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## AMERICAN MORNING

**Two Under Arrest for Boston Bomb Scare; New Tactics Required in Iraq, Experts Say; Fight Against Childhood Obesity Stirs Controversy**

Aired February 1, 2007 - 07:00 ET

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REYNOLDS WOLF, CNN METEOROLOGIST, AMERICAN MORNING: It will be mainly snow through the midmorning hours, midday expect a transition going from the snow, switching over to sleet and then this afternoon there is the potential, the potential, for some freezing rain, which could cause all kinds of issues with power lines as well as trees.

Right behind me, you can see, just a small oak tree, maybe 20, 30 feet tall or so. Some snow is picking up there. No ice as of yet which could cause damage. We are expecting that into the afternoon. Even farther behind, you can see a stretch of I-77 that has been pretreated yesterday, with a bit of a brine solution to help ward off some of the ice and the possible snow that's going to be building up.

So far, the road seems to be moving pretty smoothly, although, we can expect some issues there. It always happens when people move quickly on slick roadways. Not a good combination at all. It's something we will keep an eye on.

Also out of the airport, we have 75 flights that have been canceled. I would expect with the increasing snowfall and the possibility of that sleet, as well as that freezing rain into the afternoon, we could see more back-up there's.

Let's talk more about the snow. The snow has been very different from what we have seen earlier this year in places like Colorado where we have that beautiful fresh powder. Take a look at this snow ball. I scraped this off the front of our news vehicle. It's a wet, kind of a thick snow. Perfect for making snowballs, perfect for throwing around to people, no question about it.

But I will tell you we're not expecting much in terms of snow drifts, because the snow is very heavy. There's not much in terms of wind. So like in Colorado where you have the snow that comes in, all white and all powdery, and then you have those 20, 30 mile per hour gusts, it tends to pile up in several feet. That will not happen here in Charlotte.

As it falls, as it hits the ground, it will either melt or it will begin to pile up, as it is piling up on a lot of the grass. On the roadways, it is starting to accumulate. Roads are a little warmer in the low-laying areas, however, on the overpasses we do have some freezing conditions, there. So, again, icing is going to be an issue.

That's the latest from here in Charlotte. We will update you right here throughout the morning and, throughout the day. Right here. Let's send it back to you at the news desk. MILES O'BRIEN, CNN ANCHOR, AMERICAN MORNING: Reynolds Wolf in Charlotte, thanks. Severe Weather Expert Chad Myers will be by in a moment to give you the latest on the path of that storm -- Soledad.

SOLEDAD O'BRIEN, CNN ANCHOR, AMERICAN MORNING: In Boston today two men are under arrest, the mayor and governor, and lots of other people there are furious all over a marketing campaign that went very, very, very wrong.

Here's a little bit of the video that was found on one of the suspects websites. His name is Peter Berdovsky, and putting up light boards. An it was these light boards that caused so much havoc on Wednesday. They've been up in 10 cities over the last couple of weeks.

A commuter rail passenger first noticed one of them, though, on Wednesday, in Boston. Called the police. The police found it, blew it up. Security officials said it kind of looked like an IED, an improvised explosive device, with a circuit board that lights up.

You can see it's actually supposed to be this cartoon character that appears to be flashing a middle finger. Well, it was this thing that kept the cops on the run all day, responding to reports of these suspicious packages all around the city. CNN's Boston Bureau Chief Dan Lothian; he joins us now from Boston.

Dan, what was it like in Boston? It started at 8:00 a.m. and went well into the late afternoon?

DAN LOTHIAN, CNN BOSTON BUREAU CHIEF, AMERICAN MORNING: That's right, Soledad. Good morning.

It was a very chaotic day here in the city of Boston and surrounding areas because what you had was a city that at different times was shut down. You had a highway that was closed for quite some time. The Charles River was shut down. You had bridges that were closed. Trains that were no longer running, as police were responding to these various events. The first call,



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as you mentioned, in the early morning, and then rolling out throughout the afternoon.

Just a sense of what the city is feeling this morning on the front page, the "The Boston Globe," "Froth, Fear and Fury." And then the "The Boston Herald", "The Hoax On Us".

We are standing in front of the Charlestown District Court, which ironically is just around the corner where the first device was found yesterday morning. This is where two suspects will be arraigned late their morning. The first suspect, 27-year-old Peter Berdovsky was picked up after 8:00 last night. Late last night, 28-year-old Sean Stevens was also arrested, they are apparently shown on a website setting up the devices across the city, and across the area.

Both are being charged with placing a hoax device and disorderly conduct. They were both part of this marketing campaign for the Cartoon Network, or working for a third party advertising firm, Interference Incorporated, based out of New York, Soledad. S. O'BRIEN: The mayor pointed out this was a hoax that did not have an insignificant cost to the city of Boston.

