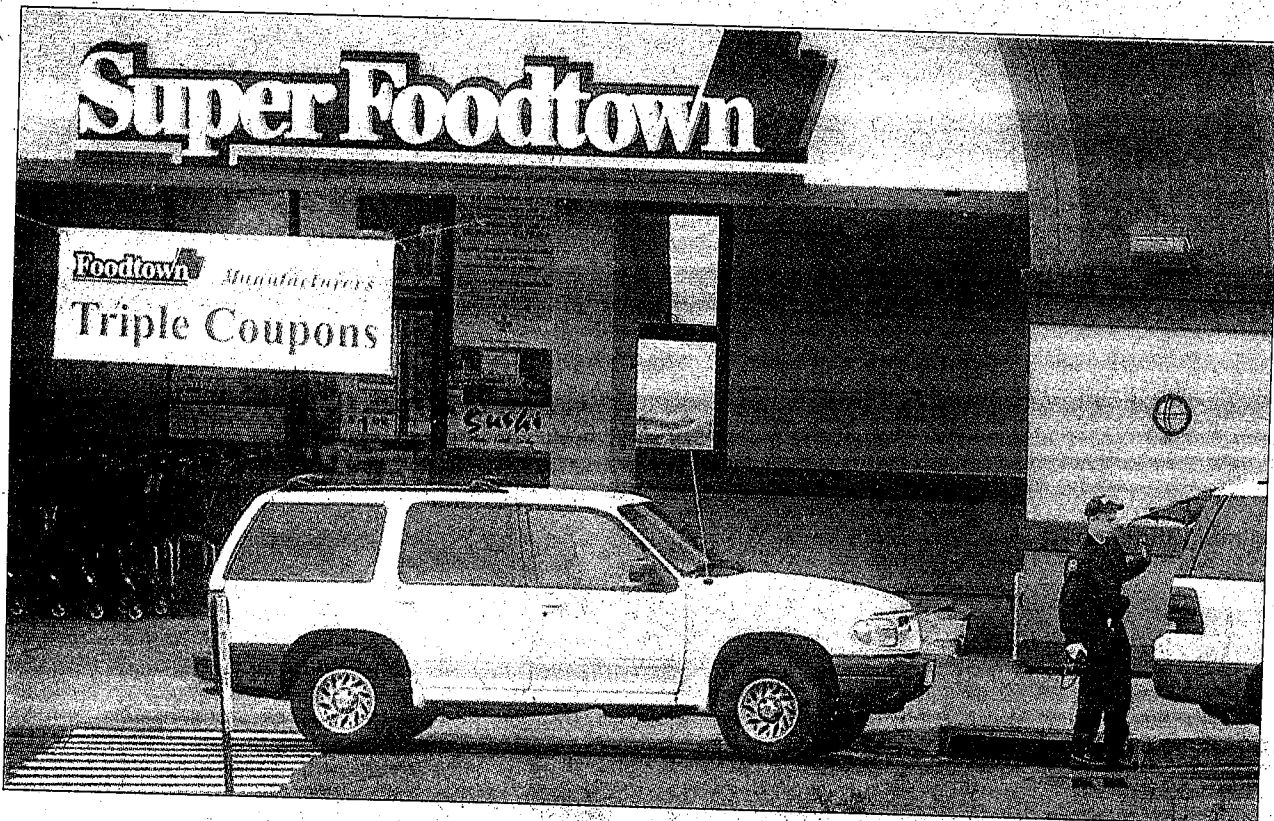


in supermarket's cooler



An investigator, above, checks vehicles outside the Super Foodtown in Hanover where a gunman forced employees into a refrigerator. Traffic was directed away from the parking lot, at right.

BOB KARP
DAILY RECORD



Bandit escapes after tussle with manager; employees unharmed

BY ROB SEMAN
AND PEGGY WRIGHT
DAILY RECORD

INSIDE STORE

"I didn't want him to get surprised and things go bad."

— Delicatessen clerk John Sagarese, who arrived at 4 a.m.

HANOVER — A ski-masked gunman herded seven Super Foodtown workers into an industrial refrigerator while seeking the store safe before he escaped after a tussle with the store manager on Friday.

