

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

2, 27, 6, 10, 29

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 9, 4, 4

Evening picks: 4, 7, 7

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 1, Gold Rush

2nd Place: 3, Hot Shot

3rd Place: 8, Gorgeous George

Race Time: 1:42.74



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

California Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante (runner-up to Arnold Schwarzenegger in the October recall election) is not the family's only public figure. As the San Francisco Chronicle reported in September, his sister Nao Bustamante, 39, is a prominent performance artist whose work includes (1) wearing a strap-on burrito for men to kneel before and bite in order to absolve themselves of "500 years of white man's guilt" and (2) sticking her head into a plastic bag filled with water and tying it around her neck to resemble a Houdini stunt, to create "an urgent situation to respond to."



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Take most people. They are crazy about cars. I'd rather have a horse. A horse is at least *human*, for God's sake."

— J.D. Salinger



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Mystery photo



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

A resident gets prehistoric by erecting a dinosaur in his yard. As part of a weekly contest debuting today, the Daily Press will give away a free prize to the first reader who can accurately describe where the photo was taken. E-mail answers to sack@smdp.com.

Mayor sets priorities for the year ahead

He wants a safer, more artistic, scholarly 2004

BY JOHN WOOD
Daily Press Staff Writer

Residents this year can expect to see less gun violence in an east-side neighborhood, a financially stable school district and more arts programs in Santa Monica.

Those are the priorities that Mayor Richard Blooms hopes to achieve in his last year as the city's top politician. But he knows from experience they won't be easy to attain.

Bloom said his top accomplishments in 2003 were guiding the city through a \$16 million budget deficit and providing stability after the living wage measure failed for a second time — two issues focused more on holding together a cash poor and divided community than venturing into new territory, politically.

With his term as mayor set to expire at the end of the year,

Bloom also will be up for reelection in November — along with City Councilmen Mike Feinstein, Ken Genser and Herb Katz.

Bloom said it's too soon to say how the 2004 election will be different than others, but added that a political action committee being set up by the local Chamber of Commerce is sure to cause problems.

It will be the first time that the chamber will endorse candidates and raise money for their campaigns. The goal is to gain majority on the City Council, which is currently controlled by Santa Monicans For Renter's Rights, a liberal group that for years has guided City Hall politics.

"For those of us who are considering running in November, it means earlier fundraising, it means more fundraising," Bloom said. "I don't think, frankly, it's going to change the outcome of the election — and I think it's

See MAYOR, page 7



Mayor Richard Bloom

Law bans smoking in front of public buildings

By Daily Press staff

If you're a smoker, chances are you're going to have a difficult time lighting up anywhere in Santa Monica except in the privacy of your own home.

A new California law went into effect on Jan. 1 that prohibits smoking within 20 feet of any public building, including universities and community colleges.

AB 846, signed into law by former Gov. Gray Davis last year,

specifically prohibits smoking within 20 feet of main entrances, exits and windows of any building owned, leased or occupied by the state, county or city.

The state law complements Santa Monica's anti-smoking stance. The Santa Monica City Council last March voted to ban smoking in its 15 parks because of health risks associated with second-hand smoke and the likelihood that children could ingest

discarded cigarette butts.

And the council is currently reviewing a law that would ban smoking on the Santa Monica Pier and at the beach.

At the request of Mayor Richard Bloom, the City Council in November voted 6-1 to have staffers draft two new ordinances outlawing smoking and return the laws to be voted on by council members. The ordinances are expected to be voted on early this year.

Violators could end paying as much as \$750 after court fees and penalties. Enforcement is done by random, periodic checks in the parks by the city attorney office's consumer protection unit and the Santa Monica Police Department.

As far as the statewide law is concerned, it's anticipated that clear signage and placing ash cans at least 20 feet from affected entrances, exits and windows will make the law virtually self-enforcing.

Fifth of electorate eyed by White House candidates

BY WILL LESTER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — For the next year, presidential candidates will be working to win over roughly a fifth of the nation's voters who haven't made up their minds about which side to support.

Who they are, how they feel and what will win their support will be central to the campaign. In large part, those voters will decide the outcome of the presidential election.

Even though the majority of voters generally say they have a definite feeling how they would vote, there are still plenty of

wavering voters at stake.

"Even if it's only a fifth or sixth of the electorate, that's still a substantial number," said pollster Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center. He said that group could consist of 15 million to 20 million voters.

Almost half of voters, 45 per-

cent, in a poll conducted for The Associated Press in mid-December by Ipsos-Public Affairs, said they definitely would vote for President Bush, while not quite a third, 31 percent, said they definitely would vote against him.

See ELECTORATE, page 10

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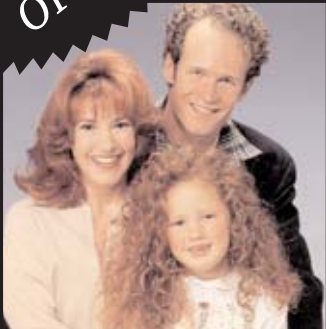
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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

★★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★★-Average
★★-So-so ★-Difficult



ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ You speak your mind, but on some level you might realize that what you are saying is not exactly on-target or not exactly true for you. Stop and think. You might want to update your suggestions. Tonight: Tired? It's about time.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Finances could be fraught with surprises, especially if you put too much trust in a friend. You easily could be upset by what you see. Right now, chill out and give others some space as you decide on your course of action. Tonight: Discuss a personal matter.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ You're in the pink — so to speak. As a result, you might decide to do something totally different from what you had planned. Screen or insulate yourself from someone who could mess up your day or ruin your plans. Tonight: Your night on the town, if you want another.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★ Take your time making a decision, especially if you are uncomfortable. You might be sensing something. Make calls and reach out for someone at a distance. You could be stunned by what you hear. Mull over a conversation. Don't react. Tonight: Get some R and R.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Aim for what you want, but don't be surprised if someone waylays you. A partner could be enormously difficult without intending to be. You might want to seize the reins of your finances. Friends are where the action is. Tonight: Playtime.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Jupiter in your sign retrogrades, pausing what might be going on around you. A partner could be uppity, and you might have had enough. Understand that you could be reacting to this major planetary shift. Tonight: A must appearance.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Take a broad point of view rather than getting caught up in the little details. You will be much happier, and, ultimately, the results will be better. On some level, you feel a need to slow down, and you will. Tonight: Take in a movie.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Not everyone is as serious-minded as you are right now. Take time with a discussion that involves a loved one who is instrumental to your well-being and health. In fact, how you handle some unexpected uproar could make or break an emotional situation. Tonight: Be with the one you love.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Uproar on the home front could have you running out the front door. If you need to take some time to yourself, do so. A partner might agree with you, but how you handle the matter might differ. Be gentle and diplomatic. Tonight: Whatever another wants. It could be worth it!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Unpredictability could become a mainstay in your life. You might want to rethink a decision that involves work. You have many talents; become less dependent on others. In the next few weeks you get long-overdue news. Tonight: Don't push. Relax.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Let creativity flow as naturally as it can. You have one idea after another, and not necessarily work-related. A partner who always proves to be fun might be a little out of sorts for a while. Don't worry so much. Tonight: Go where the fun is.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You become more and more unpredictable, which might be why a partner walks away from you, or at least hesitates. You need to be aware of the impact of your behavior on another. Share more of yourself. Tonight: Try to mellow out.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Indian art show comes to Santa Monica

By Daily Press staff

The upcoming Santa Monica Indian Art Show features a wide range of collectible contemporary and antique Native American art scheduled for Jan. 10 and Jan. 11 at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium.

