

BRIEFLY  
NORTHWESTCity weighs its options  
for PepsiCo settlement

ALBANY — The Albany City Council has yet to decide what to do with an \$18.5 million settlement it received from PepsiCo.

The council spent 2½ hours discussing the matter Wednesday night, then decided it needed more time and called for another work session.

Albany got the millions in a March settlement. The city sued Pepsi after the company failed to make good on a contract to build a Gatorade factory.

Trans-Cascade gas line  
runs into financial trouble

PORTLAND — Backers of a proposed \$800 million natural gas pipeline across the Oregon Cascades told federal energy regulators this week that their project is in limbo and needs “additional commercial underpinning” before it can move forward.

Palomar Gas Transmission, a joint venture between Northwest Natural Gas Co. and Trans-Canada Corp., told the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in a vaguely worded letter dated Tuesday that it “was reviewing its project plan” in light of the bankruptcy of its biggest prospective customer — a proposed liquefied natural gas terminal on the Columbia River that suspended its own permitting efforts in May.

## NATION

Inventories rise, sales dip,  
Commerce figures show

WASHINGTON — Inventories held by wholesalers rose for a fifth consecutive month in May but sales fell for the first time in more than a year, sending a cautionary signal about the strength of the recovery.

Wholesale inventories increased 0.5 percent while sales dropped 0.3 percent, the Commerce Department said Friday. It was the first decline for sales since March 2009.

The May sales decline is the latest sign that the economic recovery could be losing momentum in the second half of the year.

Weakness in sales could discourage businesses from boosting their orders.

That would translate into a slowdown in factory production.

Boeing, European firm bid  
to build refueling plane

WASHINGTON — For the companies vying over the past decade for the Air Force's troubled \$35 billion refueling plane contract, it is try, try and try again.

Rival planemakers Boeing and the European defense contractor EADS submitted bids this week, Boeing on Friday, for the chance to build the new refueling plane.

It is the latest round in a tussle that has yet to produce a winner and has forced the Air Force to keep up its fleet of planes, some of which are more than 50 years old.

## WORLD

Toyota president aims  
to move beyond recalls

NAGOYA, Japan — The president of Toyota Motor Corp. said he has spent the past year apologizing for the automaker's missteps and now hopes to lead the company past its recall crisis and restore confidence in its vehicles.

Akio Toyoda, speaking to U.S. reporters on Friday, also reiterated the company's commitment to fuel-efficient vehicles and said the automaker is testing an electric car prototype with technology from Tesla Motors Inc.

— News service reports

## Smart phone makers sued

The patent holder that got a \$600 million settlement out of BlackBerry goes after Apple, Google and others

By PETER SVENSSON  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The patent-holding company that won a settlement of more than \$600 million from the maker of the BlackBerry said Friday that it has sued six other companies in the smart phone industry.

Patent company NTP Inc. is suing Apple Inc., Google Inc., Microsoft Corp., HTC Corp., Motorola Inc. and LG Electronics

Inc., claiming infringement of the same patents that were at issue in its case against BlackBerry maker Research In Motion Ltd.

The lawsuit against RIM ended with a \$612.5 million settlement in 2006. However, changes in court practices have reduced NTP's power to win large settlements, and if NTP prevails, it's likely to receive much less from each defendant this time.

Microsoft and Apple said

they had no comment. The other targets did not respond to requests for comment. The lawsuits were filed Thursday afternoon in U.S. District Court in Richmond, Va.

NTP was founded by Thomas Campana, an inventor, and Don Stout, a lawyer. Campana worked on wireless e-mail technology in the early 1990s, but never commercialized the technology. He died in 2004.

In the aftermath of the RIM settlement, NTP's patents have been re-examined by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and many of their claims have

been thrown out. But the office upheld three of the 10 patent claims that RIM was found to have infringed, said Stout, NTP's president.

“Now we have to move forward,” Stout said. “We hope we can resolve these cases without having to go to trial.”

NTP now faces a different, and more difficult, legal environment than it did when it sued RIM, said Alexander Poltorak, chairman and CEO of General Patent Corp., which represents small companies and individual inventors against larger companies.

