

# REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

WWW.REGISTER-PAJARONIAN.COM

WATSONVILLE PAJARO FREEDOM AROMAS CORRALITOS CASTROVILLE APTOS LA SELVA BEACH ROYAL OAKS ELKHORN MOSS LANDING  
 THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2014 — 146TH YEAR — No. 10 NEWS LEADER OF THE PAJARO VALLEY 75 CENTS

## Opponents of measures allege racism

### Group also questions reporting of financial information

**TODD GUILD**  
 THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN  
**WATSONVILLE** — In arguments filed Friday, a group posing three Watsonville ballot measures accused

backers of not properly reporting financial information, and suggested that efforts to create the measures were racially motivated.

If passed by voters in

the June election, Measure H would require voter approval to replace City Council members if they die or resign before their term is up.

Under Measure I, the may-

or would be chosen on a rotating basis, while Measure J would require voter approval to name public places in the City of Watsonville.

The proponents, a grass-

roots group known as Let the People Vote, say they merely want to give Watsonville voters a chance to choose their leaders and name places such as parks.

"This is simply a good governance issue, and the only supporters are people who

want to make a difference," said Rick Danna, who is heading the group seeking to let voters choose their council representative.

At issue are claims that Capitola-based California

See MEASURES, page A8

### AFTERNOON COMMUTE



Erik Chalhoub/Register-Pajaronian

Watsonville firefighters and American Medical Response paramedics extricate the male driver who suffered moderate injuries after he crashed into a big rig on Riverside Drive Tuesday.

## 4-car crash snarls Riverside traffic

### Suspect arrested after car plunges beneath truck

**TARMO HANNULA**  
 THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN  
**WATSONVILLE** — A Santa Cruz man was arrested on suspicion of

driving under the influence of a drug Tuesday following a dramatic four-vehicle crash on Riverside Drive.

California Highway Patrol officer Fred Smith said that, moments before the crash, police were issued a "be on the lookout" for a reckless driver in a green Mazda Protégé around Main Street and Riverside Drive at 5 p.m. Seconds later, as the male driver of the Mazda drove west on Riverside, he sideswiped a Ford Focus and then

struck a BMW sedan, while attempting to pass a big-rig flatbed truck hauling concrete pipes.

Smith said the male driver failed to notice a red light at Industrial Road where the big-rig was attempting to stop. The Mazda careened beneath the bed of the truck before coming to a stop.

Watsonville firefighters and American Medical Response paramedics teamed up to safely extricate the male driver who suffered moderate injuries.

A woman in the Focus suffered an abrasion to her face and was treated at the scene. The male driver was taken to Watsonville Community Hospital.

The big-rig is from Santoro Transportation of Salinas and had just picked a load of concrete pipes in Pajaro.

The incident is still under investigation.

Anyone with information about the incident is urged to call the CHP at 662-0511.

### STATE

## County improves health ranking

### Santa Cruz nearly cracks top 10

By **ERIK CHALHOUB**  
 OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

**WATSONVILLE** — Santa Cruz County ranks as the 11th healthiest county out of 57 California counties, according to statistics released Wednesday.

The fifth annual County Health Rankings were a result of a joint effort by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. The statistics rank the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states.

Santa Cruz County improved from last year's rank of 13.

"These rankings not only help us look at how we're doing compared to other counties in the state, but they also remind us that health doesn't just happen in a doctor's office, it happens in the community," said Dr. Lisa Hernandez, County of Santa Cruz Health Officer.

The rankings look at a number of factors, such as high school graduation rates, obesity, smoking, and family and social support.

Despite having a lower percentage than state average in smoking and obesity, Hernandez said the county is not satisfied with the numbers and will continue focusing on tackling those issues.

"This is where we know we have work to do," she said.

Excessive drinking is one area of concern, according to Hernandez, with Santa Cruz County at 21 percent, while the rest of the state weighs in at

See HEALTH, page A8

## Veva Virgil trial: Sanity at question in maternal homicide

### Psychiatrist testifies that mother exaggerates personality disorder

**TARMO HANNULA**  
 THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

of psychosis, delusions, hallucinations and methamphetamine binges.

