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THE COST OF WAR

'IT CHANGES WHO WE ARE'

Traumatic brain injury leaves an often-invisible but life-altering wound



WOUNDED: Doctors removed virtually the entire left side of Spec. Robert Warren's skull in May after he suffered a traumatic brain injury in a blast near Kandahar. Last month, he and his wife, Brittanie, stayed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center before surgery to repair his skull.

BY CHRISTIAN DAVENPORT

The doctor begins with an apology because the questions are rudimentary, almost insultingly so. But Robert Warren, fresh off the battlefield in Afghanistan and a surgeon's table, doesn't seem to mind.

Yes, he knows how old he is: 20. He knows his Army rank: specialist. He knows that it's Thursday, that it's June, that the year is 2010. Quickly, he corrects the small stumble: "It's 2009." He knows that his wife is Brittanie, that she's due with their first child any day now, and that they "got married two to three weeks before I went to that country."

Stumble No. 2: "That country?"

David Williamson doesn't let it slide. "Which country?"

"Whatever country it was that I got blown up in," Warren says.

In a conference room at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, he purses his lips, and as he searches for the word "Afghanistan," he slides his hand over the left side of his head, which is encased, like an apple with a bite taken out of it.

"Crap, I can't remember," he says finally.

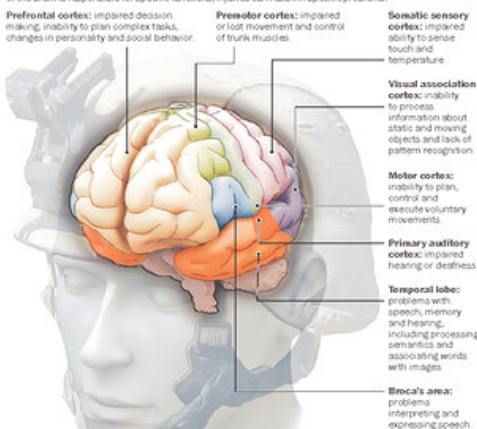
Warren has trouble remembering a lot of things. Which isn't surprising, considering that several pieces of shrapnel tore through his skull after insurgents outside Kandahar blew up his truck with a rocket-propelled grenade in May. One piece came to rest in the center of Warren's brain — two millimeters from his carotid artery — where it remains, suspended like a piece of fruit in a gelatin.

COST OF WAR CONTINUED ON A5

Video profiles of recovery: washingtonpost.com/tbi

Effects of damage

Combat injuries have very specific repercussions in the soft tissue of the brain, and because each area of the brain is responsible for specific functions, injuries can result in specific problems.



SOURCES: David Williamson, medical director of National Naval Medical Center; and the U.S. Army's Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The human body edited by Charles G. Grossman, State Security.

Military drones aid CIA's mission

TAKING AIM AT INSURGENTS

Strategy in Pakistan carries significant risks

BY GREG MILLER

The CIA is using an arsenal of armed drones and other equipment provided by the U.S. military to secretly escalate its operations in Pakistan by striking targets beyond the reach of American forces based in Afghanistan, U.S. officials said.

The merging of covert CIA operations and military firepower is part of a high-stakes attempt by the Obama administration to deal decisive blows to Taliban insurgents who have regained control of swaths of territory in Afghanistan but stage most of their operations from sanctuaries across that country's eastern border.

The move represents a significant evolution of an already controversial targeted killing program run by the CIA. The agency's drone program began as

a sporadic effort to kill members of the al-Qaeda terrorist network but in the past month it has been delivering what amounts to a cross-border bombing campaign in coordination with conventional military operations a few miles away.

The campaign continued Saturday amid reports that two new CIA drone strikes had killed 16 militants in northwest Pakistan, following 22 such attacks last month.

The strategy shift carries significant risks, particularly if it is perceived as an end-run around the Pakistan government's longstanding objections to American military operations within its domain.

Indeed, the surge in drone strikes over the past four weeks has to a large extent targeted elements of a network led by Jalaluddin Haqqani, a militant regarded as a close ally of Pakistan's powerful Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate.

