

Latest school gunman fired randomly

■ The 15-year-old alleged shooter told friends about his plans before opening fire at Santana High School, but no one reported the threat.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANTEE, Calif. — The "angry young man" accused of killing two fellow students fired randomly and still had eight bullets in his gun when police cornered him in a school bathroom, investigators said Tuesday.

Friends said the scrawny 15-year-old freshman accused in the nation's latest high school bloodbath talked about his plans over the weekend, and they took him seriously enough to pat him down before classes started Monday.

One adult even warned Charles Andrew "Andy" Williams not to commit "a Columbine," and tried to call the boy's father but didn't follow through. But no one is known to have reported the threats that preceded Monday's attack that also wounded 13 at Santana High in Santee, Calif.

During a news conference, authorities said the carnage could have been much worse if not for the swift actions of a sheriff's deputy and an off-duty police officer who was on campus to register his child in the school.

When Williams surrendered, his .22-caliber revolver was fully loaded with eight rounds, its hammer cocked, investigators said. He came to school with as many as 40 rounds, investigators said.

"I do believe that if it had not been for the conduct of the people involved ... it would have been even worse," Sheriff Bill Kolender said.

The boy fired indiscriminately, Sheriff's Lt. Jerry Lewis said. Most of the students hit were struck as they fled down a hallway between the school's library and administration office.

Authorities said the boy was cooperating in interviews, but they could not shed further light on his possible motives.

Witnesses "all said he was mad at something. We don't know if he was mad at the school, mad at students, mad at life, mad at home," Lewis said. "He was an angry young man."

Although school was closed Tuesday, students, parents and others gathered outside to place flowers at a makeshift memorial site and share their grief. The school is to reopen today to give students a chance to talk about Monday's shooting.

One victim, 18-year-old Barry Gibson, was released from a hospital Tuesday.

Gibson told reporters he was hanging out with friends



Students of Santana High School pray Tuesday at a makeshift memorial following a shooting rampage at their school, killing two and wounding 13 others Monday in Santee, Calif. The alleged gunman, 15-year-old Charles Andrew Williams, a student at the school, was arrested at the scene and is expected to be charged as an adult for murder.

after economics class when he heard shooting coming from inside a nearby bathroom.

"I am pretty sure everyone, including myself, thought they were firecrackers," Gibson said as he hobbled on crutches at a community meeting.

As authorities dug into the case, the first question for many was: How could so many people see the warning signs and fail to act?

"That's going to be haunting me for a long time," said Chris Reynolds, 29, who heard the threats and didn't report them.

Williams, held in a juvenile facility Tuesday, will be charged as an adult with murder, assault with a deadly

weapon and gun possession, District Attorney Paul Pfingst said. The adult prosecution is mandatory under a ballot measure approved last year, and the boy could face multiple life terms. Arraignment was set for Wednesday.

Pfingst said the gun belonged to Williams' father, Charles, a lab technician at the Naval Medical Center-San Diego, since July. It had been stored in a locked cabinet, investigators said.

Bryan Zuckor, 14, and 17-year-old Randy Gordon were killed; 11 other students and two adults — a student teacher and a campus security worker — were wounded. The adults and three students remain hospitalized in good or fair condition.

Putin may face choice in no-confidence vote

■ Russia's president will have to decide whether to keep parliament or Cabinet members if the motion passes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — In an unlikely alliance, pro-Kremlin and opposition lawmakers forged ahead Tuesday with a proposal that could force President Vladimir Putin to choose between firing his Cabinet or dissolving parliament.

The leading members of the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, scheduled a vote on a motion of no confidence in the Cabinet for March 14, Communist Party chief Gennady Zyuganov told reporters.

If the motion is passed twice within three months, Putin must fire Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and his ministers or disband parliament, prompting early elections.

The discussion left many Russians wondering what political upheavals were in store after a year of relative calm since Putin entered office.

"One gets the impression that those in power are tired of the political calm and have decided to get down to business," the daily Izvestia commented.

The Communists proposed a no-confidence vote last month, saying they were motivated by the Cabinet's failure to improve the nation's living standards.

