

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues



Crews remove the debris from the giant sinkhole that collapsed on Ocean Park Boulevard.

Andy Fixmer/Daily Press

Sinkhole believed to take months to repair

Cost estimated to be a million

BY ANDY FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

It's going to take \$1 million and two months to fix the giant sinkhole on Ocean Park Boulevard, officials said.

The nearly 1,000-foot-long stretch of roadway that collapsed last Saturday will be closed off to vehicles until the giant hole can be filled, city officials said.

To pay for the repairs, the city will have to tap into its city water fund, which is funded by fees collected from residents, officials said.

"It's too bad it happened, but we will get it repaired," said Councilman Herb Katz. "There is emergency money available for when this kind of stuff happens."

On Saturday, at about 8 p.m., a large portion of the intersection of Ocean Park Boulevard and Euclid Street gave way, sinking approximately 15 feet deep. Two days later, another section of Ocean Park Boulevard near the intersection of 11th Street also collapsed.

Officials believe the sand beneath the street was rapidly eroded

See SINKHOLE, page 5

S, A, M, O, H, I equals six new high schools in city

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica will have six new high schools this fall.

Except they'll all be under the guise of Santa Monica High School and on the same campus.

Samohi is following a national trend of high school reform that involves redesigning large campuses with the goal of giving students a better education.

Studies have shown that size does matter when it comes to education. Large, impersonal

schools don't offer quality education like small ones do, school officials say.

By redesigning large campuses into smaller, individual ones, schools have higher attendance rates, higher grade point averages, lower dropout rates and students and teachers report being more satisfied with the experience, studies show.

Samohi currently has about 3,500 students and, as a result, class sizes are so large that students don't get the personalized education that smaller schools

offer, administrators say.

That's why plans are underway to separate Samohi into six "houses" that will each have 25 teachers educating about 500 students. Each house will have a different name — "S" "A" "M" "O" "H" "I" to keep them distinct from one another.

"We wanted it to be symbolic," said Ruth Esseln, Samohi's 10th grade principal, who is helping spearhead the redesign project.

See SCHOOLS, page 6

Initiative may ask cities to pay more for shared school district

BY ANDY FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

A citizens group may propose an initiative that would require the cities of Santa Monica and Malibu to contribute more for their shared public school system.

Signature gathering could start soon for a proposal that would make it mandatory for Santa Monica and Malibu to use between 1.9 to 2.25 percent of their municipal budgets for education.

"The movement is afoot ... to ensure a certain portion of the

budget of the city as a whole contributes to the school district," said Don Gray, a community activist who announced the proposal at a recent school district meeting.

In California, school districts currently receive the bulk of their funding from the state and federal governments. In the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, both cities also donate money to the school district.

Santa Monica gives about \$3 million annually to its school

district. However, under the proposal, \$8.43 million of the city's nearly \$375 million annual budget could potentially be required to go to education, according to Gray.

"Funding for the school district by any means possible is needed," Gray said. "Whatever it takes, the amounts being discussed cannot come close to covering what the district needs, so there must be a second source of funding."

Though Gray said he is

See INITIATIVE, page 7

Magazine names Houston nation's fattest city for third year in row

BY JUAN A. LOZANO
Associated Press Writer

HOUSTON — Houston, we still have a weight problem.

For the third year in a row, "Men's Fitness" magazine has named the city the nation's fattest, blaming the region's hot and humid climate, "abysmal" air quality, relative lack of outdoor recreation and residents' love of junk food.

The county's fourth-largest city topped a list of 25 cities, followed by Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and St. Louis.

Last year, the city launched a Get Lean Houston! initiative, aiming to encourage residents to get fit and live healthier lives. It also named Lee Labrada, a former Mr. Universe, as the city's first fitness czar.

Labrada said he's skeptical of surveys like the magazine's, and places more stock in studies like a recent one by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC interviewed 185,000 Americans by telephone in 55 U.S. cities to determine the per-

centage of people who are overweight or obese.

"Houston was not even in the top 10," Labrada said.

Houston Mayor Lee Brown, who last year admitted he had packed on a few pounds, has lost 20 pounds since.

"We do not relish the title bestowed upon us by 'Men's Fitness' magazine," Brown said in a statement, "and will continue to work to involve all Houstonians in our programs to improve the overall health and fitness of the city's residents."

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**A: The goby. It is roughly about
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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ You could be delightfully surprised by what comes down your path if you relax and work with the moment. Others' expressions of affection could be quite touching. Reach out for others. Examine the pros and cons of a situation. Tonight: Speak your mind.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Your ability to touch an in-law or someone at a distance could make all the difference in what goes on. Unexpected developments take you in a new direction. Be more forthright with someone you respect and look up to. Tonight: A must show.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ You might have a difficult time expressing what's on your mind. Make a point of spending quality one-on-one time with a loved one or friend. An unexpected surprise points you in a new direction. Tonight: Talk possibilities.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ You might not be sure of the protocol in making what you need happen. Instead of pushing one way or another, flow with others. Surprising news comes via a partner. Perhaps you haven't seen a situation develop like this before. Tonight: Reach out for a special friend.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Do as much as you can to make someone comfortable. Don't push so hard to achieve certain goals. Rather, relax and enjoy yourself. Others seek you out as soon as they see that you're more relaxed. Happiness surrounds a child or loved one. Tonight: Frolic along.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Unexpected news heads your way. Understand what you expect from a child or loved one. Leave space open to allow others to come forward. You get greater feedback if you simply flow and demand less. Listen to what a co-worker shares. Tonight: Pace yourself.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Deal with the basics, and you'll go far. Don't push someone away. In fact, be more sensitive to loved ones and friends. Sometimes you can be too self-involved. Open up to a child or loved one's suggestions more often. Tonight: Play along. Enjoy.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Try your best to get past a problem that might be upsetting you more than you realize. Once you clear the air and have a long-overdue conversation, you'll feel much better. Let your feelings out. Be imaginative with a family member. Tonight: Put your feet up.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Express your good sense and money-making abilities. Sometimes you might not be sure when to say "enough." Unexpected developments allow you to feel more appreciated than you have in a long while. Tonight: Out.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Use the daylight hours to proceed in the direction you have already decided. Stay focused and don't lose track. You'll find by late afternoon that your friskier side emerges. Right now you have nothing to celebrate but life itself. Go for it! Tonight: Your treat.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Step back and take your time making an important decision. You'll find out unusual information if you simply flow. You might not realize how much you are treasured. As a result, your mood changes considerably. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Make that extra effort and reach out for those in your immediate circle. Your instincts drive you in a certain direction. Friends and co-workers play a significant role in your decision-making process. Think carefully. Tonight: Don't rush.



QUOTE of the DAY

**"What luck for rulers
that men do not think."**

— Adolf Hitler (1889-1945)

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LOCAL



surf report

Information compiled by Jesse Haley

It's a new year of surfing, but it could be any old week as far as the ocean is concerned. Today sees decreasing swell out of the northwest from Thursday.

However, fading swell will be followed Saturday by a newly arriving swell, a well-angled one, too, coming from about 280-290 degrees, a little more westerly than Thursday's.

Forecasts say the swell will peak Saturday night and carry over into Sunday with waist to chest high surf at breaks in the north.

South Bay spots, better exposed, expect shoulder high sets, consistent on the good tides and we should see a lot less wind than we did the last few days.

Weather is predicted nice over the weekend, and water is as clean as its been since two weeks ago.



Today's Tides:

Low- 2:44a.m. 2.11'
High- 8:51a.m. 6.49'
Low- 4:21p.m. -1.34'
High- 10:51p.m. 3.79'

Location	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Water Quality
County Line	3-4'/Fair	4-5'/Fair	4-5'/Fair	A
Zuma	3-4'/Fair	4-5'/Fair	4-5'/Fair	A
Surfrider	1-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	F
Topanga	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Breakwater	4-6'/Fair	4-7'/Fair	4-7'/Fair	A
El Porto	4-6'/Fair	4-7'/Fair	4-7'/Fair	A

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Lights go out on Winterlit



Andy Fixmer/Daily Press

Crews started stripping down the Third Street Promenade of its Winterlit holiday decor on Thursday. It will go up in approximately 330 days for the next season.

The Q-Line

The new year brings change and backbone

This past Sunday, Q-line asked:

"What resolutions or changes will you make in your life for 2003?"