LOTHIAN: That's right. We are hearing anywhere from \$500,000 to \$1million. So obviously, a lot of outrage here. But Turner Broadcasting sending out a statement apologizing for what happened saying, in part, "We apologize to the citizens of Boston that part of a marketing campaign was mistaken for a public danger. We appreciate the gravity of this situation. And like any responsible company would, are putting all necessary resources towards understanding the facts surrounding it as quickly as possible."

Mayor Menino saying he did receive a call from Turner Broadcasting also received these statements, but he believes that it is almost too little, too late. And he says that Turner Broadcasting should be held accountable.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MAYOR THOMAS MENINO, BOSTON: I just think this is outrageous what they have done. They send us one paragraph press release saying they apologize, but they never gave us the locations of any of these packages in the city of Boston.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

LOTHIAN: So obviously a lot of outrage from the mayor, and certainly a lot of outrage from people here in the city of Boston. Many of them upset because their day was disrupted by this hoax.

There are those, though, who think, you know, this seemed and appeared if you looked at it like a harmless device, but the attorney general saying there were batteries and wires attached, and law enforcement took it very seriously, and they are saying there are other people who could be arrested in this hoax, Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: They tell people, if you see something, say something. So you can't really blame the people who, when they see something, start to something.

LOTHIAN: That's right.

S. O'BRIEN: Dan Lothian, with a little bit of the fallout in Boston, this morning. Thank you, Dan.

Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Now to the war on terror. Lots to tell you about this morning, on several fronts. We have reporters covering every facet for you. Dana Bash on Capitol Hill, the latest on those resolutions against sending more troops to Iraq. AMERICAN MORNING's Sean Callebs, Ft. Stewart, Georgia, his location, reaction from the troops on that. Barbara Starr at the Pentagon, more on alleged Iranian meddling in Iraq. Zane Verjee at the State Department with a different take on the volatile Iranian president. And Paula Newton in Birmingham, England on the trail of that alleged plot to kidnap and behead a soldier. We begin with Dana Bash on Capitol Hill.

Dana, good morning.

DANA BASH, CNN CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT, AMERICAN MORNING: Good morning, Miles.

It really was a blockbuster bipartisan deal here on Capitol Hill last night. Senate Democrats joined forces with leading Republicans on a measure to condemn the president's policy to send more troops to Iraq. There had been two competing measures. One proposed mostly by Democrats, the other mostly by Republicans. By joining forces they hope to pass a bipartisan rebuke of the president and his policy in Iraq.

Here is the key line of this measure. It says the Senate disagrees with the plan to augment our forces by 21,500. That's a lot less confrontational than what the Democrats had originally in their resolution, which said it is not in the national interest of the United States to increase troop levels in Iraq. Democrats, Miles, are virtually united against the president's plan. What they essentially did was agree to compromise with these Republicans who are like-minded in order to get as many votes as possible in this vote which we expect as early as Monday.

M. O'BRIEN: Let's talk a little more about how this compromise went. You said Democrats were willing to soften their language. John Warner, leading Republican in the Senate, did he compromise from where he was?

BASH: He did. He made a few minor changes to his resolution. And one of the things he did -- we are told he was working behind the scenes on this for days, by the way -- but one of things he did to try to appeal to fellow Republicans, who are not comfortable with the president's plan, is he added a line making clear that this would not cut funding in any way for the troops in the field.

That, again, was aimed at getting at skeptical Republicans who are hearing from some of their colleagues that they're concerned about sending the wrong message to troops who are in combat now.

The bottom line, Miles, is that this is not good news for the White House. This could require 60 votes, but the deal does mean that it could get much more significant support than it would have if there were competing measures -- Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Dana Bash, live from the capitol.

Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: There are some senators who said the resolution -- or any resolution -- really could be demoralizing to the troops. So, the question is what do the troops think? AMERICAN MORNING's Sean Callebs is live for us at Fort Stewart, Georgia, on that front.

Hey, Sean, good morning.

SEAN CALLEBS, CNN CORRESPONDENT, AMERICAN MORNING: Good morning, Soledad.

The troops we had a chance to speak with who are going to deploy soon say they are simply trying to ignore all the political rhetoric flying around Washington right now. They say they're focusing on their training, knowing they are scheduled to trade the landscape here in Georgia for the battlefields of Baghdad.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CALLEBS (voice over): Real bullets, real rockets, and members of the 37th Cavalry know the reality is resolution, or no resolution, they are getting ready to join soldiers being sent to Iraq.

PVT. CHRISTOPHER WEISENBERGER, U.S. ARMY: You can always train more, but we train with the time we have. And we get to see our families, when we get to see our families. So, I'm ready to go.

CALLEBS: But before reaching Baghdad, soldiers at Fort Stewart are caught in a different kind of battle. A struggle between President Bush and senators, who are supporting a nonbinding resolution that says adding 21,000 more troops is against the U.S. national interest.

SGT. LARRY MITCHELL, U.S. ARMY: Reality is reality. So, you can ignore negative stuff, but it's still going to be there.

CALLEBS: Training to go house to house, door to door, troops know just what to do. But a confrontation between Congress and the Bush administration is something else.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You see our soldiers focused on what we have to do. And making sure that we will make a positive difference, with the Iraqi people, and with ourselves. And we'll let the rest of it take care of it.

