

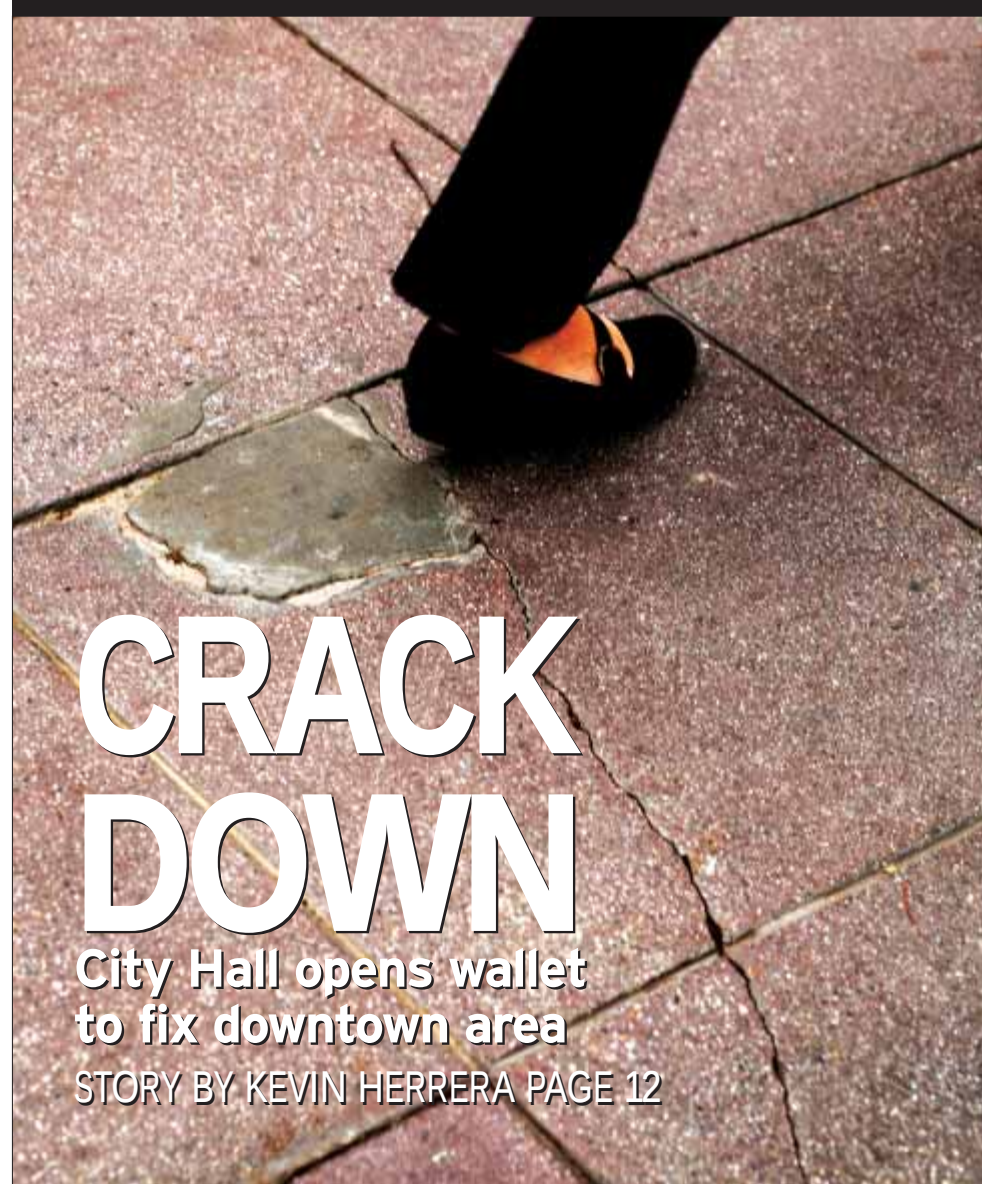
CORSAIRS LOOK TOUGH
SEE PAGE 3

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE HAND SANITIZER ISSUE

Santa Monica Daily Press

BUSINESS



CRACK DOWN

City Hall opens wallet to fix downtown area

STORY BY KEVIN HERRERA PAGE 12

Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

TAKING MAJOR STRIDES: City Hall is currently working to make the downtown area as nice as possible. Projects include fixing cracked sidewalks and adding additional ambient lighting.

Not so fast

Advisory committee postpones spending Measure BB money

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMMUSD HDQTRS Students in the public school district's three middle schools will have to wait a while longer before they see new classrooms or athletic facilities.

But that's a fate they might actually prefer.

The Measure BB District Advisory Committee on Monday decided to postpone making further recommendations to the Board of Education on how it should allocate construction funding until schematic drawings and a cost estimate for the projects are available. The committee also pledged to prioritize secondary schools, including middle schools.

This came shortly after a group of students and teachers from Lincoln Middle School pleaded that the advisory committee postpone allocating the remainder of the Measure BB bond money until its members take a tour of each of the middle and elementary schools to learn about the physical challenges facing each campus.

The advisory committee was debating how to spend the remaining unallocated Measure BB funds — roughly \$60 million. The Board of Education already acted on an earlier advisory committee recommenda-

tion last October, earmarking \$57 million to Santa Monica High School, \$13.5 million to Malibu High School and \$27.5 million to Edison Language Academy.

"It's a rash and bad decision that the BB committee would give this money without touring all of the schools thoroughly," said William Wolf, a Lincoln eighth grader. "Lincoln is a great school, but there's still several things that need fixing."

