



Kravitz looking to buy \$50M home on world's wealthiest street. **A3**

CHEZ LENNY

Light years

Blondie's 75th anniversary

inspires a look ahead: Will Cathy find a space suit that fits? **B16**



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SASKATCHEWAN THE NEW AFRICA



BRIAN HUTCHINSON / NATIONAL POST

The bald prairie near Antelope, Sask., has been suggested as a home for Africa's beasts. Our man says, well, it looks like the savannah. Story, **A2**

B.C. Witness teen on finding 'respect' at N.Y. cancer hospital

Sarah's serendipity

BY ISABEL VINCENT
in New York

There is little, it seems, that frightens Sarah, the 15-year-old Jehovah's Witness teenager who was recently at the centre of a Canada-wide legal challenge when she refused to undergo blood transfusions as part of cancer treatments in her home province of British Columbia.

In fact, when she was diagnosed with bone cancer late last year and was told that she would lose her thick shoulder-length blonde hair, she was admittedly upset, but decided to cut it and then she dyed it bright pink.

Later, just before she underwent surgery to remove the cancer in her right leg, she grabbed a red marker and drew a line around part of her leg and printed various messages on the leg for her ortho-

pedic surgeon. One of them read, "Do not cut above this line."

Over the weekend, Sarah, who still cannot be fully identified because of a court-ordered publication ban, made light of the trauma that has marked the last eight months of her life as she sipped frozen hot chocolate — a favourite dessert — at Serendipity, a popular East Side eatery that was made famous in a Hollywood film.

See **TREATMENT** on Page A5



Al-Qaeda eyes a 9/11 for satellites

Experts are warning that al-Qaeda has the desire — and the knowledge — to take out satellites. Dawn Rae Downton reports on the devastating impact such an attack would have on business, communications — and the American military.

BY DAWN RAE DOWNTON

In May, 1998, mortally wounded by contamination on a printed circuit board, Galaxy IV failed as it sat in geostationary orbit over the middle of the Western hemisphere. Ninety percent of the pagers in the U.S. and Canada — 45 million of them — fell silent instantly, including the pagers of volunteer firefighters and doctors on call. CBS, Reuters and UPI lost their news feeds; gas-pump credit card readers and ATMs stopped working from St. John's to San Diego. It was up to a week before most users were back on line.

This is what happens when a single "bird," one of several hundred up there, bites the dust. Imagine the chaos when they all fail at the same time.

Security experts say that al-

Qaeda has imagined just that. It's not so hard to interfere with satellites, and especially to destroy them. Sooner or later, the experts think, al-Qaeda will have our birds in its sights.

While communications satellites alone generate \$50-billion to American industry and \$120-billion worldwide, money's not the object here. Catastrophe is the goal, since without satellites we'd be nowhere, literally, with our security compromised. Satellites allow us to use our cellphones — and give the U.S. government access to every call. (Ottawa has similar access to each call made in this country, but is prohibited from using it without court permission.)

See **BIRDS** on Page A9

No separation of church and state likely for Iraq, AS
Far from founding fathers, A13

SURPLUS ROCKETS TO \$9.5B

Pressure grows for Ottawa to offer fresh tax relief

BY ERIC BEAUCHESNE IN OTTAWA

The federal government is — and will continue — racking up fatter-than-forecast budget surpluses that will climb back above the \$10-billion mark next fiscal year, an economic think-tank says.

The surplus this fiscal year will rise to \$9.5-billion from an estimated \$6.8-billion last year, and then surge even further to \$11.3-billion in 2006-07, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives says in a new forecast prepared for the House of Commons finance committee.

The estimate comes as Ottawa is reportedly debating the contents of a fall fiscal update, one that could include tax cuts reportedly aimed at middle income earners.

A new poll today shows the Liberals stuck at around 36% nationwide, eight points ahead of the Tories. Ipsos-Reid president Darrell Bricker predicted yesterday the Liberals may need to give voters a pre-election budget including tax cuts and other popular measures if they are to escape minority status in the next election.

"If a budget is it, then probably a budget sometime in November or December, or maybe even early January, and that's where you are going to see things, such as

tax relief and other things," Mr. Bricker said.

A federal government strategist said last week revealing another fat surplus, at a time when consumers are being hit with record gasoline prices, will add to pressure on the government to offer further quick tax relief.

The last major reduction to personal tax rates occurred in October, 2000. A leading Bay Street economic forecaster has warned that Canadians' tax load could damage the economy unless the federal government cuts personal income taxes by at least \$20-billion over the next five years.

The rebound in federal surpluses comes despite an additional \$4.6-billion in social spending this year and next that the minority Liberal government agreed to in order to obtain NDP support and avoid being defeated before the budget was passed.

The surpluses forecast by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives are in excess of the \$2-billion a year required to meet the conditions for that agreement with the NDP to be implemented.

See **FORECAST** on Page A5

Liberals are not gaining on Tories, poll finds. Page A4

An Iraqi Kelly Clarkson

BY ANDREW HAMMOND



BAGHDAD • The set is spartan and drab. There is no studio audience. But Iraqis have made a hit of *Iraq Star*, a knockoff of *American Idol*.

Many here obsessively watch *American Idol* and a glitzy Lebanese copy called *Arab Superstar* on Arabic satellite channels. But more than 2,000 young Iraqis signed up as contestants when al-Sumeria TV announced *Iraq Star*. "Most of the singers aren't that good, but maybe a few of them will go somewhere, if they get enough support," said viewer Seif Makki.

See **STAR** on Page A2

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