Considered by officials to be a cultural arts classroom, the event will feature original historic and present day objects of art — including Guatemalan masks, Southwestern kachinas, Plains Indian beadwork, Pacific Northwestern carvings, Spanish Colonial and Pre-Colombian art.

The show also highlights award winning artists, sculptors and jewelers, including Andrew Redhorse Alvarez, Cliff Fragua, Ronald Chee and Baje Whitethorne.

Special performances include Emmy award-winning music from Xavier Quijas Xyaotl and a storytelling festival on both days with native southern California Indian storytellers.

In a modern day gallery setting, more than 85 knowledgeable antique dealers and contemporary Native American artists will be on hand to talk about the items they bring to the show. In some cases, the items may be the only remaining art materials of an indigenous society. Contemporary artist also will be available to discuss their rich artistic traditions. No sacred items will be displayed or sold.

Tickets cost \$7 for adults and are free for children 17 and under. A donation is suggested for the storytelling festival. For more information, call KR Martindale Show Management at (818) 905-9299 or (800) 656-9278. Tickets are available at www.americanindianartshow.com or ticketweb.com, or by telephone at (886) 468-3398. The auditorium is located at the corner of Pico Boulevard and Main Street.

Insurance leaders to discuss plan for CA workers

By Daily Press staff

Major insurance company presidents will participate in a panel next weekend to discuss insurance solutions for California workers.

PacificCare of California president James Frey, Blue Cross of California president and chief executive officer David Helwig and HealthNet of California president Chris Wing will examine critical issues facing health care insurers, employers and workers in California at a panel co-sponsored by the Los Angeles Association of Health Underwriters and the Employee Benefits Planning Association of Los Angeles.

The panelists will discuss topics, including rising health care costs for Californians, the movement away from managed health care plans and efforts to contain prescription drug costs.

"We are honored to have such a prestigious panel of experts talk about the problems and solutions to providing affordable, quality health insurance for California employees," said LAAHU president Bruce Benton. "We believe that health care, especially access to affordable insurance, will be a key issue in the upcoming presidential primaries. With a new governor in office and the passage of the employer-mandated health insurance bill by the California Legislature, as well as several other proposals to be introduced in 2004, California will find itself in the spotlight on this major national issue."

LAAHU was founded in 1979 to give LA-area professionals who sell health insurance products a voice in the state and federal legislative process, offer opportunities for continued learning in the field and provide a support network. With a membership of more than 400, LAAHU is one of the largest members of both the National Association of Health Underwriters and the California Association of Health Underwriters.

The panel discussion, part of LAAHU's monthly series that addresses health care issues, will take place on Jan. 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sheraton Universal, 333 Universal Hollywood Drive in Universal City.



A fast moving storm front rolled quickly through the area on Friday bringing schizophrenic conditions to the region, not to mention poor water quality due to run-off.

Today will see a mix of local WNW windswell and fading NW swell. Once the tide drops, most spots will have waist-chest high surf while the standout NW spots see shoulder-head high surf with some inconsistent overhead sets. The waves will become less consistent and smaller late in the afternoon.

Expect both WNW and NW swells to continue fading through Sunday. Most breaks see some waist high-plus surf while standouts drop down to about shoulder high on the best sets. This swell mix will have wound almost totally down by Monday.

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

Today the
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56°

Sunrise: 7:05 a.m.
Sunset: 5:01 p.m.

	LOW TIDE				HIGH TIDE			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
WEDNESDAY	11:24	1.6	10:19	1.7	4:31	4.8	4:56	3.2
THURSDAY	12:24pm	0.9	11:04pm	2.1	5:07	5.0	6:24	3.0
FRIDAY	1:08pm	0.4	11:46pm	2.3	5:42	5.2	7:27	3.2
SATURDAY	1:44pm	0.0	N/A	N/A	6:15	5.5	8:14	3.3
SUNDAY	12:25	2.5	2:18	-0.3	6:47	5.7	8:52	3.4
MONDAY	1:01	5.0	2:50	-0.6	7:19	5.8	9:25	3.4

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Jews, Germans tell their stories

By Daily Press staff

The Craft and Folk Art Museum will host a discussion led by authors Bernat Rosner, Fredric Tuback and Eva Leveton following a presentation of the 30-minute documentary, "This Daunting Task — Conflict, Consequences and Reconciliation: A conversation between Germans and Jews," by filmmakers Mariel McEwan and Sergio Palermo. The project documents 10 stories from German and Jewish immigrants to California.

The event will be held from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Jan. 17 and admission is free.

The museum also will be opening a new exhibit, featuring a historical view of work by African American artists from Los Angeles from the 1990s to present. According to event organizers, the exhibition, called "A Survey Exhibition: Fade 1990-2003," reflects a broad array of influences ranging from folk art to conceptualism. The works will be on display until Feb. 29 and will be shown Wednesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission costs \$3.50.

The Craft and Folk Art Museum is located at 5814 Wilshire Blvd. in Los Angeles.

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LETTERS

School funding questions to ponder

Editor:

Most parents in the Santa Monica-Malibu School District feel strongly one way or the other about the superintendent's proposed equity fund. As we await the outcome of this issue, I hope the school board members seriously consider the following questions:

■ What is the goal of this policy? Is it to increase fundraising across the district? Somehow reshuffling the current funds in the district, lopping off 3 to 5 percent to pay a third party to manage the fund, and, in the process, alienating a large group of generous donors seems to me a backward process. Is it to increase equity across the district, something our taxes — legal ones, that is — and Title I funds already do? Is it to band together the schools to work toward a higher standard? The old saying "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar" comes to mind. I believe parents are more than willing to volunteer their time and resources where there is a need, but having a "tax" shoved down their throats invokes a belligerent response that will only harm the giving at the schools and by extension to the district.

■ What is the need? I think we all agree there are schools in the district that need some help. If I am going to voluntarily give my time and money to make that happen I would like to know what the needs are. There has been a lot of talk about some schools not having the time to fundraise because the parents are spending their time rallying the City Council for district funding. It's hard to believe that the two are mutually exclusive. For example, the school which stands to receive a whopping 26.75 percent of the entire proposed equity fund is sending 95 orchestra students to the Czech Republic at a cost of \$2,000 per student. Whether the money for the trip is being fundraised or is being paid for by the parents seems irrelevant — the capacity to raise money undeniably exists. Again, what is the need?

While parents are divided regarding the district's entitlement to private funds, I do believe a silver lining has emerged. The process has forced conversations about need and has elicited commitments to enact change. I hope the school board will not under-



estimate the power of volunteers working together, as well as the proposed policy's negative impact on future fundraising in the district.

Sandy Thacker

PTA Co-President, Webster School

2003 — Another year older and much deeper in debt



MODERN TIMES

By Lloyd Garver

2003. The first year of the millennium to end in a three. The second odd year of the century. And the fourth year in a row that your annoying friend kept reminding you that 2001, not 2000 should've been considered the first year of the new millennium. As this very special year comes to an end, let me remind you of some of its most important events.

A report revealed that the crime rate in the United States was the lowest in almost 30 years. Obviously, they weren't counting big business crimes. People are still stealing from us, it's just that the thieves are better dressed these days.