Officials said last week that some of the recent strikes have also been aimed at disrupting al-Qaeda terror plots targeting Europe. A U.S. official said the State Department was weighing whether to issue an alert that

DRONES CONTINUED ON A13

High-court divide has a new dynamic

For first time, justices' ideological split could be painted as partisan

BY ROBERT BARNES

The Supreme Court begins its new term Monday with unprecedented diversity among its members, but also the potential for a split that would for the first time in decades reflect the partisan ideologies of the presidents who appointed them.

The defining story of the new term may be twofold: the rapid evolution of the court headed by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. — the first of four new justices in the past five years — and what the change in justices means for the court's image and actions.

The most obvious will be the presence of three women, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who had hoped for such a day when she

on postpolitics.com

Supreme Court seating challenge

How much do you know about the Supreme Court? Try to seat the current justices in our interactive feature.

was confirmed 17 years ago, said it will send a powerful signal about the nation's governance when she and Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan take their places.

"The major difference is going to be the public perception of where women are in the justice system," the 77-year-old Ginsburg said in a recent interview in her chambers. "The three of us, we are here to stay."

"When the schoolchildren file in and out of the court and they look up and they see three women, then that will seem natural

COURT CONTINUED ON A11

Brutal drug violence stalks mayors in Mexico

BY ANNE MARIE O'CONNOR AND WILLIAM BOOTH

TANCITARO, MEXICO — Gustavo Sanchez worked hard in this Mexican farming town at one of the most dangerous jobs in the country. He was a mayor. Last week, he disappeared. A town councilman disappeared. Their bodies were found Monday, the skulls

smashed open in the fifth killing of a mayor in six weeks.

According to supporters at city hall, Sanchez was honest and brave. Less than a year ago, the 36-year-old schoolteacher and martial-arts instructor agreed to lead this prosperous western community after the previous mayor abruptly quit, citing threats by drug traffickers, and took the entire town council with

him.

Sanchez's short political career ended on the side of a muddy, loamy road, his handsome, mustachioed face unrecognizable. His mutilated colleague Rafael Equihua lay dead beside him. At least 11 mayors have been killed this year across Mexico, as a spooky sense of permanent siege takes hold in the many communities where rival mafias fight for

control of local drug sales, marijuana and poppy fields, methamphetamine labs and billion-dollar smuggling routes to the United States.

In recent months, one mayor was killed by masked gunmen who stormed city hall. One was dragged out of his home and later executed, allegedly by renegade

MEXICO CONTINUED ON A14

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D.C. must-reads

Excerpts from Dana Milbank's new book on Glenn Beck; Neil Sheehan on Bob Woodward's "Obama's Wars." B1

THE WORLD

Peace talks on rocks

Settlement issue separates the Israelis and Palestinians. A12

SPORTS

A Philly return

Donovan McNabb, an Eagle for the first 11 years of his career, comes back to Philadelphia today in a Redskins uniform. D1

College football scores

► Air Force 14, Navy 6
► Va. Tech 41, N.C. State 30
► Florida St. 34, Virginia 14
► Maryland 21, Duke 16

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Bay Area

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Sporting Green

► **Giants:** S.F. falls 4-2, still needs elusive win. **B1**
► **Commemorative poster:** Rookie Buster Posey. **B14**



PUBLIC HEALTH CARE



Kelly Lauderdale, who moved into 1811 Eastlake in Seattle three years ago, has cut back to a six-pack or so a day. Photos by Meryl Scherker / Special to The Chronicle

S.F. looks at Seattle 'wet house,' where alcoholics drink in peace

By Rachel Gordon
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

SEATTLE — The 5-year-old building at 1811 Eastlake on the edge of Seattle's downtown area is fairly nondescript: four stories, blue and gray in color — not unlike apartment complexes found in many cities.

It's what's inside that has made this development one of the nation's most interesting and unusual public health programs for chronic homeless drunks — and one that some San Francisco officials are considering replicating.

The government-subsidized housing project in Seattle



Lauderdale, who likes to cook at 1811 Eastlake, says alcoholism cost him his catering job.

caters exclusively to 75 hardcore alcoholics who came from the streets and are allowed to keep drinking, snub treatment and still keep a roof over their heads.