CALLEBS: It's a sacrifice for people like 25-year-old mother of two, Carlia Mulholland. She is getting read I do say good-bye to her husband, a tank commander, who is heading to Iraq for the third time.

CARLIA MULHOLLAND, SOLDIER'S WIFE: I don't really like having him go back over again. And sometimes, you know, you get to the point where you're like it's been enough. But he's our president.

CALLEBS: As the war goes, in many ways so does Hinesville, Georgia, home to Fort Stewart. Those who have loved ones in Iraq say harsh reality means more than heated rhetoric.

CAROLINE CRISSMAN, WIFE OF SOLDIER: Frustrating to deal with. This all fighting over here, when no matter what you decide, my husband is still over there. And still in harm's way.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CALLEBS: Yes, and the same time the Senate is scheduled to be discussing this proposal, next week troops will be training here. The president has said this sends the wrong message and could embolden the enemy. Commanders say they are charged with keeping the troops focused and ready to fight a war that is becoming increasingly unpopular, Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: Sean Callebs for us this morning. Thanks, Sean.

Vice President Dick Cheney's daughter, Mary, is speaking out for the first time about her decision to have a baby. Cheney is pregnant, she's due in the spring. She and her partner of 15 years, Heather Poe (ph) say they're going to raise the child together.

She told the panel at New York's Bernard College, "When Heather and I decided to have a baby I knew it wasn't going to be the most popular decision. This is a baby. This is a blessing from God, not a political statement, not a prop to be used in a debate on either side of a political issue. It is my child."

Mary Cheney also addressed her father's interview last week with CNN's Wolf Blitzer. She agreed with her father, that a question about conservatives who criticized her pregnancy had crossed the line -- Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Senator Joe Biden is campaigning for forgiveness this morning after he began his presidential bid on a sour divisive note. The Delaware Democrat managed to simultaneously toss his hat into the ring, and put his foot in his mouth.

Biden, well known as a man of many words, was evaluating his competitors with a reporter calling Senator Barack Obama a storybook kind of candidate, clean, and articulate. Biden went to the political version of confession last night, appearing on "The Daily Show" with Jon Stewart.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SEN. JOE BIDEN, (D-DE) PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I spoke to Barack today.

JON STEWART, HOST, "THE DAILY SHOW": I bet you did.

(LAUGHTER)

BIDEN: I also spoke to Jesse and Al Sharpton, and I also --

STEWART: And Michael Jordan and anybody you could get your hands on.

BIDEN: No, no, no.

STEWART: The Jackson five. Who else?

BIDEN: Michael didn't call me. Look, what I was attempting to be but not artfully -- was complimentary. This is an incredible guy. This guy is a phenomenon. This guy is -- and look, the other part of this thing is, the word that got me in trouble is using the word clean. I should have said fresh. I meant, he has new ideas, he's a new guy on the block.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

M. O'BRIEN: For his part, Obama says he didn't take the comments personally but says they are historically inaccurate -- Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: Coming up, schools closed, flights canceled. We have the latest on that ice storm that's rocking the Southeast right now. We'll give you an update.

And sounding the alarm in the San Francisco Bay Area. We'll tell you how rising seas could swamp the Golden Gate and Silicon Valley.

Here is an intriguing question for you. Is the president of Iran actually a blessing for the Bush administration? We'll take a closer look at all those stories straight ahead. The most news in the morning is right here on CNN.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

S. O'BRIEN: Welcome back. It's quarter past the hour. And there's an ice storm down South. Chad Myers is watching it for you.

(WEATHER REPORT)

M. O'BRIEN: The Bush administration still trying to build its case that Iran is meddling inside the borders of Iraq. Whether true or not, it would not seem out of character for Iran's defiant and outspoken president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, but he might be just the foil the Bush administration needs. Zain Verjee at the State Department with more this morning.

Good morning, Zain.

ZAIN VERJEE, CNN STATE DEPT. CORRESPONDENT, AMERICAN MORNING: Good morning, Miles.

The U.S. has a problem with Iran. But both countries may need each other.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

VERJEE (voice over): Could Mahmoud Ahmadinejad be a neo-cons best friend? Iran's president has been described by some in the U.S. as a gift from God. Experts says his hard nuclear stance, his explosive anti-Semitic rhetoric makes it easy for them to project Iran as a grave danger. And they're successfully pushing for the U.S. to apply more pressure and confrontation with one objective.

SEAN MCCORMACK, SPOKESMAN, U.S. STATE DEPT.: The whole point of our policies are to try to get Iran -- the Iranian regime to change its behavior.

VERJEE: Now the U.S. is cranking up the heat. Vowing to hit at Iranians fueling the Iraqi insurgency, five already in custody. The U.S. is compiling evidence to prove Iran's deadly interference in Iraq. And the second U.S. aircraft carrier is steaming through the Gulf, a reminder to Iran of America's military might. It's all rattling nerves in Tehran.