Israeli and Palestinian leaders agreed to commit to a "roadmap" to peace. Unfortunately, like most men, they refused to look at the map once they got lost.

SIGN OF THE TIMES: A shopper was trampled by other shoppers during a holiday sale at Wal-Mart.

Iranian writer and activist Shirin Ebadi won the Nobel Peace Prize. Curiously, Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta Jones presented him with the award. Now there is a report circulating that at the next Academy Awards, Shirin Ebadi will present the Best Supporting Actress Oscar.

This was the year of anti-French feeling in the United States. French fries were renamed "Freedom Fries," and patriotic teenagers engaged in "Freedom Kissing."

When camera phones became popular this year, I couldn't understand what people were going to do with them. However, apparently they figured it out. By the end of the year, possession of a camera phone was not allowed in places like health clubs, locker rooms and bathrooms. I assume this ban has increased sales.

As is the tradition, just before Thanksgiving, President Bush pardoned the national turkey. There is no truth to the rumor that Secretary Ashcroft was against the pardon. He merely felt the bird should've been detained longer for questioning.

Al Gore endorsed Howard Dean for president. All the other Democratic candidates, as well as the Republican Party, denied that they had brought about this endorsement.

"Playboy magazine" turned 50. I guess that means it's going to start having a hard time remembering other magazines' names.

FURTHER SIGN OF THE TIMES: It turns out that the trampled shopper had made numerous injury claims against stores, including nine previous ones against Wal-Mart.

Lebron James and Carmelo Anthony were not the only young athletes in the news. Fourteen-year-old soccer player Freddy Adu turned professional. Despite the obvious problems, major sports leagues continued to refuse to ban youngsters. However, in a concession to public pressure, there is a proposal in the NBA that would require all players to be potty trained.

The Queen of England knighted the Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger. It seems so silly that England honors celebrities just for being celebrities. It would be like if the citizens of one of our states elected a movie star with no political experience as their governor.

President and Mrs. Bush sent out approximately 1.5 million Christmas cards. I didn't get one. Did you?

MYSTERY OF THE YEAR: Whatever happened to the Robert Blake case? With bigger celebrities being accused of equally lurid crimes, minor celebrity Blake was

pushed out of the news. Don't be surprised if, in 2004, Blake sues for equal time.

The Nielsen ratings for the major networks went down again. The networks couldn't figure out why audiences were not watching their wonderful shows, so concluded that the fault was with the way that Nielsen counted viewers. Right. And the reason your pants have been getting tighter the past few years is that manufacturers are sizing them smaller.

FURTHEST SIGN OF THE TIMES: The trampled shopper is a former Wal-Mart employee.

I decided not to make any references to the war in this column. I figured you'd be getting enough war recaps from other sources. I'm hoping I won't make any war references in my 2004 recap column for a better reason — that the war will be over by then.

Happy New Year!

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier." He has also read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's opinion page and can be reached at smdp@lloydgarvermoderntimes.com.)

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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OPINION

No longer taking grocery shopping in SM for granted

It was inevitable, I suppose. One day, the laundry detergent would run out. The dog food would be gone. The trip to Costco would prove too daunting.

After months of honoring the picket lines at my local supermarkets, toting home one melon at a time from Wild Oats, or shaving and washing my hair before driving to Gelson's in Pacific Palisades, that day came. Heeding my wife's plaintive cry, "It's OK to shop at Ralph's! Even the strikers say so," I once more entered a supermarket.

But I didn't feel good about it. I'm a member of a union (OK, we call it a guild, but that's just because we're writers and we have to be special), and here I was consorting with the enemy. In the parking lot, there were lots of empty spots — left by people nobler than I — and on the way in, I kept my baseball cap down low, and my sunglasses on. I felt like Peter Lorre in "Casablanca," furtively pursuing the elusive letters of transit. But what could I do? We had needs — we had to eat — and there's only so long you can buy things

a few at a time, here and there — I mean, what are we, French? (Soon I was afraid I'd be carrying one of those little reusable string bags in my pocket and getting up at dawn for fresh baguettes).

Now, I like to think I'm a pretty cosmopolitan guy. I don't mind saying that I've been in supermarkets all over the country, pretty much since I've been an infant but there's something about going back into one after you haven't been for several months that really rocks you back on your heels. I'd forgotten what it was like to see big, wide aisles, stuffed with stuff, and in some cases with no one in them. It was like some Twilight Zone episode, about the last man on earth. They even had these carts, nifty wire jobs with wheels, that you got to use at no extra charge to pile your groceries in.

What an idea! And the store had everything! All in one place! I'd completely forgotten. There were fruits and vegetables at one end, a bakery at the other. A fresh meat counter for my carnivorous wife, a generous selection of tofu and soy products for me. How long this struggle for enlightenment will last, I can't say.

And if one container of cottage cheese was close to its expiration date,

right behind it there was another, with a later date. It was almost as if it had been planned that way.

Of course, I no sooner found myself flying — look at that, a whole section of food that had been frozen — than the overhead intercom brought me back down to earth. "Ralph's is currently accepting applications for temporary employment while contract negotiations go on." But are they going on? More and more, it seemed to me, there were no negotiations. In this new world I was living in, nobody seemed to care where you bought your food. Certainly not the mayor, who was as invisible as ever. (Was it only in New York, where I moved here from, that the mayor appeared to actually live in the same town as the people who had elected him?) "Ralph's is an equal opportunity employer," the message went on, which

did make me wonder when, if ever, I had heard a business describe itself as an unequal opportunity employer. Isn't it kind of unnecessary to brag about that anymore? Isn't it kind of mandatory? Or am I wrong?

At checkout I was asked by a helpful, if somewhat flustered checker, if I had a Ralph's Club card. My God, I'd forgotten about things like that, and never having shopped at a Ralph's before, no, I didn't have one. Well, in two minutes flat, they'd fitted me out with one — it even has a little baby version that I can slip onto my key ring! And it had given me an instantaneous \$9.75 discount on my groceries. All for shopping at Ralph's!

In the parking lot I discovered that my car has a trunk peculiarly well suited to holding grocery bags — I had come to think of it simply as the place where my CD player lived — and I couldn't help thinking, this whole supermarket concept is an awfully good one, and wouldn't it be nice if people who lived in LA could shop in such places, free of guilt or self-recrimination on a regular basis? Right in their very own neighborhoods? I know, I know, it sounds like some crazy pipe dream, but isn't LA the place where dreams like that are supposed to be made?

(Robert Masello is a writer who lives and used to do his grocery shopping in Santa Monica).

Guest Commentary

By Robert Masello



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STATE

Schwarzenegger expected to cut big in first budget

BY TOM CHORNEAU
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Saddled with a shortfall of at least \$14 billion and a promise not to raise taxes, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is likely to release a budget next Friday with few surprises — it will contain cuts, cuts and more cuts.

While the administration has released no details of the 2004-2005 spending plan, lawmakers and lobbyists engaged in budget negotiations with the governor say they expect to see a painful list of spending reductions that reach every corner of the state bureaucracy.

Topping the list will likely be public health and welfare programs — especially Medi-Cal, the state's health insurance for the poor and disabled that costs more than \$10 billion a year.

Education is also expected to share the burden, despite Schwarzenegger's campaign promise to protect school funding.

He is likely to renew his pledge to get a bigger share of Indian gambling profits, and his call for new concessions from labor unions. And there are hints of reforms and reorganizations aimed at making the state more efficient and cost conscious — including changes in parole and inmate supervision.