Here are your responses:

■ "California schools were sitting pretty during the days of Proposition 13. They had what they don't have now — a stable source of funding. Now they are dependent on state government, with this

less than stable income sources of sales tax and state income tax. So instead of complaining that the state has abandoned education, school administrators should adjust their sights to an income stream

that will be up in some years and down in others, or they can unite to bring back Proposition 13. I don't have a push button phone. Thank you. Bye."

■ "I've had it with the traffic in downtown Santa Monica. My lease of my business offices is up in June, and I'm moving out of Santa Monica. Hooray."

■ "My resolution is not to have anything to do with real estate sales mooches and apartment building management companies who are solely in the business of harassing their tenants,

and various real estate legal beagles who convince apartment building owners, at the expense of existing tenants, that there is a pot of gold at the end of the de-control, re-control rainbow. And those in the overnight get rich scheme of converting apartment buildings to condominiums that would inflate the value of a building three times its true market value as an apartment building, and all other carpet-bagging scoundrels who have brought their milking machines and stools to Santa Monica."

See Q-LINE, page 5



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OPINION

LETTERS

Don't buy pavers

Editor:

It was depressing to read that the newly re-opened Montana Branch Library (SMDP, 12/21) has raised over \$100,000 from the sale of engraved pavers in order to buy furnishings, books and other materials. That the city would go cap in hand to individuals, begging for money, when they are simultaneously squandering \$50 million on the destruction and replacement of our Main Library on 6th Street is absolutely shameful. There is nothing wrong with the Main Library; all that is needed is extra space. They could have built an extension, as they did on Montana, but I guess this solution was not grandiose enough or expensive enough to appeal to the spendthrifts at City Hall.

It's sad to know that so many people (most of them taxpayers, I would guess) have been duped into buying pavers. Clearly, our library system is not short of cash, and I would urge anyone contemplating the purchase of a paver to think again. There are plenty of worthwhile causes where money is really needed, but this isn't one of them.

Jill Renton
Santa Monica

Wake up, City Council

Editor:

I have lived here in Santa Monica since 1951 and now am ashamed to have anyone come and visit me. The past year or more has produced letters in the Daily Press and the Mirror showing a whole lot of angry people when it comes to shopping, eating and parking here. The problems are rude employees and almost gridlock. We really have no decent stores to shop in because of the treatment they get by our so-called City Council and the OUTRAGEOUS RENTS they impose on anyone who tries to

open up a business here. Penneys is gone, so is Target; a store with a great reputation, despite what our so-called learned City Leaders might say. They were flat out denied entrance into our city. Now they are crying WOLF; we don't have enough money to keep things going, we are going to have to cut back on services, shut schools down for 10 days and every other Friday. I could cite boondoggle after boondoggle this city has made to what they call IMPROVEMENTS. What a joke. Wake up council, before you have nobody coming here.

James Azine
Santa Monica

Thanks for the memories

Editor:

Just a letter of thanks. By having this paper, I can keep up with what's going on down there. I was raised in Santa Monica, went to all the schools and loved having my childhood there.

As years passed, the price of rent went way beyond my reach and me and my hubby relocated to Washington state. There are times I wish my children had the experience as I did of being raised in Santa Monica. Five of my kids were born at Santa Monica Hospital, and we try to visit every few years.

Having this paper keeps me in touch with the city I will forever love. So I would like to say thank you! I was saddened that the Evening Outlook folded. I remember riding my bike down Pearl Street as a child delivering papers. Now all I have to do is sign on the computer and get the feeling of my childhood city. Thank you.

Lisa (White) Lasseter
Santa Monica

Answers for school problems needed in 2003



AS I SEE IT

By Bill Bauer

As we lurch into the new year, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District is facing its worst fiscal crisis with millions of dollars in financial shortfall.

Last year, school supporters dreamed up a flat \$300 parcel tax increase (Measure EE) to generate revenue for schools. Measure EE was defeated by voters because some say it was too much money and unfair.

Now, school supporters and district administrators are back to the drawing board. This time, the new ad-hoc parcel tax group, also known as "Save Our Schools Committee," is mulling SMMUSD Superintendent John Deasy's recommendation of an annual \$144 residential and \$675 commercial/industrial parcel tax. Sound familiar? It should. The proposal is from pretty much the same crew that came up with Measure EE.

Do any of these good folks realize that one of the most obvious sources of funding is the cities of Santa Monica and Malibu? Santa Monica's annual budget is around \$380 million — one of the highest

municipal budgets, per capita, in the country.

But when you have the same gaggle of Santa Monicans for Renters Rights political cronies and education advocates repeatedly recycling from committee to committee, fresh ideas are as much a possibility as finding the Hope diamond buried under the Samohi parking lot.

Last week, one SOSC member told the committee that he'd heard a citizens group was planning its own school referendum that would require Santa Monica and Malibu to directly subsidize the SMMUSD, thereby eliminating the need for new school parcel taxes.

Funding our schools with existing resources? What a novel idea. There's no reason why Santa Monica and Malibu shouldn't contribute 2 or 3 percent of their annual budgets to the schools. The SOSC, school board and SMMUSD administration should embrace this as an obvious and common sense way to deal with the present crisis, but they probably won't. There are just too many egos in the way and special interests to protect.

Being that SMRR members control both the school board and the city government, you'd think they would be working as a team to help our kids.

Instead, it looks as if they are protecting each other's turf. The school SMRRs and their sycophants seem to follow an unwritten law that they won't ask for

money from their SMRR compatriots in the city who have earmarked funds for their own ideological social agendas.

And we all know that most of the members of our City Council have their own personal priorities. Every year, \$2 million goes to homeless services. Millions have been committed for the latest round of pedestrian enhancements approved for major boulevards.

The city is on a buying spree. It recently spent \$3.7 million for property at 15th Street and Broadway Avenue, and an adjoining residential lot on 15th Street for, you guessed it, affordable housing for people who want to live here and now reside outside of the community.

The city is negotiating to purchase a \$5-million commercial property on 1751-1753 Cloverfield Blvd. supposedly for a homeless services center. Keep in mind, this takes property OFF the tax rolls.

The city is eyeing the Fisher/Malibu Lumber property on Colorado Boulevard between 14th and 17th streets as well as other commercial properties in the neighborhood for more affordable housing.

Tens of millions of dollars for land and millions more for construction for what many call "SMRR voter base rental housing" is being spent, but only chump change is doled out for our children?

How about the hundreds of thousands of dollars the city gives annually to the Bayside District Corp. and to the Pier

Restoration Corp. to promote their respective venues? And the tens of thousands of dollars the city hands out to neighborhood groups?

You tell me. Is all of this more important than our children's education?

Apparently those who run our city and the schools would rather you pay through the nose then cut their own pet pork. As long as they think that you'll keep shelling it out, they'll keep those taxes, fees and assessments coming — all the while they hope you won't notice that most of the money doesn't even benefit you, me or our children.

There are more than enough resources already at hand that can be used to support the schools. So, why, in tough times, would any thinking person contemplate increasing taxes and driving citizens deeper into debt?

Our future is in our schools. Let's hope in the new year our City Council will, during upcoming mid-year budget deliberations, make the tough decisions, step up to the plate and go to bat for us for a change. The time to reorganize priorities has never been better.

And those supporting the schools must stop the political posturing and do the right thing or they will find out, once again, that the people will call the shots.

Bill Bauer is a longtime Santa Monica resident and a freelance writer.

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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LOCAL



Sinkhole largest in SM history

SINKHOLE, from page 1
when a 12-inch wide high pressure water main erupted, releasing about 1.5 million gallons of water before it was contained.

When the water sprayed out, it swept the sand beneath the roadway down the slope of Ocean Park Boulevard, until the pavement above had no support and collapsed. No one was injured in the incident, and no private property sustained serious damage.

The ruptured main initially left about 200 residents living on Ocean Park Boulevard between Euclid and 11th streets without water, which city workers were able to restore by Sunday afternoon, officials said.

"It was a big rupture in a good-sized water main and a lot of water was moving at a high velocity," said Santa Monica Water Utilities Manager Gil Borboa. "I've never seen anything on this size before."

Borboa said no determination has been made about why the water main, which was installed in 1975, ruptured. Until all the asphalt is removed and the remainder of the water main is examined, officials won't be able to determine how the break happened, he said.

"It's hard to say whether it's a man-made disaster," Borboa said. "The pipe ruptured for whatever reason. We would like to determine why that happened."

After the asphalt has



File photo

The massive sinkhole at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Ocean Park Boulevard will need a couple of months to be repaired.

been removed, Borboa said city workers will use an x-ray type machine to scan the ground underneath the street to look for other weak spots.