AFSHIN MOLAVI, NEW AMERICA FOUNDATION: There is serious concern that Iran faces a troubling national security threat, i.e., potential military confrontation with the United States.

VERJEE: Even Ayatollah Khamenei seems nervous, expressing concern through a newspaper that reflects his views, that Ahmadinejad is deepening Iran's national isolation and hurting its economy.

Lawmakers, leaders, students disillusioned by the lack of jobs, blaming their president for U.N. sanctions over its nuclear program, and questioning if Ahmadinejad is the right man for the job. U.S. and Western diplomats say the internal friction is evidence that the pressure is working. But experts say the U.S. isn't taking advantage of it.

TRITI PARS, IRANIAN AMERICAN COUNCIL: The past behavior of the Bush administration has been that when it has been in a position of strength, it has chosen not to negotiate because it has felt it didn't need to negotiate.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

VERJEE: Harder tactics towards Iran could backfire, Miles. Analysts warn if hard liners in the U.S. continue to push, Iranians may just decide to forgive Ahmadinejad all, and close ranks behind him, making the neo-cons in the U.S. Ahmadinejad's best friend -- Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Interesting way of looking at it. State Department Correspondent Zain Verjee. Thank you.

Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: Ahead this morning, Ali Velshi is "Minding Your Business". Plus, could global warming make San Francisco the Venice of the West? We'll tell you why some people are worried straight ahead on AMERICAN MORNING.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

M. O'BRIEN: Welcome back to the most news in the morning.

Melting point: Our focus on global warming. Hundreds of the world's leading climate scientists gathering in Paris, finalizing a pivotal U.N. report due tomorrow. It will draw a clear link between the burning of fossil fuels and rising temperatures and sea levels.

The current projection, sea level could rise by about two feet by the end of this century. That is a conservative number. Big cities from coast to coast would be inundated including San Francisco, where we find our Chris Lawrence.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CHRIS LAWRENCE, CNN CORRESPONDENT, AMERICAN MORNING (voice over): For now, airplanes soar over San Francisco International, and across the bay at Oakland, too. But some scientist say within 100 years, you'll be better off in a boat.

TRAVIS MILLS, S.R. BAY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COMM: By 2100, much of what we are standing on now would be under water.

LAWRENCE: Travis Mills says the sea level is likely to rise three feet by then.

(On camera): The Pacific Ocean has risen seven inches in the last 100 years. What makes anyone think it's going rise three feet in the next 100?

T. MILLS: We are pumping a lot of emissions into the atmosphere. It's heating up the atmosphere, and the ocean.

LAWRENCE (voice over): The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission has created new maps showing what happens. The dark blue is the San Francisco bay. The light blue is the airport, under water.

T. MILLS: We can't allow San Francisco to become the Venice of the West. We can't allow Silicon Valley to become the new lost city of Atlantis. We are going to have to spend billions of dollars putting sea walls and levees around all of this investment.

LAWRENCE: Computer models show rising sea levels swamping other parts of the country as well. For homeowners, buying flood insurance, the threat of a three-foot rise means thousands of dollars.

EVAN MILLS, LAWRENCE BERKELEY NAT'L. LAB: Then, of course, the worst-case outcome is when insurers do throw up

their hands and say we have to exit this particular market.

LAWRENCE: Some scientists predict a fast rise. Others say it will take hundreds of years.

AMY LUERS, UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS: It's certainly not an exact science.

LAWRENCE: Dr. Amy Luers says scientists do agree that ice sheets are melting.

LUERS: The difficulty is predicting when and how fast the destabilization of major ice sheets.

LAWRENCE: These images represent massive flooding.

T. MILLS: We hope our maps will motivate, galvanize, and inspire people to prevent the future that we're describing in these maps.

LAWRENCE: It won't look like "The Day After Tomorrow", with the tidal wave crashing through a city. But experts say it's scary enough that just three feet of water will leave large parts of the Bay Area completely submerged. Chris Lawrence, CNN, San Francisco.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

M. O'BRIEN: About an hour from now, in our 8 a.m. Eastern hour, more of our "Melting Point" series. I'll look at whether the political climate has changed, and whether a Democratic Congress could force the Bush administration to have a conversion on this issue -- Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: OK, looking at the stock market, 2007 has been so good, so far. But it's only February 1st, what about the rest of the year? It's 25 minutes past the hour. That means it's time for Ali Velshi, who is "Minding Your Business".

January, a thumb's up.

ALI VELSHI, CNN FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENT, AMERICAN MORNING: January, has been a thumbs up. This is what "The Stock Traders' Almanac" -- this is what guys like me read instead of "Sports Illustrated" or "People", or things like that. And there is a saying, in the markets, that as January goes, so goes the year. And January has ended up to be a good month so far on -- so far, it's over, on the major stock exchanges.

We will use the S&P 500 as the measure, because that's 500 stocks. It's the broadest measure and than half of all Americans, in some fashion or another are involved in stocks. Maybe through their 401(k) or IRA or just investing directly.