Tempering all the bad news, however, the governor is expected to paint a rosy economic outlook where billions of dollars in unanticipated tax revenue over the next year will let him sidestep some of the most difficult funding choices.

Still riding a wave of popularity since winning office in October's historic recall election, Schwarzenegger takes over at a critical time.

While former Gov. Gray Davis and the Legislature took some steps last year to solve the state's financial problems, spending remains badly out of balance with income.

Last summer's budget agreement used a long list of one-time savings, accounting gimmicks and borrowing to make ends meet. The one-time savings and many of the gimmicks expire at the end of this fiscal year, and analysts say a new deficit will begin growing almost immediately that will exceed \$10 billion by June 2005.

One of Schwarzenegger's first moves as governor, repealing a tripling of the car tax, has also added \$4 billion dollars to the deficit.

Looming on the horizon is another multibillion dollar problem. Last summer's budget agreement included \$12.6 billion in loans that have been held up by legal challenge because the debt was not approved by voters.

Schwarzenegger and the Legislature agreed last month to put a \$15 billion bond measure on the March ballot. If voters do not agree to the borrowing, the state could quickly find itself in an unprecedented fiscal crisis, forcing force the governor to drastically revise his budget priorities and promises.

But the governor's upcoming budget, to be unveiled Jan. 9, is expected to assume that voters approve the big bond measure, which means the problem is \$14 billion — still big enough to require cuts in all areas of the budget.

**"We know there will
be cuts, we know there
will be pain."**

— **FABIAN NUNEZ**
Assemblyspeaker

Anthony Wright, executive director of Health Access, a coalition of health care advocates, said he has had not direct contact with the administration on the budget, but through his network of sources has concluded that public health programs are on the chopping block.

"If you are going to make serious cuts and you are not going to raise taxes, you don't have many options," he said.

The biggest target, he said, will likely be Medi-Cal. As Davis proposed last year, Wright believes Schwarzenegger will look to limit enrollment in the program to slow the growth. He is likely to try to trim the number of patients by changing eligibility rules, cut reimbursements to doctors and hospitals, and reduce the kinds of services for which the state will pay.

To get his agenda approved, Schwarzenegger will need to walk a thin line between Democrats who control both houses and Republicans who have enough votes to block any proposed agreement.

The acrimony that has marked budget negotiations over the past three years is not expected to disappear, although key party leaders say they believe voters' decision to replace Davis with Schwarzenegger this fall sent them a message to end political gridlock.

Still, Democrats say there will be a limit to how much they will cut.

"We know there will be cuts, we know there will be pain," said incoming Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles. "What we want to make sure is that those cuts don't turn pain into shame."

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LOCAL



Schools, arts, tackling gun violence on mayor's list for 2004

MAYOR, from page 1

going to create a more divisive environment at a time when we really don't need that.

"I feel really strongly about it," Bloom added. "I think much of the history of Santa Monica is a history that was not guided by chamber interests, unlike many other communities ... Not to say the business community doesn't play an extremely important role in the community and in elections, but that's a very significant and qualitative difference than the chamber actively involving itself in the outcome of elections."

With the election 11 months away, Bloom — whose New Year's resolution is to build on his leadership skills and rekindle old friendships — has more pressing work to contend with. He said his top priority for the coming year will be battling gun violence in the eastside Pico neighborhood. Throughout 2003, incidents of drive-by shootings and stray bullets have been commonplace in the neighborhood. Police responded to close to a dozen shots-fired calls, most believed to be gang related. While most of the shots didn't seriously injure anyone, the Pico neighborhood was the scene of Santa Monica's only homicide — 19-year-old Jalonnice Carter was shot in the back in an alley east of 20th Street.

Though Bloom said he doesn't want to predetermine how the issue will be tackled, he said a report on gun violence recently authored by the RAND Corp., a national think tank based in Santa Monica, could serve as a key point in a conversation that will involve the entire community.

"The key problem is an ongoing cycle of violence that ebbs and flows with time," Bloom said. "We don't seem to have been able to make it go away. And I started to think about that over the last few weeks and how we have this regional program now to end homelessness in 10 years ... If we can really have a vision to end homelessness, I can't imagine that in a community like Santa Monica, with the resources we have, that we couldn't have a program for ending gun violence."

Bloom acknowledged that the police department is already doing most of what is outlined in the RAND report but said it is important for everyone to take a closer look at the situation and redouble their efforts. He said he was interested in exploring more job and youth intervention programs, among other things.

"We need to look at every available resource ... to end the problem. Not just deal with it, end it. That may take some time, but I think we ought to commit ourselves to doing it," Bloom said.

"This is one place where it's appropriate for the city to take the lead," he added. "I think it's extremely important for a lot of this to be community driven. That's what the Riley study from RAND showed and recommends. I think we need to convene some sort of meeting of the people who are interested in the community to put some ideas out there and then implement them."

"Most of what we're doing, in terms of what the police department is doing, is in line with the kinds of programs that are recommended by RAND already. I think that there is probably some fine tuning that we can do ... I think that the thing that needs to happen is for the community to become more involved on a day-to-day basis in terms of intervention."

A second priority, Bloom said, is cultivating the local arts — something Bloom has long championed. Though the Santa Monica Festival may be called off this year due to budget problems, Bloom said there's still some money available and he hopes to use it to set up partnerships with local businesses.

"Frankly, I don't think I did enough in the last year," he said. "My ultimate goal, particularly in the downward economy that we're experiencing, is to try to find ways for the local residents, and the business community, and

the hospitality industry to energize the community with more music and more arts.

"We have a tremendous amount of artistic talent in the city and I don't think we're coordinating it to the best benefit of the people here."

Bloom pointed to partnerships and sponsorships like the now-defunct annual folk festival, long sponsored by McCabe's Guitar Shop on Pico Boulevard.

"We need to look at every available resource ... to end the problem. Not just deal with it, end it."

— RICHARD BLOOM
Mayor, Santa Monica

"What I would like to do is have a summit meeting of all of those who are a part of the fabric of the community and see where it ends up," he said. "Basically, what I want to see is more access to music in the community and that means more open houses, more festivals and anything else that people want to see."

"We have tremendous business resources. A large part of the entertainment industry is based in Santa Monica — from music to performing arts, it's all here and I think it's a largely untapped resource," he added, pointing to Harvelle's Blues Club, Bergamot Station and the Santa Monica Museum of Art.

Bloom's third priority is to stabilize funding for the cash-strapped Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. For the past few years, the district has

depended on last-minute cash donations from City Hall to keep from slashing its programs. Bloom said that system isn't fair to either entity.

City Hall staffers are currently reviewing various options, including the cost of possibly purchasing or leasing some properties from the school district and using them for open space or other purposes. In the meantime, school boosters are working on a possible ballot measure that would force City Hall to fork over a set percentage of its revenue each year, a proposal not looked kindly upon by council members.

"There's a limit to how much that (amount) can be raised ... Without a new funding source it becomes difficult to imagine increasing the city's funding the way we need to," Bloom said, adding that, "It's really important for local government to maintain flexibility in how it allocates its resources."

Still, Bloom said unless the bottom falls out of the local economy — which isn't likely — City Hall should continue to fund public schools.

"The bottom line is that it is really dangerous to engage in simplistic analysis when it comes to issues like this," he said. "I have some skepticism, but it's healthy skepticism."

