

WEATHER

HIGH 34° LOW 20°

A brisk wind to keep the pace quick and shoulders up./D2

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MORE NEWS

CAPITAL REGION

New digs for Troy city government

The city of Troy signs a three-year lease to move its City Hall offices early next year to the former Verizon Building on Sixth Avenue./D1



BASEBALL

Red Sox' Pedroia wins AL MVP

Boston's toy cannon — Dustin Pedroia — may stand only 5 feet, 9 inches, but he grabbed a big prize Tuesday in being named the American League's Most Valuable Player./B1

BUSINESS

Big 3 automakers ask for big bucks

The heads of Ford, Chrysler and General Motors ask Congress for \$25 billion they say is needed to avoid bankruptcy and massive layoffs./C1

FEATURES

The gift card that may give out

Beware of giving gift cards this holiday season. With a rocky economy claiming its share of retailers, you could be giving someone a truly priceless gift./E1



Ghost tickets never saw City Hall

Retrieving data on no-fine tickets difficult, Albany police spokesman says

By BRENDAN J. LYONS Senior writer

ALBANY — The "ghost" parking tickets issued for years by Albany's parking enforcement officers were not forwarded to City Hall for processing. Retrieving data on how many were issued, and to whom, is proving difficult, police officials said.

The controversy over the longstanding but secretive practice of issuing "no-fine" tickets to select private vehicles has stoked calls for an investigation by city leaders. But a police spokesman said questions raised this week by Common Council members may be difficult

Please see TICKETS A9 ►

The roads less traveled this Thanksgiving

A slow economy and hard to find airline flights has fewer Americans hitting the road despite cheap gas

By DAVID KOENIG Associated Press

DALLAS — Travel over the Thanksgiving holiday will drop for the first time in six years due to the economic slowdown and fewer airline flights, the auto club AAA forecast on Tuesday.

The travel club says 41 million Americans will travel at least 50 miles from home. That's down

from 41.6 million last year.

AAA President Robert L. Darnelnet said the economy makes Thanksgiving travel a challenge for some Americans, but they'll get help from the recent decline in gasoline prices, which have tumbled from their summertime highs.

A gallon of self-serve regular gasoline has fallen 88 cents in the past month, to \$2.07 a gallon. A year ago, it cost \$3.10 a gallon.

The average price in the Capital Region is 2.31.

Car rental prices are 4 percent higher than a year ago, but mid-range hotel rooms are 10 percent cheaper, according to AAA.

AAA, which said it surveyed 8,500 people, forecast that four-fifths of holiday travelers, or 33.2 million, will go by car. That would be a 1.2 percent decline from last Thanksgiving.

The auto club expects 350,000 fewer Americans to travel by air, a



41 million Americans will travel at least 50 miles from home, down from 41.6 million last year

350,000 fewer Americans expected to travel by air, a 7.2 percent drop, to about 4.5 million.

Source: AAA

SKIP DICKSTEIN/TIMES UNION

A SNOW squall in Washington Park yesterday.

Please see TRAVEL A9 ►

Political gridlock persists



PHILIP KAMRASS/TIMES UNION

ASSEMBLY SPEAKER Sheldon Silver, left, spars over budget issues Tuesday with Assembly Minority Leader James Tedisco.



STEVE JACOBS/TIMES UNION

GAIL GADSDEN, center, joins PEF Union members and others Tuesday for a rally outside the Capital called to oppose proposed state budget cuts by Gov. David Paterson. The Legislature failed to meet after top leaders failed to agree on a plan.

Partisanship stalls budget action

Governor fails to reach agreement with top legislative leaders on \$2B in cuts

By IRENE JAY LIU Capital bureau

ALBANY — Gov. David Paterson may have sounded the alarm on the state's fiscal crisis, but it was drowned out Tuesday by partisan bickering and political rhetoric from state leaders, who did nothing to address the state's looming \$1.5 billion budget deficit in what was supposed to be a special session.

The governor and legislative leaders failed to reach an agreement on the \$2 billion spending cuts that Paterson requested for this year in anticipation of the

scheduled session, and said he does not expect the Capitol to address the issue until January, when Democrats will take control of Senate for the first time in 40 years.

Instead of the planned legislative session, the governor and leaders of the Senate and Assembly participated in a public meeting in front of the assembled media — an hour-long piece of political theater during which all participants voiced grievances, pointed fingers and argued over the reasons why they were not able to act, all the while acknowledging the severity of the problem that brought them there in the first place.

Paterson called the meeting late Monday evening, after Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos said he

Please see BUDGET A10 ►

Inside

A3 ► Governor gains clout when next budget comes.

A3 ► SUNY students to pay more tuition under move.

D1 ► Fred Lebrun comments on Tuesday's talks.

Tonko gets crash course

Newly elected lawmakers find out how to navigate Capitol's corridors

By JENNIFER A. DLOUHY Times Union Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — Seven weeks ahead of his swearing-in ceremony, Representative-elect Paul Tonko joined more than 50 other new lawmakers on Capitol Hill this week for a crash course on Congress.

