

High 44 | Low 43  
Details **B10**  
HOME FINAL ■  
**\$1.75**

Renewed NHL talks fail to result in deal  
**SPORTS, E1**



**Unmasked creativity**  
Exhibits feature folk art's variety | **VISUAL ARTS, D4**

# The Columbus Dispatch

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2005

## Funding proposal splits educators

Some asking whether school coalition can bridge differences

By Catherine Candisky  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

After years of solidarity during legal battles over Ohio's ailing school-funding system, educators say it's becoming harder to stick together.

"I'm very worried about the scenario that's being set up," said John Brandt, executive director of the Ohio School Boards Association.

Educators are at odds over a proposed constitutional amendment aimed at fixing the way the state finances public education.

The proposal, being crafted by former state Rep. Bryan Flannery, would slash local property taxes and increase state aid to schools, requiring lawmakers to fund an education program designed by a 15-member commission appointed by the governor.

Flannery, of Lakewood in suburban Cleveland, said he hopes to collect the roughly 330,000 signatures needed to place the proposal on the November ballot.

The Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding, the group of more than 500 school districts that first sued the state, is backing the plan.

But major education associations in Ohio, including the school-boards group, teachers unions and others, decided last week they would not endorse it.

"Ever since the '90s, when the rural group in southeast Ohio got going, we've tried really hard to keep the education groups (and school districts) together, rich and poor, and we've had good success," Brandt said.

"But now we're going to have a significant number of school districts in the coalition who back this plan, but the major education associations will not be.

"I just don't like the flavor of that."

The coalition's chief, William L. Phillis, said he's not concerned about educators being split on Flannery's plan.

"We didn't have much support when (the) DeRolph (lawsuit)

See **FUNDING** Page **A12**

## INSIDE

### Welcome return

Members of the Ohio National Guard's 216th Engineer Battalion were welcomed back to Columbus after serving in Iraq | **Metro & State B1**

### Aggressive competition

In the wake of Bank One's merger with Chase, rivals are working to boost their standing in the pecking order | **Business F1**

### Tricky travels

Planning vacations with friends or family can be tough, but it's well worth it | **Travel G1**

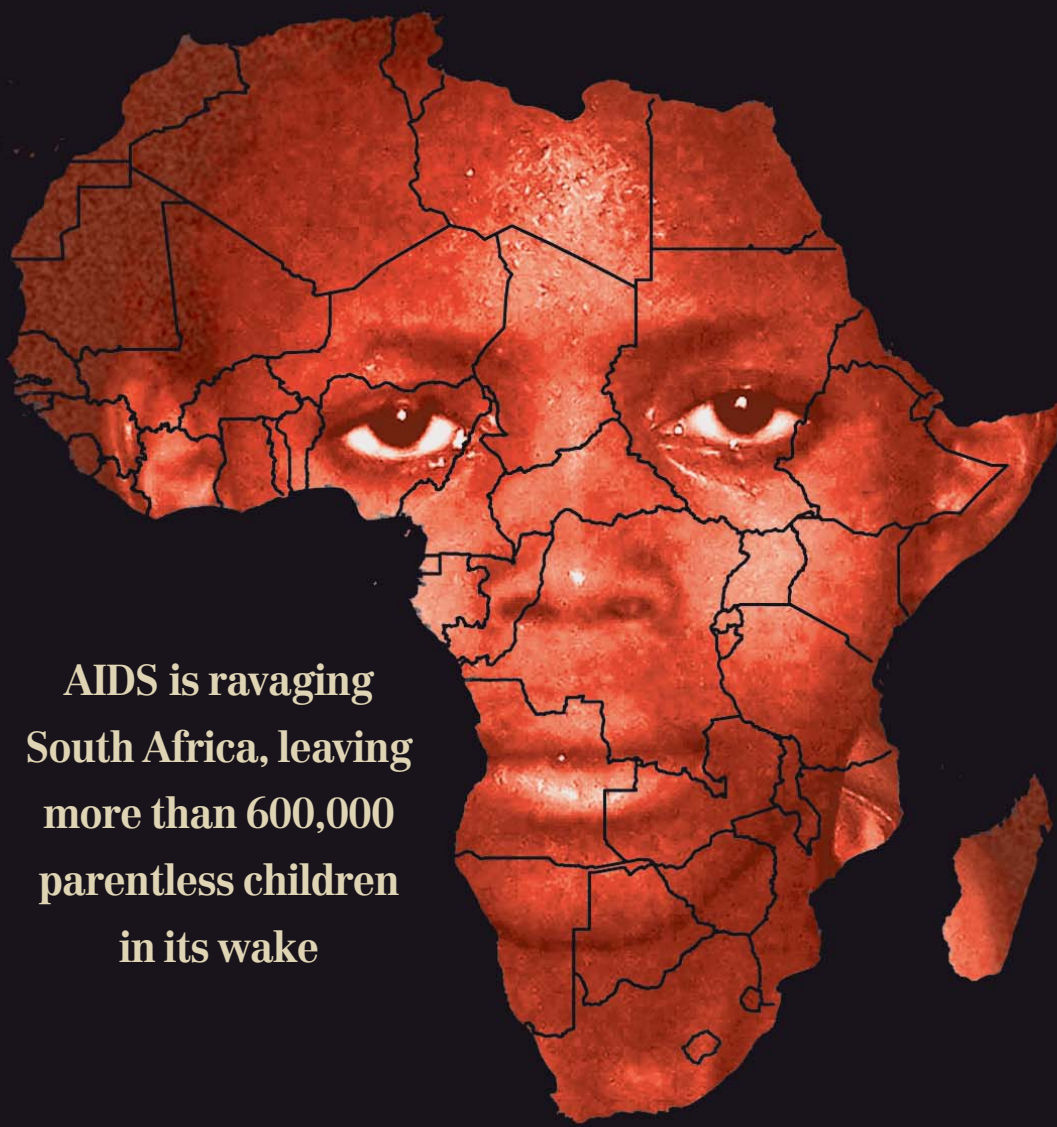
### Coming this week | **A2**

The Arts.....**D** Lottery.....**B2**  
Books.....**D7** Movies.....**D6**  
Classified.....**I** Obituaries.....**B8**  
Editorials.....**C4** Puzzles.....**H6**  
Horoscope.....**H2** Stocks.....**F4-10**  
Insight.....**C** Vitals.....**B9**