Look at that, a 1.4 percent gain on the S&P500 for the month. According to "The Stock Traders' Almanac", when January goes well, the rest of the year goes well. And their record is 91 percent success rate. The reason for that is that the things that make the market do well in January tend to be trends that continue for the rest of the year.

So for those of you following the markets there are uncertainties including interest rates, the price of oil, and the housing market. But fundamentally, Soledad, as January goes, 90 percent of the time, or better, the markets do well for the year. So, we're off to a good start.

S. O'BRIEN: Do you carry your little almanac around with you?

VELSHI: Anything you want to know, I got it.

M. O'BRIEN: Get a life, will you? Thanks, Ali.

S. O'BRIEN: Thanks, Ali.

Top stories of the morning are coming up next. An ice storm is bearing down on the Southeast. The roads are treacherous. Hundreds of flights have been canceled. We have a life look for you from the storm front straight ahead.

And how about this kind of note coming home with your kid, from school. A failing grade -- about their weight. Is it the best way towards a fit nation? We'll take a look. You are watching AMERICAN MORNING. The most news in the morning is right here on CNN. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SOLEDAD O'BRIEN, CO-HOST: It's a travel nightmare. Snow in the Plains, ice along the East Coast. Hundreds of flights have been canceled today.

MILES O'BRIEN, CO-HOST: A publicity stunt gone wrong, really wrong, and Boston is in a tizzy. Two men under arrest and headed to court next hour. We've got video of them planting these light boards, which some people thought were bombs.

S. O'BRIEN: And the battle over body weight. Some schools grade children on their weight, and when they fail, their outraged parents are firing back. We've got that story ahead on this AMERICAN MORNING.

Welcome back, everybody. It's Thursday, February 1. I'm Soledad O'Brien.

M. O'BRIEN: And I'm Miles O'Brien. We're glad you're with us this morning.

S. O'BRIEN: Let's begin with the big storm that's making news. Chad has got a look for us.

Hey, Chad. Good morning.

(WEATHER REPORT)

M. O'BRIEN: One, plug the car in.

CHAD MYERS, CNN METEOROLOGIST: That's it.

M. O'BRIEN: In Minneapolis. All right. Thank you, Chad.

MYERS: You're welcome.

M. O'BRIEN: In Boston this morning, a second arrest in connection with a bomb scare triggered by an advertising campaign gone wrong. It all started when folks started spotting electronic light boards like this one. It shows a little cartoon character. He's telling us we're No. 1. Well, not quite.

Anyway, AMERICAN MORNING's Dan Lothian has more on how this all unfolded -- Dan.

DAN LOTHIAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, Miles, it was a bizarre day. The first event, suspicious package found not far from where I'm standing here, early yesterday morning, during the commute time, and then, of course, all of these other scares rolling out throughout the afternoon.

As you mentioned, two people have been arrested, and they'll be arraigned later here at the Charlestown district court. The first person, 27-year-old Peter Berdovsky. He was picked up shortly after 8 p.m. last night. Twenty-eight-year-old Sean Stevens also arrested later last night. Both apparently seen on a web site setting up these devices as part of the ad campaign across the city and the surrounding area. Both are being charged with placing a hoax device and also disorderly conduct.

This was part of a marketing tool for the Cartoon Network, and they were working for a third party independent ad firm, Interference Incorporated, based out of New York.

Now, Turner broadcasting, which is the parent company of Cartoon Network and also CNN, did issue a statement, saying in part, "We apologize to the citizens of Boston that part of a marketing campaign was mistaken for a public danger. We appreciate the gravity of this situation and, like any responsible company would, are putting all necessary resources toward understanding the facts surrounding it as quickly as possible."

But obviously a lot of outrage here, Miles, not only from people who live in Boston but also from Boston Mayor Tom Menino, who said that Turner Broadcasting should be held accountable because of all the resources and the money that was spent yesterday, hundreds of thousands of dollars. And of course, a lot of the city shut down throughout the day -- Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Sounds like somebody is going to be writing a check there. Dan Lothian in Boston, thank you.

Boston police might want to consider a blog squad, because if they had one yesterday they might have averted that citywide panic. It seems while the bomb squads were responding, Boston area bloggers had it already figured it out. There were already posts like this one explaining precisely what it is, a guerrilla marketing campaign for the "Aqua Teen Hunger Force".

These little critters are kind of like Space Invaders-like critters that are in that rather odd cartoon there. They come from the moon. There you have it. That's all I know about it -- Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: Well, now to the war in Iraq. The Senate late last night agreed on a resolution combining the Levin and Warner resolutions. They're united against the troop build-up.

But here's what's not in the resolution. No statement that the war is against the national interest. Senator Levin originally wanted that language in the resolution. And when those 21,000 more troops go into Iraq, what they're going to find is that the enemy is changing, really modifying its tactics to kill more American soldiers.

Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr has more for us.

Good morning, Barbara.

