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What do we owe the wrongfully accused?



1st slot dues a month away

Racetracks face state's Sept. 15 deadline for \$13 million down payments

By James Nash
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Facing late fees of \$100,000 per day, Ohio's seven horse-racing tracks are scrambling to come up with \$13 million each by Sept. 15 to qualify for thousands of slot machines authorized last month by Gov. Ted Strickland and state

legislators.

One of the tracks is owned by a bankrupt company, while another recently was threatened with closure. A third track is owned by a company that backs a separate proposal for casinos in Ohio's largest cities.

And the remaining tracks are in various states of economic dis-

stress, owing both to the recession and a long-term decline in the number of people who wager on horse races.

Still, most of the track owners told *The Dispatch* yesterday that they expect to come up with the money on time.

The Sept. 15 payment is the first in a series of five — totaling

\$65 million per track — that the Strickland administration requires for track owners to install 2,500 video-lottery terminals per facility.

"I look forward to being the first licensed video-lottery-terminal operator in the state of Ohio," said Bob Griffin, president and chief executive of MTR Gaming Group, a West Virginia company that owns Scioto Downs south of Columbus.

Franklin County's other horse track, Beulah Park in Grove City, also expects to ante up.

"I can reassure you that Beulah Park will make the payment," owner Charles J. Ruma said.

Yesterday, Strickland aides released a series of proposed rules governing the racetrack slot machines that include a schedule of

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JONATHAN QUILTER | DISPATCH

Elizabeth Grunewald reacts after eating a piece of pineapple that tastes overly sweet thanks to the African miracle berry she ate first. COSI employees tested the effects of the fruit in advance of a "flavor tripping" event to be held Aug. 20.

\$224 MILLION REDUCTION

College students lose aid from state

Schools' temporary funds, loans to fill gap as grants cut or ended

By Zach Swartz
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

State budget cuts mean more debt for Ohio State University student Chris Blankenship.

Blankenship, 32, a digital-media major on the Newark campus, has resigned himself to bigger student loans after the state cut about \$224 million from the Ohio College Opportunity Grant, the state's top need-based grant program.

"When it comes down to the end, I'm just going to have to pay more back," Blankenship said.

Last year, grant recipients at public colleges could qualify for up to \$2,496 a year, based on estimated family contributions. Now, students at the main campuses of public universities will receive a flat grant of about \$1,000 a year. The 44,577 students enrolled at Ohio's 24 regional campuses will receive no money.

Ohio State and some other public schools have tried to fill the gap, at least for now.

Last week, OSU students at both the main campus and branches were informed that the

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HOW SWEET IT IS?

By Doug Caruso
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

They're dropping acid at COSI. Not the Electric Kool-Aid, Magic Bus, hippie kind of acid.

Think citric acid. As in raw lemon wedge.

"It tasted like lemon candy," said Chris Weldon, the catering chef at the science museum. "Like too-sweet lemon candy. Mostly, it tastes like I just had a mouthful of sugar."

A few minutes before Weldon bit into the lemon wedge, he had chewed on a



The African miracle berry makes the tongue think sweet instead of sour.

miracle berry, a fruit native to western Africa that makes the tongue think sweet when confronted with sour.

He and his co-workers were preparing for the first "flavor tripping" event at the museum on Aug. 20, when visitors will chew up a berry and then spend the next hour sampling foods that include jalapeño peppers, vinegar, semi-sweet chocolate and even goat cheese.

Susan Peters, a COSI employee who tried the berries, got a rare chance to sip tequila on the job yesterday during the test run. "It hits your taste buds, and

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REPLACING JOE TESTA

Republicans pick lawyer for county auditor's job

By Barbara Carmen
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Local Republicans tapped Clarence Mingo, a lawyer and Gulf War veteran, as the new Franklin County auditor last night.

"For some, these offices are political prizes. For me, it is nothing but a privilege," said Mingo, 37. His wife, Angela, and parents watched as he was selected by unanimous vote for the appointment.

He promised party members that "you will have dignified conduct ... and you will have absolutely the best I have to offer."

Auditor Joe Testa, who retired July 31 after 17 years on the job, had endorsed Mingo after meeting with him and a handful of other candidates.

"Clarence impresses me as having an excellent balance of education, intellect, analytical skills, decision-making experience, business success and service to his country and his community," Testa wrote to fellow Republicans.

Testa said Mingo is both competent and electable.

Mingo said he plans no major shake-ups and that the office is well-run. But he hopes to forge

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Cameras give cops superhuman set of eyes

High-tech tool can read license plates

By Dean Narciso
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

While on routine patrol along Hague Avenue this year, Franklin County Deputy Sheriff Joel Chairez passed a car that wouldn't have stood out.

But it caught the eye of two cameras mounted on his cruiser.

His console-mounted computer instantly flashed a picture of the car and set off a foghorn-like drone. The cameras had linked the car's license plate to a database that identified the owner as a rape suspect from Whitehall.

Chairez is convinced that the cameras are help-

ing to locate and nail criminals.

"I wouldn't know that they would have warrants on them or expired tags," he said of drivers he passes on the street daily. "It frees up my hands so I can just focus on driving. And it's quick. It's really nice."

Law officers increasingly are turning to cameras to automate police work. Traffic cameras nab red-

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Deputy Sheriff Joel Chairez's cruiser has two cameras that scan plates to find drivers wanted on arrest warrants, or expired tags.



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