Few thought the measure stood any chance until Monday, when legislators from the pro-Kremlin Unity party announced they would support it — prompting many to conclude the move had Putin's backing.

Unity members met Tuesday to decide how the party would vote but apparently failed to reach an agreement.

Unity leader Boris Gryzlov said a decision would be made the day before the no-confidence vote.

Meanwhile, Gennady Raikov, the leader of another pro-Putin group of legislators, dismissed the no-confidence bid as a misguided "political game" and said his faction would likely vote against it.

Earlier, Gryzlov said he favored early elections that he predicted would give his party even more seats. But many politicians and analysts say the Kremlin would not benefit from new elections.

Fight for custody ensues

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — An Arkansas judge Tuesday nullified the adoption of twin 8-month-old girls caught up in an international custody battle.

The girls were adopted in Arkansas on Dec. 22 by a British couple, setting off a dispute with an American couple who had also tried to adopt the children through the same Internet broker.

Pulaski County Probate Judge Mackie Pierce said Tuesday that neither the British couple nor the American birth mother, who put them up for adoption, met Arkansas' 30-day residency requirement. As a result, the Arkansas courts had no right to grant the adoption, Pierce said.

Pierce also recommended to British courts that the children be returned to the United States for further proceedings on who should get custody.

Richard and Vickie Allen of Highland, Calif., say they paid a \$6,000 fee to a San Diego-based Internet adoption broker. They say they had custody of the girls for nearly two months and were in the process of legally adopting them when the children were taken to Arkansas by Tranda Wecker, the twins' birth mother.

Alan and Judith Kilshaw of Wales say they paid \$12,000 for the same children and adopted them from Wecker in Little

Rock.

Both the Allens and Kilshaws, as well as the girls' now-separated biological parents, Tranda and Aaron Wecker, are seeking custody of the girls. The girls are now in foster care in Britain.

The judge was ruling on a motion from the Allens, who had sought to nullify the Kilshaws' adoption. The judge said the Allens did not have standing to ask that the adoption be voided, but that, based on his own review of the case, he had decided to nullify the adoption.

Pierce's order said Tranda Wecker had the right to take the children from the Allens but was required to live in Arkansas for 30 days before putting the children up for adoption there.

"An adoption order is fatally defective where neither ... the prospective adoptive parents nor the minors sought to be adopted were residents of the county," Pierce wrote. "If Tranda Wecker engaged in any fraud or deception regarding her residency, this court will not reward this bad conduct."

Pierce asked that the British High Court of Justice return the twins to the United States and suggested that a St. Louis court would be the "proper forum for further proceedings."

A St. Louis judge last week also asked that the case be resolved in that city because the girls were born there.

Bush lauds tax cut to solve economic woes

■ The president continued his trek through the Midwest to gain support for his proposal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — President Bush warned Tuesday that the "great boom is beginning to sputter," saying the economy needs the jolt that his massive tax cut would deliver.

Bush took to the floor of the chaotic Chicago Mercantile Exchange, one of the world's busiest trading hubs, in his latest attempt to rally Americans behind his \$1.6 trillion, 10-year tax cut and a budget that would hold federal spending to slightly above inflation.

Unlike previous events on his tax-cut tours, which focused on the benefits to families and small businesses, Bush this time said his plan would help entrepreneurs and, by extension, the sluggish economy.

"We're facing a problem, and the problem is our economy is slowing down," Bush told traders and clerks at the live-cattle trading pit. "This great boom is beginning to sputter a little bit."

Later, he said his economic package would "make sure this economy doesn't continue to sputter. When you give people some of their money back or don't take it in the first place, they will have money to spend."

Bush issued glum assessments of the economy during his transition to power, a tactic that GOP consultants said would help inoculate him from political fallout if a recession hits early in his term. As president, Bush has increasingly used bad economic news as a selling point for his tax-cut plan.

Bush faces a tough sell in a divided Congress, forcing him to troll for moderate Democrats in both chambers.

That is why he welcomed Rep. Bill Lipinski, D-Ill., to his address and invited the lawmaker to join him aboard Air Force One for the flight back to Washington.

"He and I will have a little quality time together," Bush said with a wink. The White House political operation considers Lipinski to be leaning against the tax cut, though the lawmaker has not announced his intentions. Lipinski and his staff were not immediately available for comment.