Driving the policy is the idea that getting these people into housing saves money and lives, and improves the quality of life in neighborhoods hard-hit by anti-social behavior.

The San Francisco Department of Public Health already provides housing for about 1,000 of the formerly homeless in buildings with mixed populations of the mentally ill, substance abusers and people

Wet house continues on A15

Whitman, Brown spar on illegals

Fallout over housekeeper dominates second debate

By Carla Marinucci
CHRONICLE POLITICAL WRITER

Republican Meg Whitman and Democrat Jerry Brown clashed in an impassioned, sometimes angry gubernatorial debate Saturday in which immigration dominated the harsh exchanges and stoked the fallout from Whitman's admission last week that she had employed an undocumented immigrant.

The former eBay CEO, trying to contain the political damage, sought to cast Brown at the hourlong forum in Fresno as the manipulator who pulled the strings behind the revelation that she had hired housekeeper Nicky Diaz Santillan.

"Jerry, you know you should be ashamed, and you and your surrogates — put her deportation at risk," she said. Turning to face the state attorney general at the podium, Whitman accused Brown of "sacrificing Nicky Diaz on the altar of your political ambitions."

But Brown, who kept Whitman on the defensive for most of the hour, counterattacked by arguing that her actions in hiring — and then firing — a woman she called "a member of the

Debate continues on A10

► **Bay Area:** Willie Brown and Mattie & Ross weigh in on the Whitman housekeeper debate. **C1**

CALIFORNIA BUDGET

Solution to deficit nears, but cost to taxpayers unclear

By Wyatt Buchanan
CHRONICLE SACRAMENTO BUREAU

SACRAMENTO — The deal to solve California's budget deficit could result in a spending plan by the end of the week, but it won't be known for months how much the crippling impasse and the proposal to end it will cost taxpayers.

Even with a budget in place, though, the state still faces the prospect of issuing IOUs.

Leaders at the Capitol said Friday they would probably hold a hearing on the plan to solve the \$19 billion deficit on Wednesday and vote on it the next day. It has been 95 days since the start of the fiscal year in California.

Assembly Speaker John Pérez, who briefed members of his caucus on the plan Saturday, said the budget "makes smart economic choices" by avoiding new taxes, deep cuts to education

Budget continues on A14

Only in The Chronicle

Exclusive to the print edition: Stories in today's Chronicle with this logo can be found only in The Chronicle's print and e-editions at this time. They will be online at sfgate.com beginning Tuesday. E-editions are available for purchase at sfgate.com/ZKFB. Print subscribers can go to the same link to sign up for free e-editions.

Today's exclusive stories are **Sunday Profile** and **Public Health Care** on A1, **Native Son** on A2, **Willie Brown and Mattie & Ross** on C1, **Kathleen Pender** and **Andrew S. Ross** on D1, **Miss Bigelow** on N3, **Bruce Jenkins** on B1, **Scott Ostler** on B2, **John Shea** on B3, **Tom Stienstra** on B3.

SUNDAY PROFILE Tierra Rogers

Struggling to find new direction

By Ron Kirochick
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Tierra Rogers still sports an expression equal parts sadness and frustration.

She stands on the sideline at Haas Pavilion, pensively watching her Cal teammates practice. She wears a McDonald's All-American T-shirt — she fulfilled her father's dream by playing in the prestigious high school all-star game last year — chats briefly with DeNesha Stallworth, trades a quick high-five with Rachelle Federio and then vanishes. Basketball used to be the way Rogers coped with the January 2006 murder of her father, San Francisco anti-violence activist Terrell Rogers. He was her friend and confidant, talking about everything from boys to hoops to her love of shoes, until he was gunned down during halftime at one of her high school games.



Tierra Rogers watches her former teammates practice at UC Berkeley.

So when Tierra, one of the nation's top prep players at Sacred Heart Cathedral, collapsed on the court in Berkeley on Sept. 21, 2009, it sent her spinning toward a cruel and painful outcome.

Rogers continues on A8

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partly cloudy.
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