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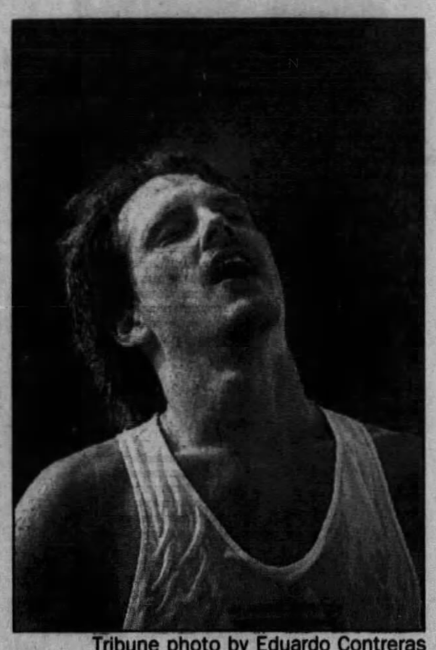
Monday



Tribune photo by Eduardo Contreras

What a relief: David Henrich of Hoffman Estates cools off after Sunday's Chicago/Du Page County Triathlon.

No kidding: Competitors in the Bulls' 3-on-3 Classic in Grant Park took their game seriously. **In Sports.**

The comforts of home: Travelers are saving on vacation expenses through a network of home exchanges. **In Your Money.**

The way to help: Your donation to the Neighbors in Need Fund helps flood victims. **Sec. 2, pg. 5.**

Weather

Chicago area: Monday: Partly cloudy; high 79 degrees. Monday night: Partly cloudy; low 60. Tuesday: Increasingly cloudy, chance of showers; high 77. Details in **Sec. 2, pg. 5.**

Wild bullet cuts short a life

Boy dies in area where too many reach for guns

By Colin McMahon
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Getting a gun in the neighborhood where 12-year-old Michael Lowery was shot to death is, in the words of one resident, as easy as buying cigarettes.

Wentworth Area Detective Cmdr. Fred Miller describes it another way.

"It has gotten crazy," said Miller, a Chicago cop for 35 years. "Time was when a gun meant something. That was one of the big things about becoming a police officer—you got a gun!

"Now, hell, one gun comes out, and everybody's got one."

Nights like June 20 make it seem that way.

Killing our children

36
Dead in 1993

Shortly after the Bulls won a third championship, Michael Lowery, 12, lost his life. His neighborhood celebrated with firecrackers and gunfire—and an errant shot killed him. Michael was the 26th child under age 15 to be slain this year.

Moments after John Paxson's three-point shot gave the Chicago Bulls their third straight National Basketball Association title, much of this championship city exploded with the sound of celebratory gunfire.

Michael Lowery was standing with friends on 35th Street just east of Martin Luther King Drive at about 9:30 p.m., a half-hour or so after the Bulls game ended. It was hard to tell the firecrackers from the gunshots in much of their South Side neighborhood that night. But when a couple of bullets whizzed past the boys' heads, they knew to scatter.

Michael never got the chance. A single bullet fired from who-knows-where pierced his skull. He died right there, for all purposes, although the official pronouncement would come nearly a day later at Cook County Hospital.

Tribune photo by Ovie Carter

Michael Lowery's half-brother, Patrick Harris, 3, looks at a picture of the slain boy as their mother, Patricia Lyles, sits nearby.

The murder is unlikely to be solved. The best lead detectives had—an officer saw a car driving by at the same time the shots were fired—failed to pan out. And the commotion and violence of the night made it impossible for detectives to employ their standard

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Rivers peaking, dread rises

Alton awash as levees are smashed

By Staci D. Kramer and Michael A. Lev
SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

ALTON, Ill.—At the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers Sunday, a month's worth of floodwater and apprehension neared their peak.

As the two swollen waterways approached record-level crests, water gushed through levees on both sides of the Mississippi, swamping downtown Alton and its water supply and sweeping farmhouses off their foundations in rural Missouri.

But the main flood wall protecting downtown St. Louis was holding and thousands of river-town residents and business owners who might have been devastated stayed mostly dry behind frantically reinforced levees.