In this phase of the trial, which began March 17, the jury must decide if Virgil was legally insane during the murder of Isabella Grace Martinez, who was 3. After deliberating for just over four hours, the same jury handed

On Wednesday, Taylor asked Patterson to explain at length the kind of tests he performed on Virgil, which took place in the Santa Cruz County Jail.

A key element Taylor wanted Patterson to explore for the jury was whether Virgil was malingering, or exaggerating

taylor said Virgil showed a tendency to exaggerate evidence of personality disorder. He also detected self-defeating behavior, paranoia and some signs of anti-social behavior.

Patterson said he uncovered several times that Virgil displayed signs of over-reporting, or exaggerating some



and how well a person perceives reality.

Patterson said he did notice hyper-vigilance in Virgil.

"This is where a person is constantly scanning their surroundings to see possible threats," Patterson said.

Patterson also told the court that Virgil reported "rare and unusual combinations of symptoms" which, he said, "raises a red flag."

Patterson said that while he did see some general mental health problems in Virgil he said he felt she was most likely malingering. He explained how the tests he gave were a way of measuring human behavior and that people in his field look at patterns of deviation. He said he saw "ample signs of substance abuse psychotic disorder," a reference to Virgil's admitted methamphetamine binge, along with her husband Richard Sullens, leading up to the murder.

Virgil's defense team, Jim McMillin and Athena Reis, have tried to paint a picture that Virgil's mental disorders, and not drug abuse, led to the maternal homicide. Reis previously told the jury of Virgil's psychotic hallucinations, delusions, mistaken beliefs and psychotic episodes and of visits to mental health fa-

"Not that I recall," Patterson said.

McMillin had Patterson tell the jury his pay for the testimony, which includes driving time from San Mateo — \$200 an hour.

McMillin delved into the validity of the tests and asked about the scientific process in which they are based.

"Are all the tests based on statistical analysis?" McMillin said.

"Yes," Patterson said.

"How is mental health defined?" McMillin said.

Patterson said studies have been done on people with no known mental health problems and then on those with observable, obvious signs of mental health problems. Statistics are then gathered and compared and used as a tool to help determine mental health.

On Wednesday, Dr. Jeff Gould — who had actually brought Patterson into play for his expertise — under questioning from Taylor, said that out of his 2,500 evaluations of people Virgil was more contradictory than any of them.

"It was my opinion that Ms. Virgil was constantly faking psychiatric symptoms and that she was suffering from general psychotic symptoms at the time

ceedings came to an abrupt halt when McMillin approached the bench and conferred with Salazar and Taylor. With that, Judge Salazar called for a 20-minute recess, excused the jury and then asked the court to remain on the record. Salazar invited Reis into conversation. She explained that Taylor had been referring, during testimony, to audiotapes and transcriptions of phone calls by Virgil over a five-year period. Reis told the court that that there appeared to be some missing tapes that she and McMillin were not given access to.

In firm and blunt delivery, Salazar grilled Taylor about the tapes and transcripts and their whereabouts. At issue, Reis said, was as much as several hours of missing tapes comprised of about 15 minutes of tapes each day over a course of several weeks. Salazar told Taylor to refrain from referring to the tapes until the defense could fully review them.

If the jury believes Virgil was insane at the time of the homicide she will be sent for life to a state mental hospital, otherwise, she will spend her life in prison.

The trial will resume after 8:15 a.m. today in Superior Court Dept. 7.

## HEALTH

From page A1

17 percent.

Marin County earned the top spot in the rankings as

the healthiest county in the state.

"We are very pleased that Santa Cruz County ranks as one of the healthiest in our state," Hernandez said. "But we still have areas of concern that need our attention. Partnering with

other agencies, such as United Way, has strengthened our ability to respond to health challenges in obesity and nutrition, despite the economic downturn in recent years."

To view the rankings, visit [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).