BARBARA STARR, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Good morning, Soledad.

Well, there may be a new strategy in Iraq, but the question is, as you say, are there new enemies?

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) STARR (voice-over): In Iraq, the battle lines are getting increasingly more blurred and more deadly. In January alone, more than 80 U.S. troops were killed. Who's doing it and how they can be stopped, four years into this war, U.S. commanders still aren't sure.

ADMIRAL WILLIAM FALLON, CENTCOM COMMANDER NOMINEE: The enemy that we face, particularly in Iraq, very adaptive, very skilled at observing and changing their tactics and procedures.

And so equipment that was, we thought, pretty effective in protecting our troops just a matter of months ago is now being, in fact, challenged by some of the techniques and devices over there.

STARR: Admiral Fallon, set to be the top Middle East commander, has reason to worry. Over the span of a week, three U.S. helicopters, apparently shot down. Five U.S. soldiers were killed in a carefully choreographed attack on a Karbala compound. Four were captured and then executed. Iranian-trained operatives may have been behind it.

And there's growing evidence of Iranian made roadside bombs coming into Iraq, bombs capable of shredding the strongest U.S. armored vehicles.

HENRY KISSINGER, FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE: They have the Al Qaeda influence and then we have the Shia/Sunni conflict. And they're all merging together in a sort of amorphous explosion of violence.

STARR: Defending and defeating that sort of amorphous violence is going to be the toughest challenge facing U.S. commanders who, like the enemy, will have to adapt and meet them head on.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

STARR: So Soledad, what are some solutions? Well, four years into this war, the military is about to spend billions of dollars on a whole brand new range of armored vehicles. They hope it's going to help -- Soledad.

S. O'BRIEN: Gosh, one would hope so. All right. Barbara Starr at the Pentagon for us. Thank you, Barbara -- Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Well, when Atlanta freezes, the entire air travel season gets a cold. Chad Myers is at ground zero for a big ice storm. We'll give you the latest.

And quick, what does BMI stand for? Do you know?

S. O'BRIEN: Body mass index.

M. O'BRIEN: Excellent, excellent. Head of the class for you, Soledad. Some states want to start measuring your kids' BMI, and it's making some parents mad.

And Dick Cheney's daughter, Mary, speaking out about her pregnancy.

You're watching AMERICAN MORNING, the most news in the morning delivered right here.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

S. O'BRIEN: Welcome back, everybody. The most news in the morning is right here on CNN. Here's a look at what we're watching for you.

Democratic Senator Carl Levin and Republican John Warner agree on a new resolution opposing President Bush's plan to send 21,000 new troops into Iraq.

Another top story for you. Snow and ice now bearing down on some southern states, all the way from Tennessee into North Carolina, as well. Hundreds of flights have already been canceled in the southeast -- Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: Well, these days in many schools the three "R's" have become reading, writing and rolls. Our kids are too fat, and some schools are looking at three other letters to try and fight the problem, BMI, or body mass index. But as some parents might put it, bothered, mad and incensed.

Dr. Sanjay Gupta has more in a "Fit Nation" report.

Good morning, Sanjay.

DR. SANJAY GUPTA, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Good morning, Miles.

It's interesting. BMI is something that's been out there for some time, body mass index. It's simply someone's weight with respect to their height. And a lot of schools, as you pointed out, have tried to glom onto these numbers as a tool to try and fight childhood obesity. But a lot of parents in a lot of districts still aren't sold.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GUPTA (voice-over): Jasmine Tolman (ph) is a happy 8-year-old. She's always enjoyed school. But when she got a note in class a few weeks ago, she worried.

VICKI ELLIOTT, JASMINE'S MOM: To receive a letter from the teacher usually says I got in trouble. And she wanted to know what it says.

GUPTA: What Jasmine received not a letter saying she'd done anything wrong. It was a notice telling her mother that her daughter was at risk of becoming obese.

Like many schools across the country, Jasmine's school district in Barnstable County, Massachusetts, is now taking body mass index, or BMI, readings of their pupils in some schools.

BMI is used to determine body fat. Jasmine was right on the line, at 66 pounds. But her mother said the note did nothing but humiliate her. ELLIOTT: Why was she receiving a letter and not everybody got one?

GUPTA: Because childhood obesity is at epidemic proportions nationwide, many states are now instituting BMI laws for public school children. At least 20 governors have introduced legislation and seven states have passed laws making it mandatory that parents be given their children's BMI scores, with information advising them to check with their pediatrician.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: This is a change in behavior that we have to implement. It's social engineering. As objectionable as that sounds, we're trying to influence people's attitudes.

GUPTA: Former Arkansas governor, Michael Huckabee, who lost 110 pounds himself, was the first to push through BMI legislation in his state back in 2003. In three years, Arkansas has actually seen its statewide childhood obesity numbers start to level off.

MICHAEL HUCKABEE, FORMER ARKANSAS GOVERNOR: We're not where we want to be, but we've stopped the runaway train.