"I'm not ruling out anything. I am hoping to find the right formula, I'm hoping it's out there."



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NATIONAL

Washington shows little reaction as American women fight, die in Iraq

BY MATT KELLEY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Female American troops in Iraq have killed Iraqis with bombs and bullets. They've won medals for valor and Purple Hearts for combat wounds. They've been captured as prisoners of war, killed by enemy fire and buried as heroes in Arlington National Cemetery.

American women have participated more extensively in combat in Iraq than in any previous war in U.S. history. They've taken roles nearly inconceivable just a decade or two ago — flying fighter jets and attack helicopters, patrolling streets armed with machine guns and commanding units of mostly male soldiers. Seven have been killed in combat.

Yet all this has gone largely without much comment in Washington, despite the attention given to rescued POW Jessica Lynch.

Congress debated the issue of women in the military after the 1991 Gulf War, voting months later to loosen the 1948 ban on women in combat. The issue hasn't come up on Capitol Hill this year, however.

"It doesn't seem to be a big deal," said retired Navy Capt. Lory Manning, who tracks military issues for the Women's Research and Education Institute.

"We could not do what needs to be done over there without women. If there needs to be a body search of an Iraqi woman, there's no way an American male could do that."

Military women in Iraq say they are doing their jobs just like their male colleagues. Sgt. Erin Edwards, 23, often travels in armed convoys as part of her work as an aide to a commander of the 4th Infantry Division in Tikrit.

Edwards left her 3-year-old son and infant daughter with her in-laws to serve in Iraq because her husband serves in the Army in South Korea.

"I would love to be at home with my kids, but I'm doing this for them. I wouldn't want to do anything else," Edwards said recently.

Opponents of women in combat haven't resigned themselves to this turn of events. They're trying to pressure President Bush to reinstate restrictions on women serving in support units that travel close to the front lines, such as Lynch's 507th Maintenance Company which was ambushed in Nasiriyah. That unit included the first American woman soldier killed in the Iraq war, Pfc. Lori Piestewa.

Elaine Donnelly, an opponent of women in combat who is spearheading a petition drive on the issue, said she believes it's important that women not be put in danger of being captured and raped. Medical records indicate Lynch was sodomized while in Iraqi captivity but she

has said she does not remember it.

"If we are opposed to violence against women at the Air Force and other service academies, why all of a sudden if violence happens at the hands of the enemy, we say it doesn't matter?" said Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, which claims more than 20,000 signatures on the petition. "That's a step backward for civilization, not a step forward."

Pentagon officials say they do not keep track of the number of women serving in Iraq. Overall, 15 percent of active-duty troops and 17 percent of National Guard and reserve forces are women.

**"We could not do what
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of an Iraqi woman, there's
no way an American male
could do that."**

— LORY MANNING
Retired Navy Capt.

Acting on the 1991 law allowing greater roles for women, the Pentagon loosened restrictions on women's military service in 1994. The new rules allow women to become combat pilots and take other jobs that previously were off-limits.

The military retained some restrictions: Army women still can't serve in front-line infantry, tank or artillery units, and Navy women can't serve on submarines or in the SEAL special forces units, for example.

But the conflict in Iraq, like other modern wars, has blurred the line between combat and non-combat units.

Women can serve as military police, which patrol Iraqi cities and often have been involved in fighting with Iraqi insurgents. Supply convoys and troop transports often include female soldiers and have been the targets of repeated attacks by anti-American forces.

Female soldiers, particularly MPs on patrol, have drawn curious crowds of Iraqis who marvel at the idea of women in uniform. Edwards, the Army sergeant in Tikrit, said Iraqi women are particularly interested.

"When women look at you, they just smile," Edwards said, her M-16 rifle slung over one shoulder. Others, however, "won't even look at you. It's like they're not allowed."

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NATIONAL



UW Graduate School dean, husband, killed in avalanche

BY REBECCA BOONE
Associated Press Writer

BOISE, Idaho — An avalanche that rushed down central Idaho's Soldier Mountain resort struck a cabin early Friday, killing the dean of the University of Washington's graduate school and her husband.

Marsha Landolt, 55, and Robert A. Busch, 58, were killed in the avalanche, which occurred about 1:30 a.m., the Camas County Sheriff's Office reported.

Five other family members survived. Two dug themselves out and went for help; the other three were rescued.

Emergency workers evacuated all the cabins in the region until the avalanche danger passes, officials said. The ski resort was also closed for the day, partly because of the risk of additional avalanches and partly because resort workers needed time to groom the trails with the freshly fallen snow.

'Big powder smile' — snowstorms a relief to resorts

BY DAN D'AMBROSIO
Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Winter storms are dumping snow across the West and ski resort operators couldn't be happier.

From the wind-swept Sierra Nevada to Big Mountain in Montana, the story was the same Friday — big snow brought big crowds over the holidays, a key moneymaking time for resorts.

"This next storm rolling in right now is helping us usher in the new year with a big powder smile on our faces," said Andy Wirth, vice president of marketing at the Steamboat Ski Area in Colorado.

Steamboat had so much snow — more than 14 feet — that Wirth expected some holiday skiers to avoid work and stick around. He said resort officials were also encouraged by the number of people arriving for a vacation, not just a single day on the slopes.

"The destination skier has shown up in force," Wirth said. "We think that's largely a function of not only the snow, but a recovering economy."

The U.S. ski industry has been on a roll the last three seasons, despite lingering concerns about the financial health of destination resorts. In November, Vail Resorts Inc. posted its first fiscal year net loss in a decade, blaming effects from the war in Iraq.

Colorado resorts in particular have been concerned about a decline in visits from out-of-state and foreign skiers.

If resort operators admit to any concern this season, it's that the good snow conditions will create too much demand for airplane seats.

Telluride Ski Resort in Colorado had the busiest day in its history on Dec. 31, but only because the resort lobbied airlines to boost the number of flights during the holidays.

"We negotiated for the airlines to fly bigger airplanes," spokeswoman Annie Carlson said. "It was a bit of a risk, but we knew the demand was there."

Jeff Hanle, communications manager for the Aspen Skiing Co., said some visitors to the upscale resort had to extend their stays until next week because weekend flights were booked. In Vail, local tourism bureau official Ian Anderson said business was up from last year.

"I certainly think the fact that we're no longer at war, the economy is rebounding and we have some good snow" get the credit, he said.

The Durango Mountain Resort in southwest Colorado was enjoying an influx of visitors from the Four Corners region and beyond.

"Texans love Durango," spokesman Matt Skinner said. "During this time of year they come up in large numbers. We have not seen a decline in that over the holidays."

The Jackson Hole Mountain Resort in Wyoming has received more than 6 1/2 feet of snow since Christmas, while at Snowbird nearly 100 inches fell between Christmas and New Year's Day. Snowbird even missed out on what typically is a huge day for resorts — Dec. 26 — because avalanche dangers closed the only road to the area outside Salt Lake City.

Landolt had been dean and a vice provost of the university since 1996, university spokesman Bob Roseth said. She was previously director of the university's School of Fisheries and wrote more than 70 scientific papers on fish pathology.

The cabin was about one mile south of the Soldier Mountain ski area. It sat on Soldier road, at the base of a gully that cuts through a high ridge on Soldier Mountain, said Kyle Davenport, an administrative assistant at Soldier Mountain Ski Resort who assisted in the rescue effort.

Soldier Mountain is in the Sawtooth National Forest about 80 east of Boise.

