

## Healthcare act faces adversity

by **Natalie Domengeaux**

*World Editor*

The national Obamacare website, healthcare.gov, has been glitchy and unreliable since its Oct. 1 launch. According to IT experts working on the website, the issues are software related. Currently, the Obama Administration is desperately trying to repair the rollout problems to ensure that Democrats remain loyal to the party in the midst of this healthcare struggle.

Recent reports reveal that the Obama Administration was warned that the constricted time period in which the website was developed might be detrimental to its quality. During a presentation given on April 4, a "limited initial launch" was suggested as the best course of action. However, this advice was not heeded and the website was launched at full capacity. According to Washington Post reports, a trial run just before the launch yielded a website crash after only a couple hundred users.

This concern regarding the launch was justified. Initially, the numerical data from the Obamacare rollout was rather disappointing. Throughout the month of October, less than 27,000 people signed up for private healthcare in states relying on the federal website while states with their own enrollment methods managed to enroll more than 79,000 people. This 106,000-person total is

nowhere near the administration's 500,000 person projection for first month sign-ups. Using this data as support, many Republicans continue to criticize the program.

Although some critics claim that the failed rollout is worse for the American people than the government shutdown, this is not to say that the website is without hope and progress has not been made. Despite the complications surrounding the law, fewer than two in five Americans feel that it should be repealed. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius assures the public that things regarding the rollout will improve, and that "there is no doubt the level of interest is strong." As Sebelius suggested, a Nov. 18 LA Times article revealed that despite the initial difficulties, registration for the insurance has dramatically increased in many states including California. In fact, sign-ups in California have nearly doubled since the month of October. Obamacare has also seen great success in Connecticut, Kentucky, and Minnesota. In fact, officials in Minnesota reported that enrollment in the second half of October was triple that of the first half. As for the program's goals, the Obama Administration hopes to enroll 7 million people in the healthcare system by 2014. (Sources: NBC, Washington Post, LA Times, CNN)

## Ferguson's conviction overturned

by **Lauren Fredericks**

*Web Editor*

On Nov. 12, 29-year-old Ryan Ferguson was released from a Missouri prison after having his forty-year sentence overturned. The young man was accused of murdering Columbia Daily Tribune sports editor Kent Heitholt and spent almost ten years in jail before this turn of events.

Ferguson was convicted after his high school friend, Chuck Erickson, came forward insisting that, through dreams, he had remembered the murder. Erickson explained that he did not know what occurred until two years later because of their intoxication at a party. When he made the report in 2003, Erickson falsely claimed that he remembered striking Heitholt and Ferguson killing him.

Despite the confession, many parts of the case did not add up. Erikson, who was using drugs at the time of the murder, stated that the pair had strangled the reporter with a shirt or a bungee cord, while the actual crime was committed with the victim's belt. There were also fingerprints and bloody footprints that did not belong to Erikson or Ferguson.

Remorsefully, Erikson told reporters, "The police threatened me to implicate Ferguson or else I would be solely responsible for Heitholt's death and [would] be charged with first-degree murder and possibly sentenced to death." The janitor who had been at the crime scene also later admitted that he had been urged into a false identification. Finally, experts proved that the tire tool Erikson claimed the friends beat Heitholt with did not match the victim's injuries.

After the prosecution withheld evidence from the defense, Ferguson's case was overturned. Once the court reviewed the existing evidence, the prosecution announced that they were not going to re-try Ferguson. This was in large part due to the fact that Erikson recanted his statement of Ferguson's alleged involvement.

Overwhelmed and elated, Ferguson is ecstatic to be free and holds no grudges against Erikson and others who accused him. He expressed his gratitude to family, friends, and supporters at a press conference soon after he was released. "To get arrested and to get charged for a crime you didn't commit is incredibly easy, and you lose your life very fast" Ferguson told reporters, "But to get out of prison, it takes an army."

(Sources: CNN Press Room, Daily Mail, Huffington Post)



REFLECTING ON HIS TIME IN PRISON: Ferguson is filled with sadness and gloom.

## NYC police chief heckled at Brown

by **Niamh Doyle**

*Opinion Editor*

Tempers ran high on Oct. 29 when Brown University hosted New York Police Commissioner Ray Kelly to discuss the controversial stop-and-frisk policy that the police force has implemented in New York. Protesters say that the NYPD's actions are racist and unconstitutional, while Kelly believes that the policies comply with the NYPD's "proactive policing" strategies to make New York a safer city.

Kelly was invited to Brown University in Rhode Island to give a talk addressing the issues. The Ivy league students, on the other hand, along with many civil rights activists, had other plans in mind. Hardly letting Kelly speak a single word, the audience starting shouting the commissioner down—clapping and encouraging students to cry out against what they believe to be a racist and unjust policy.