GUPTA: But some parents say it's an invasion of privacy. They feel it's up to parents to work with their children on weight issues, and giving out BMI scores only puts pressure on kids to be slim.

Health experts disagree, saying it's time that parents realize that obesity is a lifetime illness that can cause serious lifetime problems.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

GUPTA: And this is going to be an issue that's going to be discussed for some time to come.

A couple things. Since Jasmine received her letter, that particular school district has decided to send those letters through the mail, as opposed to singling out children in school.

And also, you just heard about Governor -- former governor, Mike Huckabee, in Arkansas. Since he left office, that's actually been voted on to be repealed, primarily because of parental objection and because of lack of funding. So it seemed to work for a little bit, but parents don't seem to like it in the long run, Miles.

M. O'BRIEN: If parents do like it, there are plenty of ways to get your BMI. You can do it on the Web. You can go -- the CDC, I think has a site. You just put in a few numbers, and you get to the amount. Are those accurate?

GUPTA: Well, you know, there's a lot of people who are somewhat concerned about using BMI alone. It's a good screening test. It's not a good diagnostic test ultimately.

A couple of things: people who are athletes, for example, it may tend to overestimate your body fat, because you have a lot of muscle mass. And people who are older who have lost muscle mass for some reason, it may tend to underestimate. So it's a little bit of a screening tool to put you on the road to more testing perhaps.

M. O'BRIEN: All right. Yes, don't consider it a panacea or the silver bullet or all those cliches.

And let's talk about baby fat, shall we?

S. O'BRIEN: Or fat babies.

M. O'BRIEN: Sanjay, Sanjay, Daddio times two. Congratulations. Little baby Sky.

S. O'BRIEN: Aw, she's a week old, right?

GUPTA: She's a week old today, yes. I actually was just plugging her numbers into the BMI calculator, as well.

M. O'BRIEN: She's OK, I hope.

GUPTA: She's fine. And her older daughter -- her older sister, my older daughter, Sage, is 19 months old. There they are together.



M. O'BRIEN: That's so cute. Does she like her little sister?

GUPTA: She loves her little sister. It's wild for me. I've got to tell you. You guys both know this as parents of multiple children. It is -- it is wild to see how much my older daughter has grown. I still think of her as the little baby. But I bring the other baby home and suddenly, Sage seems like a really big girl. It's amazing.

M. O'BRIEN: She'll be driving before long. How is Rebecca doing? Is she OK? Everything good.

GUPTA: Well, I hope she's napping right now, instead of watching, because she's still up a lot, feeding the baby. But she's doing great. Thanks for asking.

S. O'BRIEN: Never sleep again, Sanjay. At least that's how I feel.

M. O'BRIEN: And you're helping out. We know you're doing a lot of diapers, right?

GUPTA: I'm trying to. I'm trying to.

S. O'BRIEN: Thanks, Sanjay. Congratulations.

GUPTA: Thanks for showing the pictures. Thank you.

S. O'BRIEN: Yes, our pleasure.

About a quarter past -- of the hour. If you're heading out the door, a quick check of the traveler's forecast, which is made kind of messy today because of the inclement weather around the country.

Good morning, Chad.

MYERS: I just want to say one thing first. Hey, Sanjay, you get two weeks off. Go home to your wife.

S. O'BRIEN: No, we need him. Don't tell him that.

MYERS: I guess. He can report from home.

(WEATHER REPORT)

S. O'BRIEN: All right, Chad. Thank you.

MYERS: You're welcome.

S. O'BRIEN: Coming up, from comedian to talk show host, and now we'll tell you what's next for Al Franken. He's looking for a new way to serve the nation. We'll tell you what he's doing.

Plus the big game this weekend. There is still time, Miles, to buy me a new high definition flat screen 65-inch TV.

M. O'BRIEN: We've got plenty right there.

S. O'BRIEN: Because I love...

M. O'BRIEN: One of these will fall off the truck.

S. O'BRIEN: I love the half-time show. Ali Velshi is "Minding Your Business". Stay with us. You're watching AMERICAN MORNING

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

S. O'BRIEN: In Arkansas, former President Bill Clinton's stepfather, Richard Kelly, is dead. He died in his home in Hot Springs. Sources close to the Clinton family say the 91-year-old Kelly had cancer.

In New York, a panel discussion. Vice President Dick Cheney's daughter Mary spoke out for the first time about her decision to have a baby. The "New York Times" quotes Cheney as saying the baby is a blessing from God; it's not a political statement. Mary Cheney is pregnant. She's due in the spring. She and her partner of 15 years, Heather Poe, say they're going to raise the child together.

Passing of note in Texas. Molly Ivins, a syndicated political columnist and best-selling author, has died after a long battle with breast cancer. She was 62 years old. More than 400 newspapers carried Molly Ivins' column.

In Minnesota, comedian and talk show host Al Franken reportedly planning a run for the Senate in his home state. Franken was raised in the Twin Cities, moved back there last year. He's leaving his Air America radio show later this month.