Borboa said city employees are investigating how the collapse occurred, and if similar sinkholes could happen at other intersections throughout the city.

It's been more than 30 years since a similar incident occurred in Santa Monica, but never has there been a sinkhole this big, Borboa said.

"We have had other water main breaks and never had something as catastrophic as this," he said. "We're trying to determine what about this situation was unique."

Until the street can be repaired, residents have been issued permits to park on adjacent side streets, and trash is being collected at either end of the block. Make-shift pipes have been strung along the

street and the sidewalk to carry water into apartment buildings and homes until the main can be repaired.

The roadway between 11th and Euclid streets will remain closed to vehicles, but sections of the sidewalks have been reopened, allowing the curious a chance to view the damage up close.

One resident who lives along the street said he appreciates the city's fast action for restoring water and reacting to the emergency situation.

"The city was on the scene almost immediately," said Gilbert Banuelos, who lives near the intersection of Ocean Park Boulevard and 11th Street. "They have been very good to us; very understanding of our needs."

Even days later, Banuelos said he is in awe of the sinkhole up the street from where he lives. "It's incredible," he said. "It's a huge hole."

making a resolution, that there are changes that I've been making in my life that I trust will continue in 2003. What the first one I think is to try to make my daily life and all my activities more in accord with my basic beliefs, rather than just to act impulsively. And, the second one is to try to keep my money in Santa Monica. That sounds stupid, I don't have very much money, I have a small, limited income, and recently I've become aware of how easy it is to send all my money to giant corporations to their headquarters somewhere. So I've started shopping locally, going to small, locally-owned business for everything that I can. It's been interesting and more fun than I would have thought, and it makes me feel good, that way the little money that I do get to spend stays in Santa Monica, or at least in the vicinity rather than going off to someone whose face I will never see. So that's my two bits about new year's changes. Thanks for the opportunity to talk."

The Q Line

CONT., from page 3

■ "My new year's resolution is to never again let anyone use me for a doormat."

■ "My resolution for the new year is to continue the battle against mass fluoridation of our city water supply. This is wrong and should not be forced on us. No more toxic chemicals need to be added to our water. Wake up Santa Monicans, and get on this battle."

■ "My new year's resolutions are three: not to gain weight, to be politically active for one candidate for president and to support the Anaheim Angels on their journey to their next world championship. Thank you, very much."

■ "Well, I don't make new year's resolutions, and so usually I ignore questions like this, but it occurred to me that, although I don't believe that you can make a sudden change by

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LOCAL

Samohi moving towards personalized education

SCHOOLS, from page 1

When students in ninth and 10th grades show up for class next school year, they will be assigned to one of the houses, where they will stay for the remainder of their high school careers. Administrators say they aren't sure how 11th and 12th grades will be fit into the redesign.

"We will work grades in over a one-, two- or three-year plan to make sure it's done well," Esseln said.

The campus will be reconfigured so each house uses the same space yearlong. Some programs like physical education and science may still be universal for all students because facilities such as labs and gymnasiums can't be moved.

It's still unclear how students and teachers will be selected for their houses, but administrators say they plan to make them balanced.

"We want six strong schools that are ethnically balanced," Esseln said. "We want to make sure there are a variety of interests in each one, and we are going to do everything we can to keep that diversity."

Although the redesign concept for Samohi has been in the works for a decade, no plan had ever been devised until now. A 33-person committee comprised of teachers, parents and administrators worked over the past few months in coming up with the redesign. It will officially be presented on Jan. 14 to the public, and beginning in February, Samohi staff will meet as if they are in their own houses.

The plan was given to teachers last month to get their thoughts on what's been laid out. Parents and students are beginning to understand how the redesign will affect them when teachers and administrators discuss the plan with them.

"A lot of parents want to know how their kids will benefit," Esseln said. "People have a lot of questions, and we are getting fantastic questions from parents. In general, parents are really excited, and the kids are still figuring out what the redesign means for them ... some are concerned that it will be like middle school."

But administrators say each house will operate just like any high school — they will have their own curriculum, and a principal and the teachers will work in teams, which will allow them to communicate better than they do now, Esseln said.

"Working as a team, you have the power to do problem solving so much better," she said. "And, hopefully, they will get to know the students better. We are trying to offset the negative effects of large class sizes."

The houses won't compete with each other, but will have separate programs like individual student councils that will feed into the main student council, said Samohi Principal Ilene Straus.

By focusing on more individualized education for each student, Straus hopes to close the achievement gap that is widespread in large high schools. Graduation requirements also will likely change, she said. For example, students will be required to take three years of math instead of two, and foreign language requirements will become more rigorous.

"We're trying to get kids prepared for the world," Straus said. "Parents are pretty excited about the chance to make it better and trying to make large schools

work better."

Dozens of high schools around the country have redesigned their campuses. Administrators, teachers, parents and students at those schools say the change has been positive.

A 2001 U.S. Department of Education report concludes that students in small schools perform better, attend more regularly, have better relationships with their teachers and exude more positive social behavior.

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Superintendent John Deasy said he doesn't anticipate the redesign to cost much more than what it currently takes to operate Samohi. However, some private companies may donate toward the planning effort.

"We are engaging with two substantial funders," Deasy said. "Nothing is committed yet, but it would be a substantial help."

The money would be used to lower class sizes, increase professional development and provide opportunities for student externships and internships.

Grants also are available and Samohi plans to apply for them. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is supporting high school reform efforts in communities throughout the country by issuing grants to schools that want to redesign.

Two and a half years ago, Manuel High School in Denver split into three smaller schools that share the same building. Over five years, the school will receive \$1 million in grants, including \$500,000 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Its division has attracted national attention in an education environment where high school redesigns are becoming the norm. Manuel has reported that its students and staff got to know each other better and test scores have risen since it redesigned the campus.

According to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Web site, gatesfoundation.org, the problem with large high schools is that they are too impersonal. High schools have doubled in size in the last generation resulting in overcrowding and reduced interaction between students and teachers, according to the foundation. Large high schools also offer disconnected courses with little guidance to students, and most teachers see more than 150 students a day, the foundation's Web site says. Large high schools also have low expectations — only one in four to six high schools actually prepares students for college, according to the foundation.

"It's the nature of large schools," Straus said. "It's no one's fault, it's just how it's designed right now."

Samohi administrators agree with the Gates foundation that small high schools offer an environment where students feel less alienated and tend to be more engaged in school activities. Small schools also create professional learning communities where teachers have the opportunity to work collectively to improve their curriculum.

"It's what is best for kids," Ruth Esseln said. "We want to create a structure where people know each other well, both teachers and students, and we can do a better job of teaching the standards."

"We want our kids to be challenged," she added.

LOCAL



Some say petition could damage tax proposal

INITIATIVE, from page 1

knowledgeable of the group, which may begin its signature gathering within a few weeks, he says he is not a member. And he declines to name the individuals who may begin circulating the petition.

Gray, who helped defeat a previous parcel tax measure on the Nov. 5 ballot, is now a member of Save Our Schools — an ad hoc committee that is writing the parcel tax proposal slated for the June 3 special election. Gray said he supports the idea of a parcel tax, but he wants it to exclude seniors and a property's size, among other things.

A precipitous decline in state funding has sent the school district into an economic tail spin. In addition to axing nearly \$4 million from its budget already this year, the school district will likely be forced to cut another \$3.5 million by the end of the school year.

An additional \$11 million in state funding will likely be removed next year, signaling another round of cuts may be required, officials said.

To cope with the loss of funding and preserve its academic programs, the school district will likely call a special June 3 election to decide the fate of a parcel tax, which is currently being written by a special committee.

However, SMMUSD Superintendent John Deasy has said the parcel tax would only be a temporary solution, and it wouldn't raise nearly as much money as the state is decreasing its funding.

Gray said he believed a proposal requiring cities to cough up more money for education would not compete with any new parcel tax proposal.

"I think if anything it would complement the parcel tax," he said. "It makes sense because the parcel tax isn't going to cover the shortcomings of the current budget problems, and I think there is a need to cover those shortcomings."

The next time such an initiative could be decided upon by voters would be during the November 2004 general election, officials said.

Some believe gathering signatures for such an initiative could damage the school district's hope of having voters enact a new parcel tax.

"If they did gather signatures in the spring, it could have a negative affect," said Neil Carrey, chair of the parcel tax committee. "If people think we can get the city to do it, then they might ask why have a parcel tax."

Carrey said whatever the initiative could get out of the cities would not necessarily be enough. And he said because the proposal wouldn't be decided upon for more than a year, it would leave the school district without enough funding for far too long.