The overnight ordeal began on Thursday and came to a close on Friday morning with no shots fired and no one injured, authorities said.

While the bandit brandished a gun at his captives, he showed some humanity: He turned off blowers to the cooler and refused the employees' offers of their wallets, one victim said on Friday.

Authorities were searching on Friday for a bandit who they believe hid in the supermarket at the Morris County Mall on Ridgedale Avenue before its 10:30 p.m. closing on Thursday.

Armed with a handgun, he initially forced four night crew workers into a large produce refrigerator while demanding access to the store safe, which none had.

By 5:45 a.m. Friday, there were seven captive workers in the refrigerator. The ordeal ended for them when a day manager arrived by 5:50 a.m., struggled briefly with the gunman and fled to summon help through a 911 call on his cellular phone, authorities said.

SEE GUNMAN / A7

Social Security hike biggest in 14 years

Seniors say they'll put \$39 to good use

BY MARTIN CRUTSINGER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — It's no lottery jackpot, but seniors say the extra \$39 a month in Social Security benefits they'll start getting in Jan-

uary is a welcome addition. "It will help pay for the gas," said 75-year-old Grace Bryan of Monroe, Ind., who already has dropped out of an exercise class to save money on fuel. "It's something. It's

going to pay for probably the telephone bill," said Murray Levine, 86, as he maneuvered a shopping carrier full of groceries in downtown Philadelphia.

The Social Security Administration announced

on Friday that its cost of living adjustment, or COLA, for more than 50 million beneficiaries would increase 4.1 percent in January. That's the biggest jump since a 5.4 percent gain in 1991. Last year's increase was 2.7 percent.

The average Social Security

check will increase from \$963 to \$1,002 in January.

Rising energy prices, including a record-breaking surge in September, were the driving force behind the big cost of living increase, which is based on changes in the government's Consumer

Price Index. The inflation figure rose 1.2 percent in September, the biggest monthly increase in a quarter-century, mostly because of a huge hurricane-linked rise in energy costs.

Dean Swafford, 92, a

SEE INCREASE / A10

from the first lady Morris educator

day, at a New York City ceremony at the Union League Club of New York on East 37th Street.

"It was thrilling, overwhelming," Lichatin, of Washington Township, said on Friday afternoon.

Lichatin described the event as a celebration of the teaching profession and the study of history.

She cited meeting Gilder-Lehrman Institute

of American History co-founder, Richard Gilder, and Bush among the highlights. Bush met and chatted privately with Lichatin, her husband. Kevin, their daughters Ashley and Jacquelyn, and other relatives who accompanied Lichatin to the event.

Anthony di Battista,

SEE TEACHER / A10



BEBETO MATTHEWS / ASSOCIATED PRESS

First lady Laura Bush, right, presents West Morris Central High School teacher Rosanne Lichatin with the 2005 Preserve America History Teacher of the Year award in New York.

\$505,000 buys a piece of history

Morris Twp. man wins Luke Miller House in Madison at auction

BY MEG HUELSMAN
DAILY RECORD

MADISON — For 15 years, David Quirk of Morris Township passed by the Luke Miller House and wanted it. On Friday, he got it.

Quirk placed the high

bid during a public auction Friday afternoon, winning the right to buy the historic home for \$505,000.

"I definitely plan on living here," Quirk said, his hands fluttering at his sides. "The first thing I plan to do when I move in is play with my dog, Punkin, in the yard. I'm so excited."

The Luke Miller House

SEE MILLER / A10

Weather

Sun ahead

The sun peeks out after morning showers
Details, A18

TEMPERATURES

BREAKFAST 54° LUNCH 68° DINNER 60°

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Inside

Computing easier life

Microsoft founder Bill Gates tells a crowd at Princeton University that computers will be in far more places and far more forms than they are today, making life easier on many fronts. **New Jersey, A3**



Consumer prices jump

Consumer prices soar by the biggest monthly amount in a quarter-century, propelled by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the record gasoline costs in their wake. The Labor Department reports that inflation jumped 1.2 percent last month. **Business, E8**

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