M. O'BRIEN: Coming up, Ali Velshi "Minding Your Business". Plus, Senator Joe Biden stumbles on the first official day of campaigning for the Oval Office. Did his Jon Stewart confessional end the kaffuffle? You're watching AMERICAN MORNING, the most news in the morning right here.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

S. O'BRIEN: Welcome back, everybody. The most news in the morning is right here on CNN. Some of the stories we're watching for you. Two men are headed to court in Boston in the next hour or so. They're accused of hanging these light boards of a cartoon character across the city of Boston. Some of those boards were mistaken for bombs.

And oh baby, a newborn boy in Mexico enters the world at 14.5 pounds, 22 inches long. That's that big baby next to a sort of normal-sized baby. His name is Super Tonio. He's being called that. He's doing just fine, apparently. Of course he's doing fine. He slept through the night. He's eating solid food. He's a giant baby.

M. O'BRIEN: He had his first wrestling bout last night. Go Super Tonio.

Hey, it's super Thursday, folks. There's a big football game coming up on Sunday, in case you hadn't heard. It's about four minutes before the hour. Ali Velshi is here with a Super Bowl preview. Super business report, you might say.

ALI VELSHI, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Yes. Well, you know, Super Bowl weekend is often a good weekend for television sales, the weeks leading up to it. In this case, 2006, as we've talked about, has been the year of the flat panel TV, these LCDs and plasmas. The price drops have been phenomenal, in excess of 30 percent in most cases. And there were some great deals.

And Super Bowl Sunday is one of those things where you think the pent-up demand would cause prices to go higher. But in fact, that's not the case. An estimated 2.5 million sets will be sold just for people who want to start watching them on Super Bowl Sunday.

Now, the prices are actually lower. You can now get a 42-inch screen for under \$1,000 in many cases. These are not plug and play in some cases. You can get them and put them on a stand but remember that if you go to buy one, first of all, since everybody else is rushing to get one, you might not have the models you want, particularly at the discounted rate, and the other thing is in many cases you've got to get them installed.

Once you add a few hundred bucks for the installation and \$100 for the cords and seeing what else you need, it could take a little while and a little money.

But this is going to be a big weekend. A lot of people are going to be watching their flat panel HDs for the first time for the Super Bowl -- Miles, Soledad.

M. O'BRIEN: All right. Thank you, Ali.

S. O'BRIEN: Well, you know what they say: open mouth, insert foot. He was only officially a candidate for a few hours before Delaware Senator Joe Biden was forced to come clean about some comments he made about his fellow senator, Barack Obama. Now, both men are, of course, running for president.

Last night "The Daily Show's" Jon Stewart asked Biden about some of the comments he made where he called Obama articulate and bright and clean.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JON STEWART, HOST, COMEDY CENTRAL'S "THE DAILY SHOW": Here's the line. And by the way, the "Philadelphia Inquirer" yesterday, you were quoted as saying, "The one lesson I learned from my previous presidential run is words matter."

SEN. JOE BIDEN (D-DE), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: That's right.

STEWART: And you can't take words lightly. And then you came out with this one. All right. Here we go. Listen to this one. This is great. "Barack Obama, I mean, you got the first mainstream African-American who's articulate, and bright, and clean, and a nice-looking guy. I mean, that's a storybook, man."

BIDEN: Let me tell you something, I spoke to Barack today.

STEWART: I bet you did.

BIDEN: I also spoke to Jesse and Al Sharpton and I also spoke to...

STEWART: And Michael Jordan and anybody you could get your hands on. The Jackson Five. Who else?

BIDEN: Michael didn't call me. Michael didn't call me.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

S. O'BRIEN: Well, Senator Obama, for his part, mostly dismissed the comments. He did take the opportunity, though, to praise past African-American presidential candidates. There have been a bunch.

M. O'BRIEN: Yes, there have. And...

S. O'BRIEN: Clean, most of them clean.

M. O'BRIEN: Every day, we're told.

All right. It's Thursday. You know what that means, boys?

S. O'BRIEN: Miles Cam.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Miles Cam day.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Miles Cam day.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Miles Cam day.

S. O'BRIEN: The practice was so much better than the real thing.

M. O'BRIEN: All right. Well, anyway, it's Miles Cam day. Send me a questions. I'll give you the answers shortly after the show. We've got a big deal on global warming this week. Tomorrow an important United Nations report, if you have any questions about that, we'd love to take them. But anything else good, too, including the ubiquitous "Are Soledad and I married?" The answer, of course, is yes, but not to each other.

MilesCam@CNN.com is the place to send the e-mails, a place to watch Pipeline, 10 a.m. Eastern, CNN.com/pipeline.

Coming up at the top of the hour, Chad Myers at the CNN Weather Center with a look at the weather. And it's a messy look, indeed.

(WEATHER REPORT)

MYERS: The next hour of AMERICAN MORNING starts right now.

M. O'BRIEN: Storm front, snow in the plains, ice expected along the East Coast. Hundreds of flights already canceled. You've just heard from Chad.

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