A heavy slab of snow along the ridge broke loose, triggering the avalanche, Davenport said. The cabin occupied by Landolt and Busch was slammed with the bulk of the snow.

"From what the locals on Search and Rescue said, it was the biggest avalanche they've seen in a long time," Davenport said. "It looks like somebody just fired the snow through the windows on that whole side of the building. The room where the grandparents were found was filled nearly to the ceiling with snow and the bed was pushed clear against the far wall."

Landolt and Busch's son and daughter-in-law were

sleeping in the loft with their three small children, Davenport said. When they were awakened by the avalanche, the son immediately tried to dig out his parents.

After about an hour and a half of digging, Davenport said, the son made his way out of the cabin and went to a neighbor's home to call the Search and Rescue team.

"We got there at about 3:40 a.m., and at that point we knew it was a recovery effort," Davenport said. "It took the team probably another 45 minutes to an hour to get the grandparents out."

A neighboring cabin was also struck by the avalanche, but it was mostly shielded by Landolt's and Busch's cabin and suffered only minor damage, Davenport said.

At around noon on Friday, Davenport said, emergency workers heard barking coming from underneath the snow inside the cabin's living room. Though they first believed the family's pet dog had died, the animal had apparently been pushed through a glass screen into the fireplace, where he was able to get air through the chimney.

"We were able to get him out. He was scratched up and scared but otherwise OK," Davenport said.

The debris field at the base of the avalanche was nearly 200 yards wide, and between 10 and 15 feet deep, Davenport said.

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NATIONAL

Asians buy the red meat that Americans won't eat

BY ANDREW KRAMER
Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. — Oregon cattleman Mike Partlow built a business selling beef products that Americans don't eat, from hooves to femur bones to stomach lining, all prized by Asian chefs.

Korean cooks slice steamed hooves into wafers for a meaty, gelatinous soup. Bits of large intestine go on the grill in Japan.

But after the discovery of mad cow disease in an American cow last week, this \$600 million market — and Partlow's business selling so-called variety meats — has vanished, and won't return until export markets reopen.

America had been the world's largest exporter of these products before 36 countries banned U.S. beef imports last week. Many of the shipments went through West Coast ports, with the Port of Portland handling about 61,000 tons of variety meat in 2002.

The value of specialty products for Asia had added about \$75 to the value of each slaughtered American cow, economists said.

Variety meats are loosely classified as non-muscle parts, such as brain, oxtail, tendon, heart, liver and tripe.

The collapse of this market is among the starkest examples of the economic blow mad cow disease has delivered to the American beef industry.

The business had grown quickly over the past decade after market liberalization in Asia, and had come to round out the mix of products carved from each slaughtered steer, Partlow said.

Now that the market has "vanished," Partlow said some parts will likely be rendered for raw protein for animal feed and other products until the export market reopens.

Twenty-five percent of Partlow's mostly export beef business had been in variety meats. The former rancher said his business has been devastated, with containers stalled in warehouses in the Midwest and in Asian ports. He said he lost more than \$1 million, although the blow was cushioned by hedging on the futures market.

Some specialty cuts, such as thinly sliced tenderloin for Japanese hot pot, can be ground into hamburger and resold, Partlow said.

Other items, such as beef intestine, are a harder sell on American supermarket shelves.

American producers had come to rely on selling these bits overseas, said Dalton Hobbs, marketing director with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

"It was an extremely important part of the beef and cattle industry in the United States, and it's hard to find alternatives," Hobbs said.

"There are only so many ethnic stores in this country," to sell such items, he said.

The largest export market for variety meats was Mexico, followed by Japan and Korea, said Lynn Heinze, vice president of the Denver-based U.S. Meat Export Federation.

The United States exported 405 tons of variety meat in 2002, mostly from West Coast ports, at a total value of \$618.4 million.

The Asian market, critical for West Coast beef traders, hardly existed 15 years ago, Partlow said.

West Coast cattlemen began exporting to Japan soon after World War II, but the trade was lackluster and controlled by a Japanese government monopoly, the Livestock Import Production Corporation, Partlow said.

Prodded by the World Trade Organization, Japan abolished the monopoly in 1991. That opened the market for American ranchers, who quickly shipped beef parts unwanted at home, along with cuts popular in both countries, such as steaks. Variety meats account for about 20 percent of the beef market in Asia.

Three quarters of Democrats say they'll vote against Bush

ELECTORATE, from page 1

About a fifth, 21 percent, said they would consider voting for someone else.

This poll, taken right after the capture of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, showed that Bush's support had increased since November, when people were evenly split whether they were for or against him.

Attitudes about Bush were on a roller coaster in the polls through 2003, Ipsos President Thomas Riehle said. They spiked upward after the war with Iraq, declined until mid-fall and then improved with the economy's growth and the capture of Saddam.

In the most recent poll, the swing voters were more likely to be younger adults ages 18 and 39, those without college educations and political independents.

Other closely divided groups that will be courted heavily during the campaign season are voters in the Midwest, suburban residents and Catholics, according to a Pew analysis done this fall.

Hispanics have tended to lean Democratic in past elections, but increasingly are considered swing voters.

Democratic pollster Celinda Lake said she will be closely watching to see how swing voters feel about Bush's job performance and whether they think the country is headed in the right direction.

In the AP-Ipsos poll, more than half of the undecided voters approved of the job Bush was doing. But in that poll, more than half, 55 percent, of undecided voters said the country was headed down the wrong track.

Swing voters are increasingly motivated

by which candidate can provide the best solutions to problems, Republican pollster David Winston said.

"Swing voters have changed in a key way," said Winston. "That's where the Democrats are struggling. You hear these attacks, but what's their alternative solution?"

The voters' choice will come into clearer focus once Democrats have a nominee, probably sometime in March.

Now, two-thirds of Democrats say they would definitely vote against Bush and about a fourth of Democrats say they would consider voting for someone else. More than a third of independents say they would consider voting for someone else.

In the coming year, the voters, especially swing voters, are certain to be influenced by the two big issues of the last year — how the economy is going and how the

situation in Iraq is going.

The undecided voters were split on Bush's handling of the economy. Six in 10 said the United States made the right decision in going to war in Iraq.

Bush's perceived strength in handling the campaign against terrorism is going to be a crucial issue in this election. More than six in 10 in various polls consistently say they approve the way he is handling the terror fight. The undecided voters had about the same view.

Bush had more than a 3-to-1 advantage over Democratic front-runner Howard Dean on whom the public trusts more to handle national security, according to a recent ABC-Washington Post poll.

"As long as the president has a stature gap on fighting terrorism," Kohut said, "he has a trump card."



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Administration cool to N. Korea visit by U.S. experts

BY GEORGE GEDDA

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration, pressing for the irreversible and verifiable elimination of North Korea's nuclear program, distanced itself Friday from planned visits there by congressional aides and private scientists.

White House spokeswoman Claire Buchanan said that a six-nation effort to address the issue — which began last August — is the appropriate forum for such an undertaking.

The American experts have been dealing with the North Koreans as separate groups but apparently will be traveling to the communist state in the same time frame and may join together for the proposed tour of the nuclear facility at Yongbyon.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is sending Republican staff member Keith Luse and a Democratic colleague, Frank Jannuzi. Both are East Asia experts and work respectively for committee chairman Richard Lugar, R-

"Any efforts that complicate prospects or undertakings to reconvene six-party talks and to achieve forward movement in dismantling North Korea's nuclear program aren't helpful."