What was scheduled to be a 20-minute lecture with an additional 40-minute question and answer session was diminished to chaos, as the lecture was immediately canceled, an act that outraged the commissioner and Brown's president, Christina Paxson.



RAY KELLY HECKLED: Brown students shout down the police commissioner.

"The conduct of disruptive members of the audience is indefensible and an affront both to civil democratic society and to the university's core values of dialogue and the free exchange of views," said Paxson in reaction to the protests. Paxson apologized profusely to Commissioner Kelly and the NYPD, and is assembling a committee to review the incident, and to punish anyone who can be deemed responsible for the event. Paxson believes that the protest was unconstituted and denied both the ability of the commissioner to justify his decisions and the ability of the audience to challenge them.

To the delight of the protesters, the New York Federal court has reviewed the NYPD's stop-and-frisk policies, and is appealing the program. (Sources: NBC News, New York Times)



HOLDING A PRESS CONFERENCE: Kelly discusses New York City's policing policies.

## WTC completed

by **Ari Sweedler**

*People Editor*

Construction of the new World Trade Center in New York City started on April 27, 2006, and was formally "topped out" (the act of placing the last beam on the ceiling of a building) on May 2, 2013. The building was finalized eight days later on May 10. The building includes 104 floors with the addition of 5 basement floors. Combining all the floors, there is a total of more than 3,500,000 square feet, about 2,500 times larger than an average house. Because of its enormous size, the One World Trade Center has more than 70 lifts and elevators.

The One World Trade Center is the tallest building in America at 1,776 feet, more than a third of a mile. If the One World Trade Center was on its side, it would take the average person more than 6 minutes to walk from the base to the top. Now that may not seem like much, but take into account that an average classroom at Los Gatos High School has an average ceiling height of no more than 20 feet. If one were to stack 88 Los Gatos classrooms, one on top of the other, then it still wouldn't be as tall as the One World Trade Center.

There are only three buildings larger than the One World Trade Center in the whole world: The Burj Khalifa, the Mecca Royal Hotel Clock Tower, and the Shanghai Tower. The Burj Khalifa in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, is 2,717 feet tall. It should be noted, though, that the One World Trade Center actually has 200,000 more square feet due to its superior girth.

The second of the three buildings taller than the One World Trade Center is the 1,972-foot-tall Abraj Al-Bait Tower, also known as the Mecca Royal Hotel Clock Tower, in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Similar to the Burj Khalifa, the Abraj Al-Bait Towers measures in at a mere 3,300,000 square feet, which is 200,000 feet smaller than the One World Trade Center.

The only building that can truly be considered bigger, (larger in terms of both height and square footage,) is the Shanghai Tower in Lujiazui, Shanghai. The Shanghai tower is 2,073 feet tall and contains an impressive 4,000,000 square feet.

While the One World Trade center isn't the best building in terms of height or square footage, it stands at an impressive 1,776 feet (the year that the declaration of independence was signed), and it is the largest building in the western hemisphere. The One World Trade Center truly is a tribute to what the American population can accomplish. (Sources: CNN, BBC)



all photos courtesy wikicommons

DOMINATING THE SKYLINE: The one World Trade Center can be viewed from miles away.

## State senator stabbed

by **Liat Rubin**

*Sports Editor*

On Nov. 19, Virginia state senator Creigh Deeds was stabbed multiple times by his son Austin "Gus" Deeds who then committed suicide.

After a heated altercation, Gus Deeds repeatedly stabbed his father in the head and chest. State troopers arrived at Deeds' home in Millboro, a town 150 miles west of Richmond, Virginia, and found twenty-four-year-old Gus Deeds dead of a gunshot wound to the head.

Creigh Deeds was found walking down a road near his home and in need of medical help when he was recognized by his cousin who brought him to a nearby farm where they waited for the paramedics. Deeds was soon airlifted to the University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville where his condition was improved from critical to fair, spokeswoman Angela Taylor said.

Gus Deeds brutal act of attempted homicide came one day after Deeds, who has a history of mental illness, was brought to a local sheriff for evaluation by mental health professionals. Although it was evident that he was in need of medical help, he was released because no open psychiatric bed could be located across a wide area of western Virginia. Dennis Cropper, executive director of the Rockbridge Area Community Services Board (CSB), told the Richmond Times-Dispatch. However, it was later found that two other mental hospitals with available beds within a close distance to Deeds' home were not contacted by the medical professionals who examined the young Deeds.

Creigh has now decided to dedicate his time to making sure no incident like this one reoccurs. "I cry a lot. I can't focus now and talk to anyone," the elder Deeds told The Recorder. "I have very strong opinions about the CSB and feel like they are responsible. My life's work now is to make sure other families don't have to go through what we are living." (Sources: CNN, ABC News)