"I think there are a number of residents who are tired of the city paying lip service to the school district."

— PETER TIGLER
Santa Monica resident

Carrey also points out that the initiative could pass in Santa Monica but fail in Malibu, leaving one city paying more for the shared public school system than the other.

"There may be some advantages for them to wait anyway," he said. "There are some people that would be very interested in doing something like this when there isn't a parcel tax on the ballot."

Peter Tigler, another community activist who worked with Gray to defeat the previous parcel tax measure, said he too has been in contact with the individuals who will propose the initiative.

Both Tigler and Gray said the initiative is still being written, though a formal proposal could be ready by the end of the week. They say the group does not solely consist of opponents of the previous parcel tax, and is much more broad-based.

"I think there are a number of residents who are tired of the city paying lip service to the school district," Tigler said. "They give only a nominal amount to the district."

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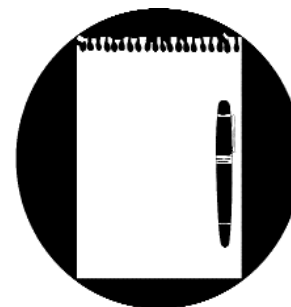
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Local Sports

Santa Monica High Vikings take down Culver City

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica High School Vikings traveled to Culver City on Monday for one last soccer match before league play. Junior Andrew Martinez kicked the first goal in the 12th minute in the first half and then scored the winning goal in the 60th minute of the second half. Senior Rodrigo Chacon and sophomore Artur Szczepanek assisted on the goals. Samohi led the game 2-0 until Culver was awarded a penalty kick in the 70th minute and scored. The final score was 2-1, Samohi.

This game ends the pre-league season, with a 7-4-1 overall record for the Vikings.

Now ready to take on the Bay League competition, Samohi will have to increase their focus and play more as a combined unit. So far there have been no major standouts for the Vikings, just strong play from the starting 11 and good support off the bench.

Bay League competition will begin on Wednesday, Jan. 8. The Vikings will host Mira Costa at John Adams Middle School at 3 p.m.

Then on Jan. 10, they will travel to play Peninsula.

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STATE

California may have enough water for at least two years

BY CARRI KARUHN
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — California will have enough water to last at least two years if the federal government carries out its threat to cut the state's overuse of Colorado River water, officials said.

That supply could give dueling water agencies enough time to finally agree on a deal involving a water transfer that satisfies federal officials.

"It allows us to negotiate a deal while we continue to meet our demands," Bob Muir, a spokesman for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, said Wednesday.

On Tuesday, officials with the Imperial Irrigation District in southeastern California approved transferring part of its share of Colorado River water to San Diego.

But neighboring districts rejected the 11th hour offer, saying the deal revised the terms of an earlier plan and no longer met federal criteria because the IID could back out in as little as a year. And, they said, the deal would be too expensive for consumers.

The disputed terms involved guarantees of state and other funds in case of environmental harm caused by the transfer.

After the IID approved the pact, there wasn't enough time for other districts involved to review or negotiate it.

As a result, the state failed to meet a federally set Dec. 31 deadline. The Bush administration said Tuesday that in the weeks ahead it would suspend California's use of surplus Colorado River water.

California will lose enough water to supply 1.6 million households or 15 percent of what it has been drawing each year.

However, there's no immediate threat of taps running dry, water officials say.

Water districts in Los Angeles and San Diego, the two biggest urban users of the Colorado River, have said they have adequate supplies for at least two years — even in worst-case drought scenarios.

In the meantime, the MWD, which supplies water for 18 million residents in Southern California, plans to expand conservation, desalination and recycling programs.

The Imperial Valley is the nation's largest irrigation district and receives more than 3 million acre-feet of Colorado water each year — about 70 percent of California's total river allotment.

For years, California has used 800,000 acre-feet more than the 4.4 million acre-feet it is entitled to under an agreement with seven states in the West because the other states didn't use all of their allotments.

But rapid growth and drought across the region prompted the states to complain to the Interior Department about enforcing the agreement.

Fraud detection might not justify \$31M cost, audit says

BY DON THOMPSON
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — California is spending tens of millions of dollars for a fingerprint system to thwart public aid fraud, but can't demonstrate the system is worth the money, state auditors said Thursday.

Such doubt remains that auditors said lawmakers should consider repealing the law that created the fingerprinting system.

The Department of Social Services spent \$31 million to create the system, and will spend an estimated \$11.4 million annually to maintain it. It projected the system would cost counties outside Los Angeles another \$1.8 million each year — but Riverside County alone put its annual administrative costs at about \$1.4 million.

So far, the system has helped block recipients of food stamps and other benefits from traveling from county to county to get duplicate aid. But most of the duplications came from administrative errors with few instances of actual fraud.

Moreover, State Auditor Elaine Howle said there is no way to determine if the fraud savings outweigh the system's costs. She also echoed critics' concerns that the fingerprinting might deter immigrants, for instance, from obtaining aid to which they are legally entitled.

Duplicate-aid fraud wasn't considered a serious problem in most counties, auditors found, and where it was, counties such as Los Angeles already were using their own fingerprint matching systems.

During the five years before the statewide system was put in place, counties with their own fingerprinting systems documented just 972 fraud cases costing \$654,905 in duplicate benefits. Counties without fingerprinting systems document-

ed 583 cases during the same period.

Between the system's start on March 1, 2000, and Sept. 30, 2002, investigators found just 45 incidents of fraud from among 18,157 fingerprints matched by the new system — a fraud rate of 0.2 percent.

Social Services Director Rita Saenz said the fingerprinting system is meant to prevent fraud, not detect it, so the relatively few cases "is a desired, expected result."

The state based its savings projections on Los Angeles County's experience. But those assumptions may not translate statewide, auditors said — problems first raised by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1998.

That was two years before the state began implementing the fingerprint system for 1.8 million food stamp recipients and 1.2 million participants in CalWORKS, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids program. Last fiscal year the state issued about \$1.6 billion in food stamps.

State officials disregarded federal advice that Los Angeles' system might not be cost-effective, so the state spent only its own money on the fingerprinting system to avoid triggering a federal requirement that it conduct a cost-benefit analysis before putting it in place.

However, department director Saenz noted the Legislature, not the department, decided to require the fingerprinting system based largely on the success of Los Angeles' first-in-the-nation program that handled 40 percent of the state's welfare caseload.

The state's fingerprinting program exceeds federal requirements, auditors said. Most states match information such as birth dates, Social Security numbers and addresses to prevent duplication.

NATIONAL



America West Airlines tests selling food on flights

BY BETH DEFALCO

Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX — Airline passengers have long used those little boxed meals served on flights as a kind of entertainment, a source of jokes and small talk with fellow passengers. But are they willing to pay for it?

Starting Monday, America West Airlines is prepared to find out. In a move that might prompt other cash-strapped airlines to join suit, the nation's eighth-largest carrier will test a "Buy on Board" program that allows passengers to buy meals, costing from \$3 to \$10.

The meals will be sold on about dozen flights a day for three weeks. The response will be evaluated after that.

If the experiment proves successful, the airline may begin selling meals on all flights longer than 2 1/2 hours, said America West spokeswoman Janice Monahan.

"The program is designed to offset the cost of providing food, not to make a profit," she said. "We're trying to meet customer needs without raising ticket prices."

America West reported its eighth straight quarterly loss in fall of this year.

The move already has other airlines, under tremendous pressure to cut costs, considering a similar program.

Northwest Airlines spokesman Kurt Ebenhoch said the carrier is "studying" the idea of selling food aboard its flights and Julie King, a spokeswoman for Houston-based Continental Airlines said they are reviewing the idea.

The company is "figuring out what customers value and are willing to pay for," King said.

A few other airlines, including Southwest, United, Delta and American airlines, said Thursday they have no immediate plans to begin selling food.

A Southwest Airlines spokeswoman said the company does not anticipate changing its current offering of complimentary peanuts and drinks.

"The majority of our passengers know that if they're going to fly Southwest and they're hungry, they probably should grab McDonald's before the flight," spokeswoman Angela Vargo said.

Tara Batem, a spokeswoman for American Airlines, said her company looked into selling food during its flights but determined it would be less expensive to continue the current food service, which cost the company \$778 million in 2001.

Colorado-based airline consultant Michael Boyd said America West should be given credit for trying to do things differently, but in the end, he doesn't think pas-

sengers will applaud the effort.

