I love you." She waved to them with her hands cuffed behind her back as she was led from the courtroom.

with the children but glared at photographs in the rear of the courtroom.

After deliberating about 3½ hours, jurors found the couple guilty of aggravated child abuse with serious bodily harm and child neglect with serious bodily harm for starving the 10-year-old girl, who was kept in a locked room with only a toilet for a toilet.

See **ALLAINS GUILTY**, Page 4 ▶
Defenses argued girl had an eating disorder.

THE CONVICTIONS

Lori and Arthur Allain were found guilty of aggravated child abuse with serious bodily harm, 2½ years, and child neglect with serious bodily harm, 1½ years.

Aggravated child abuse with serious bodily harm.

Child neglect with serious bodily harm.

A sentencing hearing is scheduled for April 12.

The child abuse charge carries a maximum of 30 years.

The neglect charge carries a maximum of 15 years.



Lori Allain waves to her six children as she is led from the courtroom.

Fire Won't Put Brakes On Race At Sebring

TRACK OFFICIAL SAYS BLAZE TOO FAR TO AFFECT EVENT

By NEDDY McNEELY
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and CHERRY McNEELY

SEBRING — Race fans awaiting the start of the 2006 running of the Twelve Hours of Sebring should worry about the usual things: the traffic, the sun-screen, the earplugs, the wildness on the infield and, of course, the race itself.

They needn't worry about the blistering wildfires in Polk and Highlands counties that are burning out of control, a spokesman said.

"The fire hasn't had any impact on us at all," Ken Breslauer, raceway communications director, said Friday night. "Actually, we are a good distance from the fire area."

The track, nestled among orange groves and cattle pastures, is about six miles southeast of Sebring in the town of Spring Lake. It is the oldest permanent racetrack in the United States and was built on a World War II-era air base.

The 300-acre brush fire will serve as a backdrop for the race, but the wildfires weren't mentioned Friday on the Sebring International Raceway's Web site.

More than 160,000 people are expected to make the yearly run to this Central Florida track of just less than 10,000, whose name is synonymous with big-time auto racing. As of Friday night, there were no roads closed, and all routes to the raceway were open.

The fire, one of several in Central Florida that have sparked up over the past month, did not threaten homes.

See **SEBRING WILDFIRE**, Page 4 ▶
Some residents decided to evacuate.



'She Would Have Really Loved It'



Thelma's photo by FRED BELLETT

Family members release the ashes of 88-year-old Thelma Signaigo, of Spring Hill, into the atmosphere aboard a sealed helium balloon. The unconventional service is available from the Eternal Ascend Society within 100 miles of its Crystal River headquarters.

Families Find Farewell Uplifting

A typical service costs \$995.

They can't occur in controlled airspace, such as above MacDill Air Force Base or Tampa International Airport.

They must occur on a clear day.

They cannot be done in congested areas.

The balloon and contents must weigh less than 6 pounds.

By EM TUNSTALL
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Signaigo

PINE ISLAND — Thelma Signaigo wanted her ashes scattered at the beach.

So her family and friends gave the 88-year-old Spring Hill woman a send-off like few others.

"We weren't sure what we could do on our own, legally," said Ed Seaberg, her nephew. "Then we saw a brochure [for the Eternal Ascend Society] ... and thought it was a fantastic idea."

They hired society founder Joanie West, who met them Feb. 12 in this west Hernando County burg. West loaded a portion of the cremains into a biode-

See **FUNERAL BALLOONS**, Page 4 ▶
At \$395 a pop, pet flights haven't caught on as quickly.

2 More Abortion Pill Deaths Prompt Changes

GROUP HEEDS FDA WARNING

By GABRIEL LARSEN
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — After receiving reports that two more women died after taking abortion pills, Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest provider of abortion and contraceptive services, announced it would immediately change the way it

gives the medicines. The change partly resolves a long-running dispute between Planned Parenthood and the Food and Drug Administration over the safest way to provide pill-based abortions.

To date, the FDA has received reports that six women in the United States died after taking RU-486, or Mifepristone. A seventh died in Canada. The two most recent deaths and one of the previous four underwent their procedures at

Planned Parenthood clinics, a spokeswoman said.

Federal officials do not know the cause of the latest two deaths. The previous four resulted from systemic infections with a trivalent bacteria, *Clostridium sordellii*. Planned Parenthood in a statement announced that one of the two recent deaths occurred within

See **ABORTION PILL**, Page 4 ▶
Women still will administer drug at home.

Symphony Of Style

Dressed up by designers, decorators and artists, a Beachway Drive hummer cruises money for The Florida Orchestra's Tampa guild.

DETAILS, At Home, Page 11



TODAY'S HIGH 78
TODAY'S LOW 59

It will be race and sunny, a good day for events and spring training camp. It will be even warmer on Sunday and Monday and slightly milder Tuesday.

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