The Amsterdam Democrat and his fellow rookies are getting their first official taste of their new jobs in the House of Representatives during a weeklong "freshman orientation" that began Monday morning with a class picture on the Capitol steps. It ends Friday when they learn their office assignments.

Though voters may have elected the new lawmakers to tackle weighty issues such as immigration, health care and energy policy, much of this week is devoted to the mundane details of running a congressional office. During lectures and meetings, the new members are schooled in abiding by ethics rules, given tips on whether to lease or buy office equipment, advised on how to assemble an office staff and told the best strategies for dealing with an avalanche of e-mails from constituents.

Even Tonko, who spent 24 years in the State Assembly, finds Congress 101 helpful. "It's familiarizing you with the process, the space, the people and the guidelines," said Tonko, who was elected in New York's 21st congressional district to succeed retiring Rep. Mike McNulty, D-Green Island. Staff and leaders are "steering you through the process" and helping "figure out the framework of your Washington and 21st district operations," Tonko said.

"Their efforts here are to make sure that what you set up is most efficient."

Unlike the New York Assembly, members of the House of Representatives are in charge of every detail of their office operations — from how many offices to set up in their districts to what aides will staff their space in Washington. They work within a congressional budget that is largely tied to their district's proximity to Washington.

Receptions and dinners — in-

Please see TONKO A1 ►



TONKO

UPCOMING

Great Christmas ideas that only come in boxes. Thursday



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BUDGET: No agreement in crisis

▼ CONTINUED FROM A1

would put the governor's draft budget bill to the Senate, but would not vote in favor of it. Skelos had earlier refused to negotiate with the governor and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, a position Paterson called politically motivated.

"The reason I called this meeting is not to talk about process, not to talk about meaningless actions," Paterson said Tuesday. Silver echoed the governor: "We didn't come here to play politics or engage in theater with one-house bills."

Silver was repeated over the past few weeks that he would work with the governor and Skelos to develop a consensus on the spending cuts, but said he would not vote on a bill unless there was a three-way agreement. The speaker criticized Skelos' unwillingness to negotiate and suggested that it was a lack of understanding about the state's fiscal crisis. "There are those who fail to recognize the severity and the depth of the crisis that we face," Silver said. "Crisis is not, as the Senate majority suggested, exaggerated."

Skelos responded by saying he understands the need to cut spending, but said that those decisions, particularly cuts to health care and school aid, "cannot be made in a vacuum."

Outside of the Capitol, over a 1,000 demonstrators rallied for their causes, including advocates for AARP, organized labor, health care and libraries. Skelos defended his decision to bring the governor's bill to the floor by throwing the governor's own words in his face: "You stated, 'I wanted the Senate and Assembly to vote on my bill, whatever way the bills go...' The Senate is ready to honor your request."

Skelos would repeat that refrain a few more times, to which Paterson, in exasperation, said, "I didn't mean the exact bill that was printed. That has never happened in this institution... I put the bills out, and I allowed all of you to make corrections, to make adjustments."

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reductions. Once there was agreement between the three leaders, the legislature passed the finalized budget bills.

This time, Paterson told Skelos on Tuesday, "You've brought us nothing," and raised a blank sheet of white paper. "You don't have anything to show. You have nothing," he said, slamming the sheet of paper on the table. "And you're going to come in here and Mr. Leader, with all due respect, I'm still waiting for what your solution to this problem is."

Assembly Minority Leader James Tedisco lamented the lack of his conference's inclusion in a previous leaders' meeting Sunday and accused the governor of not returning his phone calls, and focused his blame on Silver.

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The deterioration of Paterson and Skelos' relationship was one of the greatest casualties of the fight. Paterson raised millions and campaigned heavily for the Senate Democrats in the final weeks before the election. Skelos accused Paterson of breaking a promise to stay out of the fight; Paterson said he was helping Democrats because he grew tired of Skelos' attacks.

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The Democratic leaders are already planning for the work ahead — Paterson, Silver and Smith are in Washington, D.C., today to advocate for a federal economic stimulus package for New York.

► Staff writer Irene Liu can be reached at (518) 454-5081 or iliu@timesunion.com

Black
Yellow
Magenta
Cyan

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT NEXIUM

Please read this summary carefully at the end, ask your doctor about NEXIUM. No advertisement can provide all the information. Read the full patient information leaflet to determine if a drug is right for you. This advertisement does not take the place of careful discussion with your doctor. Only your doctor has the right to weigh the risks and benefits of a prescription drug.

WHAT IS NEXIUM?

NEXIUM is a prescription medicine called a proton pump inhibitor (PPI). NEXIUM is used by adults:

- to treat the symptoms of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). NEXIUM may also be prescribed to heal acid-related damage to the lining of the esophagus (erosive esophagitis), and to help you live this healthy.
 - GERD is a chronic condition (lasts a long time) that occurs when acid from the stomach backs up into the esophagus (food pipe) causing symptoms, such as heartburn, or damage to the lining of the esophagus. Common symptoms include frequent heartburn that will not go away, a sour or bitter taste in the mouth, and difficulty swallowing.
 - to reduce the risk of stomach ulcers by some people taking pain medicines called oral-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
 - to treat a stomach infection (*Helicobacter pylori*), along with the antibiotics amoxicillin and clarithromycin.
 - for the long-term treatment of Zollinger-Ellison Syndrome. Zollinger-Ellison Syndrome is a rare condition in which the stomach produces a more than normal amount of acid.
- For children and adolescents 1 to 17 years of age, NEXIUM may be prescribed for short-term treatment of GERD. NEXIUM has not been shown to be safe and effective in children under the age of 1.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE NEXIUM?