— ADAM ERELI

State Department spokesman

Ind., and Joseph Biden of Delaware, the panel's ranking Democrat.

A second group planning a trip consists of John Lewis of Stanford University; Sig Hecker of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, a nuclear weapons research center; and Jack Pritchard, a former State Department official who left the government last summer.

The six-nation effort to halt the nuclear program began with a meeting in Beijing. Efforts to reconvene the discussions last month fell through. Participants, aside from the United States and North Korea, are South Korea, China, Japan and Russia.

The United States is hoping that North Korea can be persuaded to disarm through security guarantees as well as economic benefits.

Asked about the plans of the two groups to visit Pyongyang, State Department spokesman Adam Erel said they are not acting on behalf of the administration.

"Any efforts that complicate prospects or undertakings to reconvene six-party talks and to achieve forward movement in dismantling North Korea's nuclear program aren't helpful," Erel said.

Asked whether the administration

opposes the visit, he said, "We neither facilitate nor oppose."

There has been no outside access to the nuclear facility at Yongbyon since U.N. inspectors were expelled at the end of 2002.

The North says it has completed reprocessing 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods at Yongbyon. If true, that would yield enough plutonium for half a dozen atomic bombs. North Korea is believed to already have one or two nuclear bombs.

In addition to the plutonium bomb project at Yongbyon, North Korea also has acknowledged a separate effort to produce a uranium bomb.

During a visit to East Asia in late summer, Luse and Jannuzi spent three days in North Korea.

In a report, they said they told North Korean officials that the United States views Pyongyang's nuclear programs as a "grave threat to international peace and stability."

They urged the officials to seek a peaceful, negotiated solution to the impasse through multilateral dialogue.



WORLD BRIEFLY

Differences reduced in Afghan politics

By The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghans on both sides of an ugly ethnic divide at the country's constitutional convention said they narrowed their differences during crisis talks with American and U.N. officials Friday.

The progress during a one-day break at the *loya jirga* could avert a complete collapse of the gathering, seen as a historic opportunity to help this war-ravaged nation toward the promise of peace and stability.

At the 502-member grand council, President Hamid Karzai's fellow ethnic Pashtuns have swung behind his call for a strong presidency he says is vital to hold the country together as it rebuilds and faces a stubborn Taliban insurgency.

Smaller groups, however, including Tajiks and Uzbeks from the north, have dug in against a charter they claim would bring back the Pashtun hegemony that lessened with the defeat of the Taliban two years ago.

Exasperated council leaders were forced to abandon voting on the charter in a tumultuous session Thursday, after more than one-third of the delegates boycotted the ballot and staged a sit-in in the huge tent where the 3-week-old meeting is taking place.

Quake wipes out 2,000-year-old fortress

By The Associated Press

BAM, Iran — Most of the 30 circular guard towers have crumbled into avalanches of dirt, along with parts of the thick, mud-brick walls. The bathhouses, gymnasiums and a Zoroastrian temple that survived for centuries now resemble a moonscape.

The earthquake that killed nearly a third of this Iranian city's people last week also devastated its archaeological jewel — the Arg-e-Bam, or Citadel of Bam, the world's largest mud-brick fortress, parts of which date back 2,200 years.

But even as aftershocks sent more of its walls crashing down, Iran's government is vowing to rebuild it.

"The citadel was almost as precious as the lives lost in the earthquake," Fakoor Pass, director of cultural heritage for Kerman province where Bam is located, told The Associated Press on Friday. Officials are "100 percent sure we will" rebuild it.

More than 30,000 people are believed to have died in the 6.6-magnitude temblor that struck before dawn Dec. 26, burying thousands alive as they slept.

Much of the historic citadel on the outskirts of the modern city collapsed like a sand castle.

Manufacturing ends strongest year in 20

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The nation's manufacturing sector finished 2003 with its most robust month of growth in 20 years.

The Institute for Supply Management reported Friday that its manufacturing index jumped to 66.2 in December from 62.8 the previous month, strong evidence that the economic turnaround continues to pick up steam.

The new reading was the highest since December 1983 for a sector that has shed millions of jobs over the past three years.

Stocks rose strongly following the release of the report, but major indexes ended up mixed after a bout of late-day selling.

The Dow Jones industrial average ended 44 points lower at 10,410. Broader stock indicators were mixed. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 3 points to 1,108, while the Nasdaq composite index was up 3 points at 2,007.

The December reading marks the sixth consecutive month of expansion in manufacturing and was significantly higher than the 61 forecast by analysts.

The index measures the rate of growth in U.S. manufacturing. A reading above 50 indicates expansion; one below 50 indicates manufacturing activity is contracting. From March through June, the manufacturing index was below 50.

Catholic church still needs help

By The Associated Press

An upcoming report on whether Roman Catholic bishops are implementing their new mandatory discipline plan for sexually abusive priests will say most dioceses are complying, but "there is still a lot that needs to be done," the official overseeing the audit said Friday.

Kathleen McChesney, a former top FBI agent and

head of the bishops' Office of Child and Youth Protection, said the sheer size of some of the largest dioceses slowed their progress, while others lacked the personnel or financing for quick compliance.

The plan not only dictates how bishops should respond to abuse claims, but also requires them to take steps to prevent molestation, such as conducting background checks on all clergy and lay workers in the diocese and training them to identify abuse. The largest archdioceses employ more than a thousand priests alone, McChesney said.

"Considering it's only been about a year since people have been working on it, there's been a lot of progress, but nobody is going to tell you that it's all been done," McChesney said, in a phone interview with The Associated Press. "What you're going to find is that most of them are (complying), but there is still a lot that needs to be done."

The report, which is scheduled to be released Tuesday in Washington, is based on audits of all 195 U.S. dioceses conducted by the Gavin Group, a Boston consulting firm led by former FBI official Bill Gavin.

Dulles security head suspended

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The head of security at Washington Dulles International Airport was placed on administrative leave because of his arrest on drunken driving charges as the airport was on a heightened state of alert early New Year's Day for terrorist activity, the Transportation Security Administration said Friday.

Charles Brady, acting federal security director at Dulles, was pulled over Thursday morning, hours after a British Airways jetliner was detained at the airport because of intelligence information.

Airport spokeswoman Tara Hamilton said a Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority police officer took Brady into custody after he saw him driving erratically.

The Transportation Security Administration named Adm. James Schear acting federal security director at Dulles during an investigation of Brady's arrest, agency spokesman Darrin Kayser said.

Jennifer Marty, TSA spokeswoman, said Brady and other federal security directors at the nation's airports were notified on New Year's Eve that they should plan to stay at work until 2 a.m. because the agency was conducting emergency drills. Brady was pulled over at 1 a.m. EST and taken to the Fairfax County Detention Center, where he spent the night before being released Thursday afternoon.

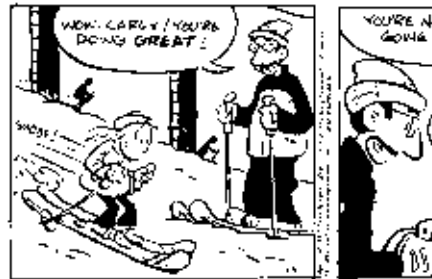
DID YOU KNOW?: Martin Van Buren was the first President to be born in the United States (his predecessors were all born in Britain's colonies).