PT CRUISER'S  
RIDE IS OVER

Chrysler's homage to an earlier time came to symbolize the automaker's decline

By DEE-ANN DURBIN  
The Associated Press

DETROIT — A decade ago, the PT Cruiser roared onto the road with trend-setting looks and Al Capone swagger. In a sea of bland Honda Civics and Toyota Camrys, it was a retro hit. Chrysler could barely keep up with demand.

On Friday morning, the last Cruiser rolled off the assembly line in Mexico, finally killed off after years of declining popularity. Chrysler sold just 18,000 last year, compared with nearly 145,000 in 2001.

What happened in between is symbolic of the larger problems that helped drive Chrysler into bankruptcy — and a cautionary tale for its new owners, who are planning to release a similarly stylish car later this year.

Love it or hate it, the Cruiser was a head-turner. With flared fenders, a sloping hood and tall doors, the Cruiser was a cross between an old-time milk truck and luxurious sedans of the 1930s. Its looks were different from anything on the road.

It spawned imitators like the retro Chevrolet HHR, and

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CARLOS OSORIO/The Associated Press, 1999

## Google wins permission to stay online in China

A one-year extension comes after the Web search giant stops automatically routing searches around censors

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE  
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Google won permission Friday to maintain its website in China and keep its foothold in the world's most populous nation after bowing to pressure to eliminate a virtual detour around the country's online censorship requirements.

Entering search requests at Google.cn from within mainland China now requires an extra click, a change made last week to appease communist regula-

tors. Users who click anywhere on the page are then taken to a site based in Hong Kong, which isn't subject to Beijing's censorship rules.

Since March, Google had been automatically rerouting search requests from the mainland to the Hong Kong service.

The small concession was enough to persuade China's regulators to renew Google's Internet license for at least another year, the company said. There was no immediate statement on the website of China's Internet regulator, the Ministry of Indus-

try and Information Technology.

It's the latest twist in a diplomatic dance that's been unfolding since Google vowed in January to end its four-year practice of omitting search results that the Chinese government considers subversive or pornographic. Google reversed course after blaming Chinese computer hackers for an attack aimed at stealing the company's technology and e-mail information from human rights activists.

As soon as Google published a Jan. 12 blog post publicly challenging China's censorship policies, “it became clear that Google.cn could never operate the same way again,” Internet analyst Scott Kessler of Standard

& Poor's said.

Even if Web surfers in mainland China click on Google.cn to get to the Hong Kong search engine, China's government can still block results by using technology controls commonly known as its “Great Firewall.”

Google and the Chinese government have been trying to uphold their conflicting principles while protecting their economic interests.

Google wants to remain in China because the country is expected to be an Internet gold mine for decades. China's government seems to realize losing a technology powerhouse would be a setback in its effort to cultivate more innovation.

Pump  
prices  
end week  
lower

However, gasoline still costs more than it did a year ago

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Drives to the beach and summer road trips will cost less this weekend, with average gasoline pump prices around the country more than 4 cents lower than a week ago.

A gallon of unleaded regular costs \$2.713, according to AAA, Wright Express and Oil Price Information Service. A year ago the average was \$2.58 a gallon. In the Eugene-Springfield area, the average price Friday was \$2.92, compared with \$2.74 a year ago.

Most analysts think gas prices have peaked for the summer and will be generally lower over the next couple of months. Demand remains weak with many consumers concerned about high unemployment numbers and the strength of the economic recovery.

Oil prices rose for the third straight day on Friday, helped by improving stock prices and lower crude supplies. Benchmark crude added 65 cents to settle at \$76.09 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Oil prices have risen this week with the stock market, which rebounded from a pre-holiday sell-off last week. The Dow Jones industrial average rose more than 59 points to close at 10,198.03. “The DJIA and crude have not been moving point-for-point, but they have had similar-sized gains in numbers,” energy consultancy Cameron Hanover said in a note to investors.

Crude prices got a boost from a government report that said oil supplies dropped last week. Crude inventories fell by 5 million barrels, the Energy Department's Energy Information Administration said Thursday, more than the 3.5 million barrels drop forecast in an analysts' survey by Platts, the energy information arm of McGraw-Hill Cos.