"It's a noble, worthwhile experiment," he said. "But I question whether it might send the wrong message and cheapen the experience."

Boyd said some airlines might jump at the chance to give away more food to attract America West customers.

Other analysts said the effort could improve airplane food and airlines' image.

"When you start selling something, it's got to be better," said Terry Trippler, an industry analyst from Minneapolis.

On longer flights, America West plans to serve hot meals on china.

But, Boyd warns, that means doing dishes. And then there are the potential inventory and storage headaches as well as making change, he said.

"I think it will be a nightmare to handle," Boyd said.

America West's for-sale menu will include a \$3 snack box packed with cheese, crackers, nuts, beef jerky and cookies or ice cream.

Other more expensive meals, ranging up to the \$10 Chicken Kiev with side dishes and dessert, will also be available.

Director of Los Alamos National Laboratory quits

BY LESLIE HOFFMAN

Associated Press Writer

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — The director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory was replaced Thursday amid government investigations into charges of widespread theft and fraud at the birthplace of the atomic bomb.

Employee accused of identity theft scam at H&R Block

By The Associated Press

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. — More than two dozen customers who went to H&R Block for tax-preparation help had their personal information stolen as part of an identity theft scam, according to a federal complaint.

Four suspects allegedly used the information to divert the victims' mail — including tax refunds — and to set up credit card accounts for their own shopping sprees, the complaint said.

One of the suspects, Ivy Johnson, worked at a Block office in White Plains between December 2000 and April 2001, prime tax-return season. She allegedly stole names, addresses, Social Security numbers and dates of birth from at least 27 customers.

Johnson and the other suspects, LaTasha Edwards-Hamlett, Catherine Pointer and Charles Griffin, allegedly used the information to open credit card accounts and divert tax checks of up to \$8,000.

David Ng, a spokesman for the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, said H&R Block did not willingly cooperate with the investigation. "We had to get subpoenas," he told The Journal News.

Block spokeswoman Denise Sposato would not comment, saying, "We don't know the specifics of her (Johnson's) case."

John Browne, a physicist and lab veteran who became director in 1997, will step down Monday.

University of California spokesman Rick Malaspina did not give a specific reason for the resignation but said it was a "mutual decision" by Browne and the university, which runs the lab for the government.

Browne submitted his resignation last month after a meeting with Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham.

"It is crucial that we restore public confidence in the management of the laboratory," Abraham said Thursday.

The FBI, Energy Department and at least two congressional committees are looking into alleged credit card abuses at the lab over the past several years and the disappearance of high-tech hardware and other equipment.

Two lab-hired investigators were fired in November and they went public, alleging a cover-up of the wrongdoing. The lab gave no reason for the dismissals and has not replaced the two men.

"They continue to cover up and to conceal the situation at the lab, and finally they've had to pay for what they've done," said Steven Doran, one of the fired investigators.

The lab has also been tarnished by security scandals, including missing computer disks and the controversy involving former scientist Wen Ho Lee, who was jailed for nine months after being accused of stealing nuclear

secrets. He denied any wrongdoing and ended up pleading guilty to a single felony count after the government's case crumbled.

The university, which has managed the lab since its inception in 1943, appointed retired Navy Vice Admiral George Nanos as interim director. Also stepping down is Joseph Salgado, a principal deputy director at the lab.

"These changes reflect the university's deep concern about the allegations that have been made about Los Alamos business practices and our absolute and steadfast commitment to addressing them in a timely manner," university President Richard Atkinson said.

Many of the security problems surfaced during Bill Richardson's tenure as energy secretary under President Clinton. Richardson, now New Mexico's governor, did not immediately return a call for comment.

The resignation comes less than two months after Los Alamos released the results of an audit into its credit card program over nearly four years. The audit questioned \$4.9 million in transactions, though watchdog groups said the figure should be higher.

Doran and Glenn Walp were hired last year by the lab to investigate its handling of government property and money. Walp said some \$2.7 million worth of equipment was unaccounted for, including 263 computers listed as missing since 1999. Many of them are presumed stolen.

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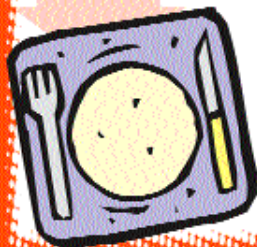
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NATIONAL

Democratic field swells to three and likely to grow before 2004 election

BY WILL LESTER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON

The Democratic field for the White House swelled to three with the entrance of North Carolina Sen. John Edwards Thursday and probably will double to a half-dozen or even more in the next week or so — nearly two years before the 2004 election.

Edwards, 49, announced he was entering the race for president, saying, "I want to be a champion for the people I have fought for all my life — regular people." He joined Vermont Gov. Howard Dean and Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry in the fast-growing Democratic field.

Missouri Rep. Dick Gephardt and Connecticut Sen. Joseph Lieberman are expected to join the field soon. Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle is strongly leaning toward a run and probably will announce his decision by mid-January, associates say. The Rev. Al Sharpton plans to file papers for an exploratory committee on Jan. 21, aides say.

Sen. Bob Graham of Florida is expected to announce his intentions later this month. Delaware Sen. Joe Biden and Connecticut Sen. Christopher Dodd are considering bids, too. Retired Gen. Wesley Clark of Little Rock, Ark., has also been mentioned as a possible candidate.

The Democrats in the field will compete for a chance in the 2004 elections to face President Bush, whose popularity has been high in the 16 months since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. But the Bush administration faces an uncertain economy and growing international problems.

Bush said Thursday he is not paying attention to the growing field of Democrats jockeying for the right to challenge him. He is too busy to pay any mind to "a lot of verbiage and a lot of noise and a lot of posturing and a lot of elbowing" on the Democratic side, he told reporters after a tour of his ranch in Crawford, Texas.

"One of these days, somebody will emerge, and we'll tee it up, and see who the American people want to lead," Bush said. "And



Karl DeBlaker/Associated Press
Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., speaks to the media, Thursday, in front of his Raleigh, N.C., home. Edwards announced that he has formed an exploratory committee for a presidential run.

until that happens, I'm going to be doing my job."

In the meantime, Democrats are moving quickly to prepare for a primary season that won't start until early next year.

Outside his home in Raleigh, Edwards talked about his working-class roots — his father was a textile mill supervisor and his mother's last job was at a post office — and how he became the first in his family to graduate from college.

Edwards is a multimillionaire trial lawyer who had never run for office before winning his Senate job 1998. He has earned at least \$152 million in civil judgments for clients and a fortune for himself, estimated at \$14 million during the Senate campaign.

"If the American people want a lifelong politician in the White House, that's not me. They'll have a group of people to choose from if that's what they want," he said. "If they want instead somebody who is closer to them, more connected to them and spent his entire life fighting for them and comes from them, that is me."

"The president has a different kind of administration that is run to a large extent by insiders and for insiders," Edwards said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. "We need to give the American people that choice."

Though he has little experience on the national stage, Edwards said, "I'm more than happy to be judged on the basis of my ideas."

Candidates have to register a committee with the Federal Election Commission once they exceed \$5,000 in financial activity for a given office such as president. Money raised from individuals after Jan. 1 of this year is eligible for federal matching funds — dollar for dollar up to \$250 per contribution — that would be paid to the campaigns beginning Jan. 1, 2004, said Ian Stirton, an FEC spokesman.

Florida Sen. Graham was getting a chance to connect with Iowa football fans by refereeing — as a member of the sidelines crew — at the Orange Bowl Thursday night where the Hawkeyes were playing Southern Cal. Graham often has taken on unusual jobs in a series of "workdays" he has held throughout his political career.

Gephardt was vacationing on the South Carolina coast.

In Iowa, site of the Democrats' first 2004 presidential contest, Edwards, Dean and Gephardt have made an impression with their early work, though party activists say the state still is open.

INTERNATIONAL



China stands by North Korea despite hardships

BY CHRISTOPHER BODEEN
Associated Press Writer

BEIJING — They've been as close as "lips and teeth," the saying goes, staunch comrades in battle and communist allies during decades of Cold War standoff.

With ties sealed in blood, China remains North Korea's most important ally and a crucial aid provider. That gives Beijing an important role and unique leverage as Pyongyang faces worldwide condemnation for restarting its nuclear program.

While China says it wants a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, it has not visibly exerted its substantial influence on Pyongyang. Instead, it seems to be standing by its ally, guided by historical ties and fears of being drawn into the chaos that could unfold if the North Korean regime collapses or the country goes to war with its southern neighbor.