"We've had some losses but some remarkable saves," said Elizabeth Faulkenberry, emergency management spokeswoman for Jefferson County, Mo., south of St. Louis, where levees were breached in three places but only one couldn't be patched, flooding a subdivision.

The National Weather Service said Sunday night that the Mississippi below the Missouri River was expected to crest at 49.7 feet overnight. But the Army Corps of Engineers warned that those depending on levees should be prepared for a 50- or 51-foot crest.

Even if the levees hold through the crest, they will have to withstand weeks of pressure as the water slowly recedes. That pressure proved too much Sunday for downtown Alton, Ill., a few miles north of St. Louis.

Although the sandbag levee

SEE FLOOD, PAGE 7

AP photos

Tom Hollie bails at his family's home in St. Charles, Mo., as the Missouri River rises Sunday.

Madonna Tackaberry is grief-stricken as she is forced to evacuate her St. Charles home. At right, a levee gives way in Monroe County, Ill., and the Mississippi River obliterates a farm.

Europeans overhaul their monetary plan

By Ray Moseley

LONDON—European Community ministers agreed early Monday to a radical reform of monetary policy in a bid to resolve a crisis that threatened to derail long-range plans for a single currency and to delay the achievement of European union.

The reform involves the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) set up 15 years ago to halt wild fluctuations in currency exchange rates and to pave the way toward eventual monetary union.

Under the ERM, Germany, with its strong deutsche mark, acted as the anchor of the system. The currencies of the other 11 member countries were allowed to fluctuate against the deutsche mark only within a narrow band.

> The cause of the currency crisis is the economic difficulty in which Germany has found itself since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

But Britain and Italy withdrew temporarily from the ERM last September when their currencies came under strong speculative pressure.

In recent weeks, similar pressures have been brought to bear against the French franc, the Spanish peseta, the Portuguese escudo and the Danish krone. If the French, in particular, were forced to withdraw from the ERM, the system would come crashing down.

To try to head that off, EC finance ministers met in Brussels for almost 12 hours and agreed to widen the bands within which currencies can fluctuate.

Until now, the French franc and most major currencies were permitted to fluctuate within a range of 2¼ percent vis-a-vis the deutsche mark, while the peseta and escudo could fluctuate 6 percent. The ministers agreed to allow almost all currencies to fluctuate by as much as 15 percent.

This will have the effect of giving the deutsche mark more room to rise against

SEE MONEY, PAGE 10

House post office staffer told FBI about suspicions in 1979

By Michael Tackett and William Gaines
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITERS

WASHINGTON—More than a decade ago, Pat Saylor, a secretary at the House post office, called the FBI with a startling allegation: At least four members of Congress were involved in a scheme to trade cash for stamps.

She named names. She described how members did it. She didn't know everything, but the FBI treated her story seriously and assigned agents to investigate.

Eventually, however, two of her superiors contradicted her story. For that and other reasons, lawyers at the Justice Department dropped the matter.

What the lawyers didn't know was that Saylor's bosses, Postmaster Robert Rota and Supervisor of Accounts Mary Bowman, weren't telling the truth.

Had the matter been pursued more vigorously, the cash for stamps scandal that dominates today's headlines and has implicated Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.) in the embezzlement of $21,300 in federal funds might never have occurred. Rostenkowski has emphatically denied any wrongdoing.

Yet the allegations pose the most serious threat Rostenkowski

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Showdown: David Boren is one of the Senate defectors posing a budget problem for Clinton. **Page 3.**

U.S. 'determined to act' in Bosnia if NATO balks

FROM TRIBUNE WIRES

SHANNON, Ireland—The Clinton administration has told NATO allies that if European nations don't agree to tougher action on Bosnia, the United States is prepared to act alone, a State Department spokesman said Sunday.

"We cannot allow the strangulation of Sarajevo to continue," said Mike McCurry, the spokesman.

McCurry's comments came on the eve of a meeting in Brussels of the North Atlantic Council, the political arm of NATO.

The briefing took place on Secretary of State Warren Christopher's plane en route to the Middle East. Christopher is not attending the NATO meeting.

"The United States is determined to act," McCurry said. "We prefer to act in a multilat-

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