COMICS

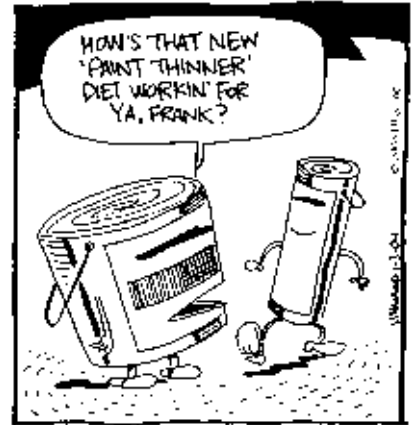
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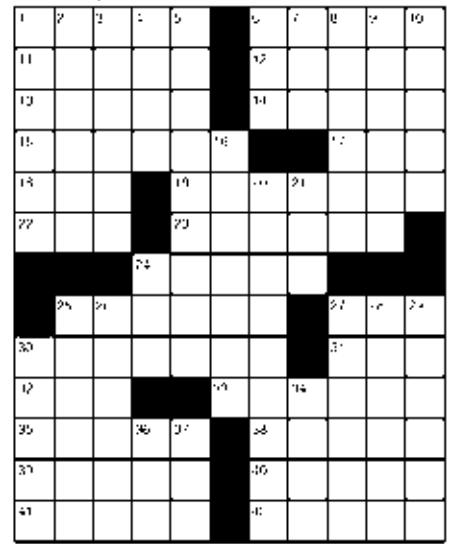
- 1 Future tales
- 6 Writer Carr
- 11 Jay's follower
- 12 Without company
- 13 Language exams
- 14 Make rugs
- 15 Strong fabric
- 17 Pointer
- 18 Compass dir.
- 19 Gullies
- 22 Used a stool
- 23 Reverberated
- 24 Sight from Oslo
- 25 Pick
- 27 Opposite of post-
- 30 Giveaway
- 31 Writer Stout
- 32 Track trip
- 33 Francis' home
- 35 Open the tooth-paste
- 38 Breaks
- 39 Pageant wear
- 40 Acting ambassador?
- 41 Corroded

- 42 Takes it easy

DOWN

- 1 Defendant of 1925
- 2 Long cigar
- 3 Peeved
- 4 Plummet
- 5 Crime committed by an employee
- 6 Crow some generals and hotels
- 8 Despise
- 9 Was covetous
- 10 Computer sounds
- 16 Capital of Cyprus
- 20 Like some
- 21 Food fish
- 24 Rival
- 25 Brain holders
- 26 Jazz fan
- 27 Prepares for painting
- 28 Bristle at
- 29 Lives
- 30 Champagne glass
- 34 Wisc
- 36 Live
- 37 Bad review

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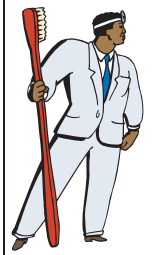
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Top producing album awarded to rapper 50 Cent

By The Associated Press

■ **LOS ANGELES** — Rapper 50 Cent's "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" was the top-selling album in 2003, followed by Norah Jones' Grammy-winning debut, "Come Away With Me."

"Get Rich or Die Tryin'" sold 6.5 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The jazzy "Come Away With Me," which won the Grammy for album of the year, sold more than 5 million.

CD album sales declined 2 percent from the previous year and overall album sales fell 3.6 percent. Overall music unit sales were off .8 percent.

Here were the year's top 10 selling albums:

1. "Get Rich or Die Tryin'," 50 Cent
2. "Come Away With Me," Norah Jones
3. "Metemora," Linkin Park
4. "Fallen," Evanescence
5. "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below," OutKast
6. "Dangerously in Love," Beyonce
7. "Chocolate Factory," R. Kelly
8. "Metamorphosis," Hilary Duff
9. "Shock'n Y'All," Toby Keith
10. "A Rush of Blood to the Head," Coldplay

■ **LOS ANGELES** — Screenwriter Robert Towne has struck a deal to develop a remake of the Alfred Hitchcock classic "The 39 Steps."

The Hollywood veteran, who won an Oscar for 1974's "Chinatown" and was nominated for "The Last Detail," "Shampoo" and "Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes," will write and direct the thriller for Carlton International Media, Daily Variety reported on its Web site Thursday.

Towne has also directed films including "Personal Best" and "Tequila Sunrise."

"There is only a handful of individuals in our business with the talent, experience and insight to whom we

would entrust a project of this magnitude, and Robert Towne is one of them," said Stephen Davis, Carlton America's president and chief executive officer.

Hitchcock's version of the spy film was made in 1935 and starred Robert Donat, Lucie Mannheim and Madeleine Carroll.

■ **MESA, Ariz.** — A judge has ruled that the bass player for the rock band the Meat Puppets, who has been charged with assault, is a flight risk and a danger to others and must remain in custody.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Virginia Mathis also ruled Wednesday that there's enough evidence to try Kris Kirkwood for a Dec. 26 confrontation at a Phoenix post office, said Harriet Bernick, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Kirkwood is accused of hitting a federal post office security guard in the head with a baton that the musician took from the guard during a struggle. No trial date has been set.

According to court documents, the guard then shot Kirkwood in the back. The struggle began over a dispute about parking with another customer.

Kirkwood has been charged with one count of assault with a dangerous weapon at a federal facility. The 43-year-old was released Tuesday from a Phoenix hospital and subsequently arrested.

Kirkwood and his brother, Curt, fronted the Meat Puppets, who had several hit records in the 1980s and '90s. They were cited as an influence for bands such as Nirvana and earned a gold record in 1994 for "Too High to Die."

■ **CHAMPAIGN, Ill.** — Officials from a Champaign television station said a blackout of Michael Jackson's recent "60 Minutes" interview was a simple case of technical difficulties, not a deliberate act.

"The station received e-mails and calls claiming that we did it on purpose, that we were trying to discredit

Michael Jackson and all of that," said Russ Hamilton, vice president and general manager of Champaign-based WCIA-TV.

The sound worked but there was no picture for part of Sunday's interview with Ed Bradley, during which Jackson defended himself against allegations of child molestation. The hour-long program was No. 1 in last week's Nielsen ratings.

The glitch was caused by a problem with the station's recently installed transmission system, which sends the station's digital signal from its Seymour source to a receiver in Springfield, Hamilton said.

The blackout only occurred in part of the station's viewing area. Hamilton said he was surprised to hear of the difficulty because he watched the program in Champaign.

"All I can tell you is that in the broadcast business, if it can go wrong, it will go wrong," Hamilton said. "And it just picks the most inopportune time to go wrong."

■ **BRIDGEWATER, Conn.** — Sixteen-year-old Tony Wimperis has joined the ranks of famous actors, singers and athletes who have donned a signature milk mustache.

A "Got Milk?" ad featuring the Bridgewater skateboarder hit the newsstands in the February issue of TransWorld Skateboarding magazine.

Wimperis is the third boarder to be featured in a "Got Milk?" campaign. Pros Tony Hawk and Bob Burnquist are the other two.

During the photo shoot, Wimperis said he got his mustache "touched up," about 150 times as photographers snapped pictures until they got the perfect shot.

"They use real milk" and milk products, Wimperis said. Being in the milk campaign is just part of the prize Wimperis won for creating a design for the deck _ or bottom _ of a skateboard. The contest was sponsored by TransWorld Skateboarding.

Wimperis' prize also included an afternoon skating with Burnquist in his backyard skate park.

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