"Despite all the problems North Korea poses for China, Beijing appears unwilling to risk destabilizing North Korea," said Charles K. Armstrong, director of the Center for Korean Research at New York's Columbia University.

China's closeness to North Korea has made it the target of intense lobbying from other nations uneasy over the latest moves by Kim Jong Il's dictatorial regime. North Korea alarmed the world last month when it decided to reactivate its plutonium-based nuclear program; last week, it expelled U.N. nuclear inspectors and signaled it may quit a global nuclear arms-control treaty.

U.S. officials have urged Beijing to pressure North Korea. On Thursday, South Korea sent a deputy foreign minister to Beijing for talks about North Korea, and Seoul said the two sides agreed to cooperate to "prevent the situation from further aggravating."

American and South Korean diplomats say Beijing has listened to their concerns but hasn't promised to intervene with

Pyongyang. If China is exerting influence on North Korea, it isn't letting on.

Making direct demands on North Korea is "not China's style," said Chu Shulong, director of the Institute of Strategic Studies at Beijing's Tsinghua University. However, he said China has made its concerns clear to the North — a suggestion that Beijing is exerting subtle pressure on Pyongyang.

At the United Nations, diplomats said Beijing wanted to deal privately with the situation through diplomatic channels rather than bringing it to the Security Council where China could wind up publicly defending Pyongyang.

It is a difficult role for China to play. Beijing must balance its ideological and traditional ties to Pyongyang with its keen desire for regional stability and its hunger to be seen as an important player on the world stage, especially by Washington.

North Korea's founder and its current leader's father, Kim Il Sung, spent much of his youth in China and was once a member of China's Communist Party. China fought on North Korea's side during the 1950-53 Korean War, sacrificing an estimated 1 million Chinese soldiers in the fight against South Korea and the United States.

Ties remained strong even after China established diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992. At a North Korean embassy reception that year, a Chinese general, Fu Quanyou, again invoked the Korean War-era "lips and teeth" analogy, setting the tone for the current cordial relationship.

China's leverage is considerable. It provides about 220,000 tons of grain a year to the famine-plagued country, according to the United Nations. Chinese fuel supplies help keep the remnants of North Korean industry operating, and China is the North's biggest trading partner, though trade volumes are paltry.

China receives some raw materials from North Korea and traders near the border get some business from North Koreans, but it's

Wanted man talks



K. M. Chaudary/Associated Press

Mohammed Asghar, a Pakistani jeweler, talks to journalists at his shop in Lahore, Pakistan, Thursday. Asghar, who claims his photo was identified as one of five foreign-born men being sought by the FBI in the United States, said Thursday he wants to clear his name, as his family and fellow shopkeepers spoke out in his defense. Asghar has never been to America and says has only traveled outside of Pakistan once when he tried last year to get to Britain on false documents. He was stopped in the United Arab Emirates and returned to Pakistan.

not considered very lucrative.

China "could exert a great deal of pressure on North Korea if it wanted to," Armstrong said.

Kim Jong Il visited China twice in recent years, significant because he rarely leaves his country. The trips led some to wonder if North Korea was considering Chinese-style economic reforms, but there has been little evidence of serious change.

Withdrawing aid to force changes is considered too risky. Already, hundreds of thousands of North Korean refugees are believed to have fled across the border seeking food and work in China. Almost 200 have entered foreign diplomatic missions and schools in China seeking asy-

lum in the past year, creating diplomatic headaches for China.

Any North Korean collapse would risk unleashing a conflict that could draw in China or — equally worrisome to Beijing — plant a U.S.-allied unified Korean state on its border. South Korea currently hosts 37,000 U.S. troops.

Some experts say that China, rather than using aid as leverage, may even increase its assistance to forestall a North Korean meltdown.

The complexities of China's relationship with North Korea make the "lips and teeth" analogy even more apt, since it implies co-dependence as much as intimacy.

Iraq criticizes U.N. resolution limiting imports of goods

BY NADIA ABOU EL-MAGD
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraq said Thursday it has cooperated with U.N. inspectors and that they have found no weapons of mass destruction in five weeks of searching, so their crucial report to the U.N. Security Council this month should favor Baghdad.

The inspectors, however, said it's too soon to draw conclusions about whether Iraq has complied with U.N. demands — as it must to avoid war with the United States.

The government-controlled Iraqi press also reproached the Security Council for tightening controls on imports to the country, saying council members were following the dictates of Washington and furthering "the mad U.S. attempts to wage aggression on Iraq."

Gen. Hossam Mohammed Amin, Iraq's chief liaison to the U.N. inspectors, said the inspections so far — visits to 237 sites in five weeks — gave credence to Baghdad's assertion it has no more banned weapons.

Amin said the inspections had been intrusive and included surprise visits.

"All those activities proved that the Iraqi declarations are credible and the

American allegations and claims are baseless and they are lying for political reasons," Amin told a news conference.

He said he was certain the inspectors had found nothing so far since the liaison officers who accompany them "are scientists and engineers and they can, of course, notice anything abnormal."

However, the inspectors on the ground have said nothing publicly about what they have discovered, and Ewen Buchanan, the spokesman for the inspectors, said at the United Nations that "we have not finished our investigations."

"There are many more sites to be inspected and this process will take some time. Inspections are a process and not something where one can draw instant conclusions," he told The Associated Press.

However, weapons inspectors have said Iraq's accounting of its weapons program fails to provide enough evidence to support its claims to have destroyed missiles, warheads and chemical agents such as VX nerve gas.

The Bush administration cited nine areas in which it said Iraq's declaration fails to provide a complete picture of actual weapons holdings. These included unaccounted-for thousands of pounds of growth

media for producing anthrax and chemical precursors for making mustard gas.

On Thursday, U.N. inspection teams visited five sites in the area around Baghdad, including a chemical plant, a state company that works on missile propellants and an air force technical warehouse. As usual, they said nothing about their findings.

The inspectors had been expected to begin using helicopters in their work this week, allowing them to explore more Iraqi territory, but Amin said the use of helicopters had been postponed for technical reasons. He did not elaborate.

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, meanwhile, complained Washington was going ahead with plans for war during the inspections.

"Despite the presence of the inspectors, U.S. aircraft carriers are heading to the region and U.S. and British soldiers are arriving and making preparations," he told a visiting Spanish delegation.

Washington and London have accused Iraq of hiding banned weapons. Both nations have threatened to use military force unless Saddam Hussein's regime provides evidence it has eliminated all such arms as required by U.N. resolutions

adopted at the time of Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent Gulf War.

The U.N. arms experts must certify that Iraq has no more chemical, biological and nuclear weapons or the means to deliver them before economic sanctions imposed after the Iraqi invasion can be lifted.

As part of the sanctions, a U.N. committee must approve export of goods to Iraq, and on Monday the Security Council tightened controls on some communications equipment and antibiotics that the United States and Britain said could be used by the Iraqi military in a war.

Iraq's state-run press reacted Thursday with angry editorials. The daily Al-Jumhuriya said the resolution, which controls imports under the U.N. oil for food program, is new evidence of Washington's "hegemony" over the Security Council.

"This is a bad resolution which would lead to inflicting a deliberate damage and harm to our people," the paper said.

It said the members of the Security Council should "fulfill their responsibility, stand against the obvious U.S. domination of the council and ... foil the mad U.S. attempts to wage aggression on Iraq under the cover of the Security Council."



SPORTS

No. 5 ranked USC beats No. 3 ranked Iowa, 38-17

BY STEVEN WINE
AP Sports Writer

MIAMI — Heisman Trophy winner Carson Palmer played keepaway from Brad Banks, and Southern California looked right at home playing in the Orange Bowl for the first time.

Palmer dominated his duel with Heisman runner-up Banks, helping the No. 5 Trojans to a 16-minute advantage in time of possession as they beat third-ranked Iowa 38-17 Thursday night.

Palmer led scoring drives of 79, 80, 99, 85 and 61 yards, helping USC blow open a game that was 10-all at halftime. He threw for 303 yards and a touchdown and was chosen the game's most valuable player.

Banks was limited to 204 yards passing and failed to lead Iowa's normally high-powered offense into the end zone until the final minute.

The Hawkeyes' biggest play came when C.J. Jones returned the opening kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown.

Southern California (11-2) beat a top 25 team for the seventh time this season. USC won its final eight games and snapped a nine-game winning streak by Iowa (11-2).

The Trojans outscored UCLA, Notre Dame and Iowa 134-51 in their final three games, a finish that may be impressive enough to vault them to second in the

final rankings behind the Fiesta Bowl winner. It would be USC's highest finish since 1979.