- Do not take NEXIUM if you:
- are allergic to any of the ingredients in NEXIUM. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in NEXIUM.
 - are allergic to any other Proton Pump Inhibitor (PPI) medicine.

WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY DOCTOR BEFORE TAKING NEXIUM?

- Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including if you:
- use liver problems
 - are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are planning to become pregnant.
 - are breastfeeding or planning to breastfeed.
- Talk with your doctor about the best way to feed your baby if you take NEXIUM.
- Tell your doctor about all of the medicines you take including prescription and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements. NEXIUM may affect how other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how NEXIUM works. Especially tell your doctor if you take:
- warfarin (COUMADIN)
 - ketozazole (NIZORAL)
 - voriconazole (VEND)
 - atazavir (PREVACID)
 - products that contain iron
 - digoxin (LANOXIN, LANOXICAPS)

HOW SHOULD I TAKE NEXIUM?

- Take NEXIUM exactly as prescribed by your doctor.
- Do not change your dose or stop NEXIUM without talking to your doctor.
- Take NEXIUM at least 1 hour before a meal.
- Swallow NEXIUM capsules whole. Never chew or crush NEXIUM.
- If you have difficulty swallowing NEXIUM capsules, you may open the capsule and empty the contents into a tablespoon of applesauce. Be sure to swallow the applesauce right away. Do not store it for later use.
- If you forget to take a dose of NEXIUM, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Take the next dose on time. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed dose.
- If you take too much NEXIUM, tell your doctor right away.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF NEXIUM?

- The most common side effects with NEXIUM may include:
- Headache
 - Nausea
 - Abdominal pain
 - Dry mouth
 - Dizziness
 - Gas
 - Constipation
- Tell your doctor about any side effects that bother you or that do not go away. These are not all the possible side effects with NEXIUM. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about side effects.

HOW SHOULD I STORE NEXIUM?

- Store NEXIUM at room temperature between 59°F to 86°F (15°C to 30°C).
- Keep the cellophane of NEXIUM closed tightly.
- Keep NEXIUM and all medicines out of the reach of children.

GENERAL ADVICE

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed by the Patient Information Leaflet. Do not use NEXIUM for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give NEXIUM to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This Patient Information Leaflet provides a summary of the most important information about NEXIUM. For more information, ask your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information that is written for healthcare professionals. For more information, go to www.purpille.com or call toll free 1-800-463-9486.

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS IN NEXIUM?

Active ingredient: esomeprazole magnesium trihydrate
Inactive ingredients in NEXIUM Delayed-Release Capsules (including the capsule shell): glyceryl monostearate 40-55, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl, magnesium stearate, methacrylic acid copolymer type C, polyacrylate 80, sugar spheres, talc, triethyl citrate, glycol, FD&C Blue #1, FD&C Red #40, D&C Red #28, titanium dioxide, shellac, ethyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, n-butyl alcohol, propylene glycol, sodium hydroxide, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, and D&C Yellow #10.
Inactive ingredients in NEXIUM Delayed-Release Oral Suspension: dextrose, xylitol gum, croscopollose, citric acid, iron oxide, and hydroxypropyl cellulose.

NOTE: This summary provides important information about NEXIUM. For more information, please ask your health care professional or doctor about the full prescription information and discuss it with him or her.

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PARTISANSHIP STALLS BUDGET ACTION

Governor fails to reach agreement with top legislative leaders on \$2B in cuts

IRENE JAY LIU CAPITOL BUREAU

Publication Date: November 19, 2008 Page: A1 Section: Main Edition: Final Edition

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Inside

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WEBHEADLINE:

Infighting stalls special session

WEB AUXILIARY HEADLINE:

Governor, top legislative leaders trade bitter accusations

WEBTEXT:

Gov. David Paterson met with the majority and minority leaders of the state Senate and Assembly for

an hour-long session that included accusations, finger-pointing and, every now and then, an acknowledgement that the state is in a perilous fiscal situation. For full coverage, visit Capitol Confidential

Caption: STEVE JACOBS /TIMES UNION

Gail Gadsden, center, joins PEF Union members and others Tuesday for a rally outside the Capital called to oppose proposed state budget cuts by Gov. David Paterson. The Legislature failed to meet after top leaders failed to agree on a plan.

PHILIP KAMRASS/TIMES UNION

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, left, spars over budget issues Tuesday with Assembly Minority Leader James Tedisco,

STEVE JACOBS / TIMES UNION

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Keywords:

Create Date: November 19, 2008

Input Date: November 19, 2008 4:37

Date last Output: November 19, 2008

Publication Date: November 19, 2008

Byline: IRENE JAY LIU CAPITOL BUREAU

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