GOP predict doomsday of debt

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional Republicans on Saturday produced a doomsday scenario of crushing debt and warned of imminent federal bankruptcy if President Barack Obama’s massive spending blueprint wins passage.

But a White House adviser dismissed the negative assessments, saying she is “incredibly confident” that the president’s policies will “do the job” for the economy.

In a TV interview, Obama laughed when discussing the dire state of parts of the economy — and ascribed his laughter to “gallows humor.”

White House Council of Economic Advisers chairman Christina Romer insisted that the nation’s “falling economy” will be rebalanced by 2010.

Administration officials — and the president himself — have taken a cheerier tone despite economic indicators that are anything but positive.

“I have every expectation, as do private forecasters, that we will bottom out this year and actually be growing again by the end of the year,” Romer said.

The president, in an interview that aired Sunday on CBS News’ “60 Minutes,” talked about the need to spend tax- payer money to save financial firms and the auto industry.

“I just want to say that the only thing less popular than putting money into banks is putting money into the auto industry,” Obama said with a laugh.

Interviewer Steve Kroft asked how that laughter might be perceived, given the economy’s troubles.

“There’s got to be a little gallows humor to get you through the day,” Obama said. “If you went to us in a year and the least of my problems would be gone, it would be still a pretty awful problem, I don’t think anybody would have believed it.”

Republicans say Obama’s Treasury’s asset plan could cost $1 trillion — A7

“Mentally ill becoming a threat in nursing homes

CHICAGO (AP) — Iowa, Jackson, and Alzheimer’s, but that wasn’t what killed him.

At 77, he was smashed in the face with a clock as he lay in his nursing home bed.

Jackson’s roommate, a mentally ill man nearly 30 years younger, was arrested and charged with the killing.

Police found him sitting next to the man’s stitches, blood on his hands, clothes and shoes.

In their room, the ceiling was spattered with blood.

“You didn’t do what they needed you to do to protect my dad,” wondered Jackson’s stepson, Russell Smith.

Over the past several years, nursing homes have become dumping grounds for young and middle-age people with mental illness, according to Associated Press interviews and an analysis of data from all 50 states.

And that has proved a prescription for violence, as Jackson’s case and others across the country illustrate.

Younger, stronger residents with psychosis, depression or bipolar disorder are living beside frail senior citizens, and sometimes taking their food out on them.

Sad, we’re seeing the tragic results of the failure of federal and state governments to provide appropriate treatment and housing for those with mental illnesses and to provide a safe environment for the frail elderly,” said Janet Wells, director of public policy for the National Citizens’ Coalition for Nursing Home Reform.

Numbers obtained through the Freedom of Information Act and prepared exclusively for the AP by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services show nearly 125,000 young and middle-aged adults with serious mental illness lived in U.S. nursing homes last year.

That was a 41 percent increase from 2002, when nursing homes housed nearly 89,000 mentally ill people ages 22 to 64.

Most states saw increases, with Utah, Nevada, Mississippi, California and Texas showing the steepest climb.

Doctors have used it to communicate with patients with schizophrenia and to provide a respite from institutional life.

“Why didn’t they do what they needed to do to protect my dad?” wondered Jackson’s stepson, Russell Smith.

Mentally ill becoming a threat in nursing homes

By Karen Lambert

“N o, no, no. Where are you going?” instructor Jeanne Shelton said as a girl in a strappy heels and a guy in a monkey suit walked past their spot in the configuration.

With that, students of Utah State University’s ballroom dance team started the routine again.

A peacock, lion, girl inebra stripers and exotically dressed dancers came onto the gymnasium floor within eight counts.

“One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight,” counted Shelton as people turned into place, this time in perfect sequence.

At the practice last Wednesdays inside a church, the dancers were making last-minute additions to their act in preparation for a matinee performance in February at the Ellen Eccles Theatre.

The event, “Jungles,” marked the culmination of two months of practicing five days a week, starting in early as 5 a.m. some days and lasting into the early evening on others.

At the opening performance — where community members paid between $12 and $15 a ticket to see the team perform — USU African Drummers provided rhythm while light and strongly metered music set the mood.

Dancers dressed in satin gowns danced with generous smiles, in tunics, a peacock and yellow canary squawked and soaring, and monkeys made their escape from the zoo to the top floor.

Falling into step

USU ballroom dance team turns hard work into successful show

By Karen Lambert

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By Karen Lamb


**Obituaries**

Stephen Fay Hawkes

MICHAEL KAHN

— Stephen Fay Hawkes, 77, passed away at his home in Richford, VT., on March 24, 2009, from complications of a rare tumor of the brain. Steve was deceased’s stepfather. He was born on Dec. 3, 1931, in Covina, Calif., and attended schools in eight small towns. LuAnn and Stephen married in Portland, Oregon, in 1956 and became a father. Later they moved to another family, the Logan LDS Temple, and later to Texas and Utah. Steve and LuAnn were later divorced.

In 1981, Steve married Jette A. Jacobsin the Logan LDS Temple. Steve was a talented craftsman, painting homes and furnishings. He was a letter writer for the University of Utah, in Salt Lake City, and he married LuAnn in 1954. His marriage was later remarried in the Logan City LDS Temple.

Steve was a veteran of the KIA in the Korean War. He served as a member in the LDS church, holding a variety of positions, as counselor in the branch in the state nursing homes in 2007. The growth rate is the fastest in the nation, according to CMS, which none of them are able to cope with.

*Ted H. Nielson*

Ted H. Nielson, 61, passed away at home in Logan, Utah, on March 21, 2009. He was the son of Lawrence and Thelma (Foster) Nielson and Delores Hansen of Evanston, Wyo. He grew up on the family farm in the family and in the arts.

Ted was born Jan. 20, 1948, in Salt Lake City, Utah. He graduated from the University of Utah in 1970. He was an active member in the LDS church, holding a variety of positions, as counselor in the branch in the state nursing homes in 2007. The growth rate is the fastest in the nation, according to CMS, which none of them are able to cope with.

*Threats Continued from A1*

The CMS data has left Utah officials scratching their heads. According to CMS, Utah saw a 78% increase in the number of mentally ill people between the ages of 24 and 64 living in state nursing homes between 2002 and 2008. The growth rate is the fastest in the nation, according to CMS, which none of them are able to cope with.

"That’s just unbelievable," said Robert Stearn, manager of a state adult care unit of the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. "That’s not happening in Utah."

Stearl said data from DSAMH — which is compiled differently across the states — reflects only a 10% increase in nursing home admissions for the mentally ill in all age groups over the same time period.

In 2008, the annual report, a large majority of Utahans with mental illness — 85.4 percent — were living independently when they accessed services last year.

DSAMH data from 2008 also shows just 1 percent of mentally ill Utahans were in residential care and 3.9 percent lived in institutional settings.

The percentages reflect a worrying philosophy in Utah's mental health care community that most people do better if they can stay home. In 2008, 77.6 percent of residents called Citizens for Safety who have concerns.

Continued from A3

Students majoring in the college’s programs. Prior to joining Utah, she held several positions at Washington State University, specializing in African American and ethnic studies and the chair of the Department of Ethnic Studies. Students from 2003 to 2007. She holds a doctorate in African and American Studies.

**Dean Continued from A3**

Dean is often described as a model of high cultural and political commitment. She has been described as a dynamic and charismatic leader who is able to frame and articulate complex concepts in a way that is engaging and accessible.


discussion about the current state of the world and the challenges facing us. She draws on her extensive experience and expertise in the field to provide insights and perspectives that are both thought-provoking and relevant.


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