In another show of bipartisanship, Bush had lunch with Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat and brother of Al Gore's campaign chairman. Bush called him "a good mayor of a big city" and told local reporters that Daley could call the White House "anytime he needs to."

Bush's brief visit to this key presiden-

"This great boom is beginning to sputter a little bit."

George W. Bush
President

tial state was capped by a stroll through the exchange floor, where the clerks and traders looked like an army of multicolored ants — mustard yellow smocks for the clerks; red, blue and green for the traders — swarming the president. They crawled over each other to shake Bush's hand, all the while sneaking glances at the electronic boards toting sales.

"When we cut that top rate ... we're sending a loud and clear message that the entrepreneurial spirit will be reinvigorated as we head into the 21st century," Bush told hundreds of cheering traders on the exchange floor.

"Small business is the backbone of the country."

Few in the crowd said they were opposed to him, with trader Michael Quattrocci saying he was one of the few Democrats in the cattle pit area.

He noted that Hillary Rodham Clinton's controversial commodity trades were conducted on the same spot.

"The Republicans around here don't think it was an accident that Bush decided to speak right here. This is the place that started her pet scandal," Quattrocci said.

World/Nation

The Associated Press

California Judge gives record industry control over songs on Napster

SAN FRANCISCO — A federal judge Tuesday laid down the law to Napster, saying that once the recording industry comes up with a list of copyright songs it wants removed from the music-swapping service, Napster will have 72 hours to comply.

The order effectively gives the recording industry control over the immediate fate of the Internet music service that lets computer users download popular songs for free.

Napster is fighting to stay online and retain its popularity while promising to shift over to a subscription-based service that charges listeners and pays royalties to artists.

Napster, which has struggled with little success in the past few days to screen out some songs already identified by record labels, declined to comment on the ruling by U.S. District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel.

"If Napster complies with what this injunction says, it will be to our satisfaction," said Howard King, an attorney for heavy metal band Metallica and rapper-producer Dr. Dre in their \$10 million lawsuits against Napster.

New York Some in Northeast steamed after winter storm fizzes

After days of dire warnings, frenzied shopping and canceled flights, New Yorkers were spared the worst of the nor'easter. But some of them weren't grateful.

They were steamed. Weather Channel correspondent Jim Cantore, dispatched to report live from Times Square on Monday, was summarily reassigned after pedestrians started heckling him with taunts like, "Where's the storm?"

New York City schools closed when there was no snow but opened as the inches accumulated. Flights were canceled for three days in a row, even though the weather was only bad for one day. And shoppers snapped up bread, milk, shovels and salt, preparing for a siege that never happened.

"They said it would be heavy yesterday and light today. We got the opposite," Mike Queen complained as he bought a newspaper in Pleasantville, in suburban Westchester County.

Israel New Israeli leader faces task of restoring security in region

JERUSALEM — Ariel Sharon is set to become prime minister Wednesday as the head of a broad-based government that will face the urgent task of restoring security to an anxious Israel rocked by five months of violence with the Palestinians.

A month after his election victory, Sharon will present his unity government to parliament on Wednesday.

It could include more than 80 members of the 120-seat Knesset, according to Ruvy Rivlin, a member of Sharon's Likud party.

With peace talks on hold and Islamic militants threatening more bombings, the 73-year-old Sharon faces tough decisions on how to deal with the Palestinian uprising that has claimed more than 420 lives.

New York Witnesses offer versions of Combs' nightclub incident

The man with whom Sean "Puffy" Combs argued in a nightclub just before shots rang out will not testify at the rap impresario's trial, lawyers said Monday.

Instead, jurors will consider a statement from Matthew "Scar" Allen, who gave prosecutors and police his version of events that led to the shooting at Club New York early on Dec. 27, 1999.

Allen yelled, "I'll kill you!" at Combs and then threw a wad of money at him seconds before the shooting started around 2:45 a.m., witnesses have testified. Three people were wounded by gunfire.

Allen's statement says that as Combs' entourage passed by, he was jostled and he pushed back. He also said money was thrown, but he did not say he threw it or that he threatened Combs.

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