Palmer completed 21 of 31 passes, feasting on a defense that ranked last in the Big Ten against the pass. His 65-yard bomb to Kareem Kelly set up Southern Cal's first score, but mostly Palmer made short throws to keep drives alive.

Banks, a Florida native playing with dozens of relatives in the stands, went 15-for-36 and threw his first interception since Oct. 19.

Iowa's muscle was a concern for Southern California coming into the game, but instead the speedy Trojans wore down the Hawkeyes. USC mounted long touchdown drives on each of its first three possessions in the second half and totaled 363 yards in the second half.

The matchup was dubbed the Rose Bowl of the East because Pasadena is the more traditional postseason reward for both teams, but Southern California thrived in the unfamiliar setting. Justin Fargas rushed for 122 yards, including touchdowns of 4 and 50 yards. Teammate Mike Williams caught an 18-yard touchdown pass, his 14th of the season to tie an NCAA freshman record.

Jones scored on the longest kickoff return in Orange Bowl history. But more than 40,000 Iowa fans in attendance had little to cheer about after that.

Parcells officially hired as Dallas Cowboys coach

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
AP Sports Writer

IRVING, Texas — Bill Parcells is back for sure, taking over the Dallas Cowboys on Thursday to end any doubt about his return to the NFL.

Parcells was introduced by the team after more than a week of speculation and conflicting reports about a coach with a history of walking away from deals.

The two-time Super Bowl winner was hired three days after Cowboys owner Jerry Jones fired Dave Campo, saying he wanted a proven coach and a "change in philosophy."

"I'm energized, determined and I look forward to being part of the community here in Dallas," said Parcells, already wearing Cowboys colors — a silver-and-blue striped tie. "I know what station football occupies on all levels in the state of Texas."

Parcells, who got a four-year contract reportedly worth \$17.1 million, will try to turn around a team that went 15-33 in the last three seasons. He is the first Cowboys coach with prior experience as an NFL head coach.

Dallas won the last of its five Super Bowls — three under Jones — in 1996, and the Cowboys haven't had a winning record since 1998.

"I look forward to getting the team back to a place of prominence, a place of high-competitiveness," he said. "I became convinced that this was the opportunity at this time that was right for Bill Parcells."

Jones described Parcells as the "most qualified coach in our sport that you could draw up if you were drawing your own Rembrandt."

The 61-year-old Parcells coached 15

seasons for three teams, taking the New York Giants, New England Patriots and New York Jets from losing records to the playoffs in two seasons.

He led the Giants to their only two Super Bowl victories, took the Patriots to the NFL title game and the Jets to the AFC championship game.

After leaving the Jets, Parcells said he never wanted to coach again. He even wrote a book: "The Final Season: My Last Year as Head Coach in the NFL."

That was seven years after he took the Patriots job, saying that would be his "last coaching job, without question."

Still, he signed a contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers last year but changed his mind. He also backed out of an agreement with the Bucs in 1992.

Parcells is 138-100-1 in regular-season games and 11-6 in the playoffs. Only four coaches have more postseason wins.

Parcells will have more authority than anyone since Jimmy Johnson, the first coach Jones hired after buying the team in 1989. He will also be the first Dallas coach to make more than \$1 million a season.

Jones and Parcells create an unlikely pair.

Jones is also the team's general manager and has relished total control of the organization. Parcells is an unyielding taskmaster who expects authority over his coaching staff and the final say on the roster.

But both men want to get back to the Super Bowl.

Parcells said he agreed to a "partnership" with Jones and that he accepted the owner would have the final say in many decisions — although neither man gave details of how they will work together.

"There will be changes here, there's no doubt about that," Parcells said.

Touchdown!



Donna McWilliam/Associated Press

Texas Roy Williams (4) is hit by Louisiana State's safety Jack Hunt (8) and cornerback Corey Webster (13) as he crosses the goal line for a touchdown after running 39 yards in the third quarter at the Cotton Bowl game in Dallas, Wednesday. In the background is linebacker Lionel Turner (58). Williams led a rally by turning a short slant into a 51-yard touchdown, going 75 yards after a leaping grab to set up another score and snaking 39 yards for a TD on an end around, rallying No. 9 Texas past LSU 35-20.

More than big money at stake in Orange Bowl

BY TODD DVORAK
Associated Press Writer

MIAMI — There is more than a fat financial payoff in store for this year's Orange Bowl teams. Iowa and Southern California also stand to reap some of the recruiting benefits of playing in Florida's postseason centerpiece.

South Florida is a hotbed for prep football talent and a constant source of talent for programs such as Miami, Florida and Florida State.

Coaches from Iowa and USC agree the publicity that comes with playing in the Orange Bowl gives their programs a boost in the battle for the state's top talent. For Iowa, which aggressively recruits in the state and has 12 Florida natives on its roster, playing in a Bowl Championship Series game in Miami is the kind of advertising money can't buy.

"Once players from an area have success in a program, it makes it easier to recruit those areas," Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz said. The Orange Bowl means "great exposure in all the local papers."

He believes being in a BCS bowl and going undefeated in Big Ten play was even more important.

"That was a great step for our program. I'd like to think that's going to help all of our recruiting, not just the Florida recruit-

ing," Ferentz said.

USC coach Pete Carroll agrees, despite the fact the Trojans are not as active in the state and have only two Florida players on their roster.

"No doubt we're getting a lot of attention, a lot of people are tuned in to this game," Carroll said. "It really helps that it's on Jan. 2. It can pay off even more if we play well and win."

Win or lose, No. 3 Iowa and No. 5 Southern California will be paid \$13.5 million apiece — to be shared by their conferences — by the BCS for playing in the Orange Bowl Thursday night. It's a handsome payout for two teams that few expected to have such stellar seasons.

Iowa (11-1) won a share of the Big Ten title, and like the Trojans has won seven straight games even though the Hawkeyes didn't get a single vote in the preseason polls. USC (10-2) is co-champion of the Pac-10, and like Iowa earned an at-large bid in the Orange Bowl after closing out the season by routing UCLA and Notre Dame.

The game featured a marquee quarterback matchup. USC's Carson Palmer won the Heisman Trophy, while Iowa's Brad Banks finished second in the voting.

Dubbed by many as the "Rose Bowl East," the game also was billed as a classic clash of Big Ten brawn against Pac-10 speed and finesse.

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- ACROSS**
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 - 8 Struck a stance
 - 11 Lucy's drum
 - 12 Battery end
 - 13 Plow pioneer
 - 14 Red leader
 - 15 Fishing poles
 - 17 Youngsters
 - 18 Asian nation
 - 20 "Yeah, right"
 - 22 Eggs
 - 23 Ready to send
 - 26 Dramatic no-show
 - 28 Zigzag
 - 29 Catcher
 - 31 Gatsby-burg loser
 - 32 Shark, e.g.
 - 33 Fix
 - 34 "Waterloo" group
 - 36 Mouth part
 - 38 Inclined
 - 40 Sounds of agony
 - 43 Kate's roomie
 - 44 Wide tie
 - 45 Pizzeria buy
 - 46 Strapped
- DOWN**
- 1 Garden area
 - 2 Had dinner
 - 3 Bob Hope film
 - 4 Long lunches
 - 5 Coaster
 - 6 Crony
 - 7 Former
 - 8 Bob Hope film
 - 9 Fix copy
 - 10 Legs
 - 16 Perched
 - 18 Theater box
 - 19 Bard's river
 - 21 Shop tools
 - 23 Headliner
 - 24 Flat
 - 25 Monopoly card
 - 27 Like some produce
 - 30 According to
 - 33 Bullwhisker for one
 - 34 Signed word
 - 35 Class ender
 - 37 Mideast nation
 - 39 Golf need
 - 41 Auction signal
 - 42 Hog holder



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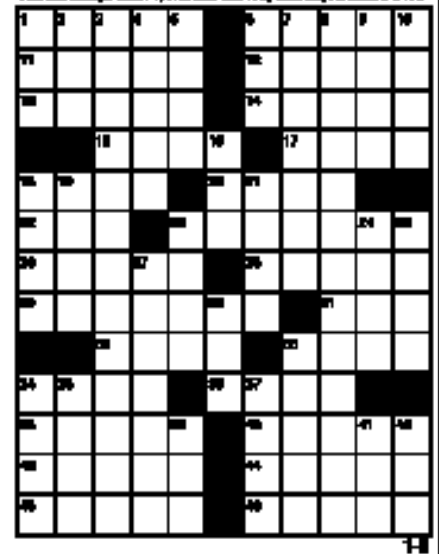
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Do men know bra size in Saudi Arabia?

