

IN SPORTS: THE NEW YORK GIANTS FIRE HEAD COACH JIM FASSEL, BUT HE WILL FINISH OUT THE SEASON

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Thursday

# The Day

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## GOVERNOR UNDER FIRE

*'Every human being has shortcomings and has experienced failures. Over these last few weeks I have grappled with more than my fair share of failures and with these failures there is embarrassment and a profound sense of humility. Today, as I did last week, I ask the people of Connecticut for their forgiveness, not their sympathy. I am sorry for my actions and take full responsibility.'*

Gov. John G. Rowland

# Rowland Asks For Forgiveness



**Above:** Gov. John G. Rowland and his wife, Patty, prepare to enter a breakfast meeting of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce in Cromwell on Wednesday. In his first public address since admitting he made false remarks about work on his summer cottage, Rowland apologized for his actions but vowed to stay on the job.

## Governor's speech gets mixed reaction as polls show declining support

By KENTON ROBINSON  
Day Staff Writer

Cromwell — As polls showed his public support crumbling, Gov. John G. Rowland Wednesday asked Connecticut's citizens to forgive and remember.

"As I ask for your forgiveness," Rowland said, "I also ask for your support to keep all things in perspective and keep all things in proportion — the good of nine years versus the bad."

Within the hour, U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, had issued a statement telling the governor that if more improprieties are revealed he should resign "to spare the state and its citizens the misery of a divisive, protracted and demoralizing inquiry."

Rowland, whose administration is the focus of a grand jury investigating corruption in the awarding of state contracts, has come under fire for accepting gifts from contractors and political appointees ranging from renovations to his lakeside cottage in Litchfield to a free hot tub.

The controversy blew up in Rowland's face Friday when he admitted to accepting gifts he previously had denied receiving.

Two separate polls, conducted Monday and Tuesday by the University of Connecticut and Quinnipiac University, showed that those revelations have undermined the public's confidence in the governor. Only 18 percent of those



**U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons believes Gov. Rowland should resign if more improprieties are revealed.**

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### INSIDE:

Gov. Rowland, in his first public address since the controversy erupted, asks the people of Connecticut for "their forgiveness, not their sympathy." A8

Patty Rowland, the governor's wife, lambasts the media with her own version of "Twas the Night Before Christmas." A8

Excerpts from a letter by U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, in which he questions the "personal integrity of the Governor and his capacity to lead and govern." A9

## Opinion polls keeping the heat on Rowland

By MATTHEW J. MALONE  
Day Staff Writer

Two new opinion polls slamming Gov. John G. Rowland did little to change the viewpoints of local legislators, whose opinions Wednesday still ranged from disgust to reserved disapproval.

On Wednesday, Quinnipiac University released a poll that showed registered voters split over whether the governor should resign. The results followed Rowland's admission Friday that he lied about receiving free work on his summer home

from politically connected friends. Forty-four percent of those polled said Rowland should step down. Forty-five percent said he should remain in office.

Seventy-three percent of those polled said the governor was dishonest.

Rowland received a 30 percent approval rating, the lowest of a Connecticut, New York, New Jersey or Pennsylvania governor or mayor since the university began polling the states in 1994 and 1996, Poll Director Douglas Schwartz said.

See POLLS page A9

Do you approve or disapprove of the way John Rowland is handling his job as governor?

Approve ..... 30%  
Disapprove ..... 61%

Would you say that John Rowland is honest and trustworthy, or not?

Yes ..... 18%  
No ..... 73%

Do you think Gov. Rowland should or should not resign from office?

Should ..... 44%  
Should not ..... 45%

## Sub base coalition still wary of shutdown despite reassurances from Navy

By ROBERT A. HAMILTON  
Day Staff Writer

New London — The Navy might not close the Naval Submarine Base in Groton after a federal review that starts next year, but leaders of a local "save the base" movement say that doesn't mean the base is safe over the long term.

John C. Markowicz, chairman of the Subase Realignment Coalition, and Vice Chairman Frank "Mick" O'Beirne traveled to Washington last week to meet with Assistant Navy Secretary Hansford T. Johnson about the Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, process slated to begin next year.

"He was very clear it is his intent to focus on the 'R' of the BRAC, which is 'realignment,' so it sounds like he doesn't want to close anything down," Markowicz said. "But it's kind of a double-edged sword."

See SUB BASE page A7

## Otto Graham, NFL Hall of Famer and former CGA coach, dead at 82

### Former Browns' star spent over 2 decades at Coast Guard Academy

Staff and wire reports

Otto Graham, the professional football great who spent 22 years as athletic director and football coach at Coast Guard Academy and became a champion for cancer research, died Wednesday of an aneurysm of the aorta at a hospital in Sarasota, Fla. He was 82.

Graham, who had survived colon cancer, was taken to Sarasota Memorial Hospital earlier in the day with a tear in his aorta, the same heart condition that killed actor John Ritter, said his son,

See OTTO GRAHAM page A6



STEVE NESIUS/AP File Photo

**Football great Otto Graham, who died Wednesday at age 82, is surrounded by reminders of his Hall of Fame career in his Sarasota, Fla., home in this 2002 photo.**

## Norwich area chamber of commerce will debut on an all-volunteer basis

By CLAIRE BESSETTE  
Day Staff Writer

Norwich — A new chamber of commerce for Norwich and surrounding towns will debut in January, staffing its first efforts with volunteers.

About 25 business representatives met behind closed doors for an hour Wednesday to discuss the proposed Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce. When the group meets again in January, bearing a name very similar to the former northern New London County chamber of a decade ago, it expects to be ready to adopt bylaws and name a board of directors. An effort already is under way to obtain federal tax-exempt status.

The new chamber will represent Norwich and surrounding towns, as the Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce did in the 1990s. That organization later became the

See VOLUNTEERS page A7

**INSIDE TODAY**

etw  
entertainment this week

Sugar Plum Dreams  
Eastern Connecticut Ballet dances its own unique version of the classic 'Nutcracker.'



**MUSIC:** Kevin Crandall Band rocks through the years.

**MAIN EVENT:** It's a model world at local train display.

**STAGE:** Dance Theater of Harlem pirouettes into Foxwoods.

**ROAD TRIP:** Hartford Stage roasts a 'Holiday Ham.'

### NEWS

**Cracking Down**  
U.S. forces go on the offensive against the Iraqi resistance that has persisted despite the capture of Saddam Hussein. A2



### WEATHER

**Seasonably Chilly**  
Today, partly cloudy and breezy. High about 40. Friday, partly cloudy and pleasant. High around 38. B12

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**Children At Risk**  
The current flu outbreak is the worst for U.S. children in years, perhaps worse in Western states than the Hong Kong flu of 1968-69. A4

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