dispatch.com



## A NATION OF ORPHANS



**AIDS is ravaging South Africa, leaving more than 600,000 parentless children in its wake**

By Sherri Williams  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

**M**ANDINI, South Africa — In this home with four teenagers, the floors are dirt. There is little food, no electricity and no money for batteries for the one luxury they have, a radio.

Here, children play the role of breadwinner, cook and caretaker, looking after one another while meticulously keeping their house tidy.

Their parents would be proud, if only they had lived to see this.

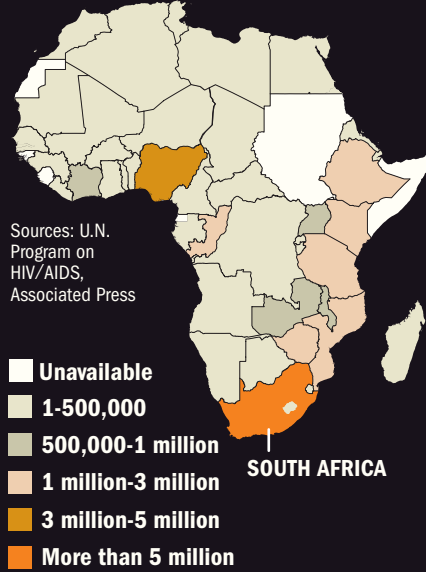
The parents of Xolani, Londiwe, Msizi and Sakhile were consumed — mother one month and father the next — by AIDS, the scourge of South Africa.

The Dlamini children are alone, and yet they are not.

They are among the more than 620,000 children orphaned by AIDS in South Africa since 1990.

See **AIDS** Page **A12**

Estimated numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS in 2003



Sources: U.N. Program on HIV/AIDS, Associated Press

► Poverty, culture and poor health care contribute to the epidemic in Mandini, once dubbed the AIDS capital of the world | **Insight, C1**

## Iraqis endure fresh attacks

Shiite holiday offers no respite from deadly suicide bombers

By Tom Lasseter and Susannah A. Nesmith  
KNIGHT RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — As Iraq's Shiite Muslims observed one of the holiest days of their calendar, a wave of suicide bombings and an ambush killed at least 48 people yesterday and wounded more than 140 in attacks Iraqi officials and witnesses blamed on insurgents from the nation's minority Sunni population.

The violence, although far short of bombings that killed at least 181 on last year's holy day, underscored the continued ability of insurgents to kill civilians and Iraqi soldiers in broad daylight, and the increased tension between Shiites and Sunnis.

Just days before, it was announced that a Shiite political ticket backed by clerics, which swept national elections last month, will control the majority of seats in the new National Assembly. Several Sunni parties did not receive a single seat.

Shiites yesterday were celebrating the day of

See **IRAQ** Page **A3**

### SAFETY CONCERNS

## Use of Tasers increasing as questions fly

By Mark Ferencik  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

When a Columbus police officer shot James R. Neal with a Taser, the 17-year-old was fighting a man who had thrown rocks at him from a railroad trestle.

Neal, 5 feet 8 inches tall and 180 pounds, said that police handcuffed his left hand as they tried to pry him off the other man. Then an officer shot two bars from the stun gun into Neal's left side and pumped 50,000 volts of electricity through him.

"I was all numb," he said. They stunned him again and cited him for disorderly conduct that day in early November.

Neal's mother, Rebecca Neal, was surprised to hear that her son had been shocked with a Taser, known generically as a stun gun.

"I never heard of it," she said. "That's crazy." Columbus police are increasingly relying on the weapons to subdue people, despite reports

See **TASERS** Page **A2**

## Wars' legacies defined when Johnny marches home

By Joe Hallett and Jack Torry  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

With dust from South Vietnam still on his Air Force uniform, Wallace Rushin returned to the United States in 1968 for a reception both restrained and solitary. Only his wife and baby, born while he was overseas, greeted him at the airport.

"I came out alive, left the war behind, and got on with my life," said Rushin, 60, a Columbus police homicide sergeant.

Rushin's welcome was typical for the hundreds of thousands of Americans who served in Vietnam. Unlike those showered with adulation after fighting in



**THE WAR YEARS**  
1945-1975  
In a series of occasional stories, The Dispatch will mark significant war anniversaries throughout 2005, from the thrill of V-E Day in 1945 to the fall of Saigon in 1975.

► **2005 war anniversaries** | **A12**

World War II, Iraq and Afghanistan, the Vietnam soldiers returned to a nation torn asunder by the prolonged war and

gripped by doubts about the United States' role in the world.

From the surrender of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan 60 years ago to the fall of South Vietnam to the Communists 30 years ago, this is a year of war anniversaries. Simply looking at how soldiers were greeted upon returning home provides a vivid illustration of how those wars changed the thinking of the generation that fought them.

Troops returning from Iraq are roundly hailed as heroes, but that war's impact on America is a chapter that remains to

See **WAR YEARS** Page **A12**



Whether in World War II or Vietnam, how soldiers were received upon returning home provides a glimpse of how wars shaped those generations that fought them.