In a December New York Times dispatch from Jidda, Saudi Arabia, concerning the heavily religious-law-regulated Perdu lingerie shop, its female marketing director said that about 85 percent of Saudi women wear ill-fitting bras, perhaps because the law requires that sales clerks in public stores be men. According to the Times, "(W)hile women may be berated for showing a ... leg or an arm (in public), they must ask strange men for help in assessing their bra size."





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SATURDAY

Weekly Storytime, 11:00 a.m. Come to Barnes & Noble for Saturday readings with the kids! Call 310-260-9110 for more information.

Puppetolio! presented by the Santa Monica Puppet & Magic Center. All ages, 3 and up. This musical revue features marionettes, ventriloquism, magic and more. Shows are always followed by a demonstration, Q & A, and a tour of the Puppet workshop and Museum. Saturdays and Sundays at 1pm and 3pm. Wednesdays and Holidays at 1pm. Seats are \$6.50. 1255 2nd Street in Santa Monica. Reservations/Information (310)656-0483. www.puppet-magic.com

Psychic Faire & Spiritual Healing Festival - Admission & Healings are free. Tarot, Past Lives, Career, Palm, Love Life, Money, Aura and More. Readings \$8 contribution or three for \$20. 1pm to 4pm, 1731 21st St. (between Michigan and Olympic) For information or directions call (310)587-3536.

Music Showcase. **UnUrban Coffeehouse**. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, (310)315-0056.

The Red Ribbon Squares, Santa Monica's official square dance club, invites you to enjoy an evening of plus level square dancing, alternating with round dancing, with an A-1 tip during break time. We dance every Saturday at Marine Park from 7:45pm to 10:30pm. Pre-rounds begin at 7:15pm. Admission is \$5 for dancers, including refreshments. Spectators are free. For more information, please call (310)395-3383

MOVIE °GUIDE

LOEWS CINIPLEX BROADWAY CINEMA

1441 Third St. at Broadway
About Schmidt (R) 12:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40. *Two Weeks Notice* (PG-13) 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10. *Antwone Fisher* (PG-13) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00. *The Hours* (PG-13) 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:20.

MANN CRITERION

1313 Third St.
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (PG) 11:30, 3:15, 7:05, 10:30. *Treasure Planet* (PG) 12:00. *The Hot Chick* (PG-13) 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:10. *Gangs of New York* (R) 11:15, 12:15, 3:00, 4:15, 7:10, 8:15, 10:40. *Narc* (R) 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00. *Adaptation* (R) 12:30, 3:45, 7:30, 10:20.

AMC THEATRE SM 7

1310 3rd Street
Die Another Day (PG-13) 10:30am., *Drumline* (PG-13) 10:45, 1:10. *Maid in Manhattan* (PG-13) 11:20, 2:00, 4:45, 7:20p, 9:55. *Star Trek: Nemesis* (PG-13) 11:10, 1:55, 4:35, 7:15, 9:50. *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (PG-13) 11:00, 3:00, 7:00, 10:00, 10:45. *Catch Me If You Can* (PG-13) 11:45, 1:20, 3:20, 4:30, 6:30, 7:50, 9:45, 10:55. *Analyze That* (R) 4:00, 7:30. *Chicago* (PG-13) 11:30, 2:20p, 5:10, 8:00, 10:40.

LANDMARK NU-WILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Love Liza (R) 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:30, 10:00. *The Pianist* (R) 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:15.

LAEMMLE MONICA

1332 2nd St.
Pinocchio (NR) 1:45, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40. *Frida* (R) 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:05. *Sonny* (R) 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50. *Max* (R) 1:30, 4:35, 7:25, 10:05. *Far From Heaven* (PG-13) 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45.

AERO THEATRE

1328 Montana Ave.
My Big Fat Greek Wedding 5:30, 7:30, 9:30



BACK PAGE

Bridge, bears, prospectors top CA coin design finalists

BY IAN STEWART
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Is California defined by panhandling prospectors, sea swept cypresses, the movie industry or the Golden Gate Bridge?

Those are the top choices among proposed images for the state's upcoming commemorative quarter and Californians now have the chance to cast their vote on what design should be used.

More than 8,000 designs, including grizzly bears and a variety of landscape

vistas have been narrowed down to 20 finalists that will vie for one of five spots to be handed over to the U.S. mint for final selection, said Kevin Starr, the state librarian and chairman of the California Quarter Committee.

"It's been an interesting sociological study," Starr said of the selection process. "In a state of 35 million people, the choices have encompassed every kind of landscape, every kind of flora, every kind of fauna. In the end, what kind of an icon do you choose to represent the state?"

Of the final 20 finalists, nine picture

the Golden Gate Bridge in one form or another. There are four that show prospectors as a representation of the mid-1800s Gold Rush; five show strips of film to represent the movie industry; six have depictions of towering redwoods, pines or sequoias and one shows a grizzly bear.

California is the latest of 40 states already with commemorative quarter designs, including the original 13 colonies, followed by others such as Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The coins are an important feature of a state's identity, Starr said by telephone from his office in Sacramento.

"There's something talismanic about coinage. People have lucky coins," he said.

The coin program has, however, run

into controversy in other states, triggering heated debates on what should be used to define a state's identity.

Some numismatics, or coin collectors, have complained that the images on the coins from Indiana, Louisiana and Tennessee are too cluttered and too busy esthetically.

Unlike many states, California chose to include the general population in at least part of the design process. Submissions were received from art schools, colleges and independent artists between September and November of last year. The cast of choices was narrowed by a committee to 100 and again trimmed to 20, which have now been posted on the governor's Web page, where anyone can cast their vote.

Man gives up pet shark; it's too large for living room

By The Associated Press

PLEASANTON — Jigsaw isn't a typical family pet.

He's more than 4 feet long, has a dorsal fin and loves calamari.

The 2 1/2-year-old white-tipped reef shark has been living with John Valentine and his family for more than two years. But the beloved pet has grown too large for their living room aquarium, so the family found Jigsaw bigger digs at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

"We want to do the right thing for him," said Valentine. "We love him, but he'll be better off with four or five other reef sharks in a bigger tank."

Jigsaw was just 16 inches long when Valentine bought him from a friend in August 2000. Since then, Jigsaw has

become a part of the family.

Though he'll eat any new fish introduced into his tank, the Valentines said he steers clear of munching on the fish he's lived with since he was small.

"He's friends with the fish in there. They cohabitate," said Valentine's wife, Whitney.

"I never knew a shark had character or an alliance with things it actually grew up with," Valentine said.

White-tipped reef sharks can grow as long as 6 1/2 feet long and are commonly found in shallow tropical waters from the Galapagos Islands to the Indian Ocean, according to Kevin Lewand, a biologist with the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

The Valentines promise to visit Jigsaw in his new home, but at least one member of the family wishes the shark was staying put.

Woman fired for refusing to wear uniform gets \$30,000

By The Associated Press

CHICAGO — A woman who was fired for refusing to wear pants as part of her work uniform will be paid \$30,000 by her employer, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission said Thursday.

Carol Grotts, a Pentecostal, was hired by Brink's in Peoria as a uniformed messenger. She told the company that her religious beliefs precluded her from wearing pants, and she offered to buy culottes.

Brink's fired her, then hired her back,

allowing her to wear culottes, after she filed a religious discrimination complaint with the EEOC.

Under a consent decree filed in federal court, Brink's will also pay Grotts' attorney fees and train its Peoria managers about religious discrimination.

"Grotts should not have been required to choose between respecting her religious beliefs and keeping her job with Brink's," EEOC attorney Richard J. Mrizek said.

Brink's had no comment.

Recycling your Christmas tree is a trip to the park.

WHEN:

SaL & Sun., Dec. 28 & 29, 2002
SaL & Sun., Jan. 4 & 5, 2003
SaL & Sun., Jan. 11 & 12, 2003

WHERE:

Trees may be brought to any of the following Santa Monica parks:

Clover Park
25th & Ocean Park Boulevard

Douglas Park
Chelsea & Wilshire

Christine Emerson Reed Park
Lincoln & California

Los Amigos Park
5th & Hollister

PLUS:

City of Santa Monica Transfer Station
2401 Delaware Avenue (next to Recycling Center)
During the month of January, Christmas trees may be brought, free of charge, to the City's Transfer Station
Hours: Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

PARK YOUR TREE!



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