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Every winter, the Arizona Republic's circulation gets a bump from the migration of snowbirds, part-time residents who move south to escape cold temperatures elsewhere in the country. The Republic had been running a daily package on A2 of "News from Home" for these winter readers. Copy Editor Tom Nichols says AP Complete and its access to all 50 state wires made the job of assembling the page easier and also improved the quality. With help from AP Exchange searches, editors can find more state-centric news for the daily briefs than just pulling stories from the national wire. The package includes items of interest for other Arizona transplants and tourists.

Editors also set up searches for global environmental news for its daily "Green Zone" briefs package that hits on a hot topic.

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NEWS FROM HOME

LOS ANGELES

Teen challenges county to week without cussing

Can Los Angeles County residents go a week without cussing? At least one county supervisor thinks so. Supervisor Michael Antonovich is set to proclaim this week No Cussing Week, following the example of sandy-haired soccer player McKay Hatch, 14, who has become a media darling since he started his No Cussing Club at South Pasadena Middle School. "Through the 'No Cussing Challenge,' we see the power of positive peer pressure among all people and how saying 'no' to cussing is a motivating factor, one that has made it easier for some to say 'no' to drugs and violence," Antonovich wrote.

BREMERTON, WASH.

Counterfeit cookie dough results in trio of arrests

Police in the state say they've arrested three people who bought Girl Scout cookies with counterfeit \$20 bills. Troop 40411 leader KC Gettings says she went to a bank Saturday to get change and was told she had two counterfeit \$20 bills. She says she found an additional \$60 worth of fake bills in the cookie receipts for a total loss of \$100. Police say the counterfeiters also were using fake bills to make purchases at stores all over Kitsap County, west of Seattle across Puget Sound. Three people were in custody Monday, and police say there is probable cause to arrest a fourth.

OMAHA, NEB.

Cat placed inside big bong not a high point for owner

A man who tried to cool out his hyper cat by stuffing her into a boxlike homemade bong faces cruelty charges — and catcalls from animal lovers. Lancaster County sheriff's deputies responding to a domestic-disturbance call Sunday said they saw Acea Schomaker, 20, smoking marijuana through a piece of garden hose attached to a duct-taped, plastic glass box approximately 12 inches by 6 inches in which the cat had been stuffed. "This cat was just dazed," Sgt. Andy Stebbing said. "She was on the front seat of the cop car, wrapped in a blanket, and never moved all the way to the Humane Society."

BOSTON

The awful tooth: Suspect accused in injury scheme

A Brookline, Mass., man has been accused of filing 21 fake injury claims for the same broken tooth, pocketing at least \$36,000 in insurance payments. Attorney General Martha Coakley's office said Tod Schaffer was scheduled to be arraigned today on charges of insurance fraud, larceny and attempted larceny. Schaffer injured a tooth by biting into a piece of plastic at a restaurant in October 2002. The eatery paid the costs of his treatment. Prosecutors say Schaffer then filed 21 false-injury claims against other restaurants, using information from the legitimate incident.

— Wire services

The Arizona Republic uses the additional state wires to produce a daily package of "News from Home" for its winter readers.

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Tom Nichols
Copy Editor
Arizona Republic in Phoenix

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