The students named several Lincoln facilities that need some attention, most notably the track and field, which Wolf claimed was the cause of injuries sustained by several students.

Some students pointed out that the outdated facilities can directly have an impact on their quality of education. Chace Beech, an eighth grader, noted that one of the buildings on the Lincoln campus does not have a bathroom and whenever a student in that structure needs to use the lavatory, they have to cut through campus, taking away valuable classroom time.

"There's a great energy about the school ... but there are a lot of problems with our campus," Beech said.

The suggestion by parents and students to hold off on earmarking funds until all of the campuses are visited was met by mixed reactions from committee members, some believing if that was the case, then all of the school sites should've been toured before any money was allocated in October.

Several of the parents and committee members that spoke out against stalling the

SEE BB PAGE 13

Writers convene to talk theatre

Library hosts workshop on playwriting for local wordsmiths

BY GABRIELLE HARRADINE
Special to the Daily Press

MAIN STREET A management consultant by trade, Paul Kuzniar has been trying to figure out what to do with "Cell Hell," the unwritten play that's been stuck rolling around in his mind for the past few years.

On Tuesday, inside the historic, Greek Revival facade of the Ocean Park Branch Library, he might just have found a way to get it all down on paper.

The library's newly renovated community room hosted a free workshop on playwriting. It was the first of six meetings

instructing scribes of all levels about the ins and outs of penning plays.

The instructor, Anna Stramese, is a big fan of the Ocean Park library.

"She wants to use this new space well," said Ceila Carroll, the library's branch manager.

Stramese has an extensive background in theatre and has taught both playwriting and screenwriting at the University of Southern California and in France. She also has experience in acting, including studying at the

SEE WRITING PAGE 14



Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

GROUP WORK: Instructor Anna Stramese (center left), teaches playwriting at the Ocean Park Branch Library on Tuesday.



Gary Limjap

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Project documents and notices available at http://www.smc.edu/facilities_student_services/default.html

Calendar

2

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



SMC Student Services Replacement Building Presentation

1900 Pico Blvd., 7 p.m.

SMC will hold a community presentation showcasing its proposed Student Services Replacement, Bookstore Modernization and Pico Improvements Project. The presentation will be held in the Main Campus Library. Free parking passes will be available at the Information Kiosk for this event.

Schmoozing Westside writers

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.

The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators' monthly "Schmooze" is a chance for writers to network, make friends and get connected. Schmoozing occurs at the Fairview Branch Library.

Winter camping clinic

402 Santa Monica Blvd., 7 p.m. — 8 p.m.

An REI expert will discuss safety tips and must-have gear for extra comfort in snowy conditions.

Mystery book group

1704 Montana Ave., 7 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

The Montana Avenue Library presents a discussion on David Baldacci's "Camel Club," a near-future thriller in which political conspiracy theorists get actual grist for their paranoia.

Jewish story hour

1428 17th St., 3:15 p.m. — 4 p.m.

Story time at Chabad is for children ages 3 — 7. It is recommended that participants RSVP to this free event to ensure there are enough materials for all children. For questions or to RSVP, call (310) 393-7379 or e-mail srljs@juno.com.

Cool School revisited

1611 Electric Ave., Venice, by appointment only

The "Cool School" exhibit, named for the film which features Ferus Gallery artists, will be on display through Jan. 11. A portion of the proceeds from sold paintings will go to the "Films for Schools" outreach program. For more information, visit www.VeniceTrust.com.

Thursday, Jan. 10, 2008

What's New This Week

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. — 2:30 p.m.

A free-wheeling review and discussion of the week's key news stories at home and abroad.

Cool School revisited

1611 Electric Ave., Venice, by appointment only

The "Cool School" exhibit, named for the film which features Ferus Gallery artists, will be on display through Jan. 11. A portion of the proceeds from sold paintings will go to the "Films for Schools" outreach program. For more information, visit www.VeniceTrust.com.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.



Governor seeks new beginning

BY LAURA KURTZMAN
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO Saying "the wolf is back" at the door, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed a constitutional amendment in his State of the State address Tuesday that would force automatic cuts to the state budget to avoid large deficits like the one he is now facing.

The governor wants to trigger the cuts when state finances start falling into the red and create a surplus when revenues come in higher than expected. It would be capped at 15 percent of the budget and could be used only to help with the next downturn.

Schwarzenegger gleaned the idea from former President Bill Clinton, who had similar budget powers as governor of Arkansas. He said it would put an end to the feast-and-famine cycle of California budgeting.

"For several years, we kept the budget wolf from the door, but the wolf is back," Schwarzenegger said, addressing state lawmakers in the Assembly chamber two days before he is to lay out a budget for the coming fiscal year filled with deep cuts.

"We cannot continue to put people through the binge and purge of our budget process," he said. "It is not fair. It is not reasonable. It is not in the best interests of anyone."

Revenues have tapered off with the slowing economy but spending continues to grow, and Schwarzenegger is grappling with a projected \$14 billion budget gap over the next 18 months.

He said the state is spending \$400 million to \$600 million more each month than it is collecting in revenues.

The constitutional amendment would not help the governor with his current budget problems, since it requires a vote of the people before it can take effect. But Schwarzenegger said it would make the state's budgeting process less volatile in the future.

Under the governor's plan, lawmakers would be able to decide how to make the cuts. But the governor would have the authority to trigger them any time the

SEE STATE PAGE 13



Morgan Genser news@smdp.com

IN THE MIX: Santa Monica College's Noah Gottlieb (center) tries to pull down a rebound during a recent game against Pierce College.

SMC lights it up

Corsairs look to make run in difficult league

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMC There's something special about being on a winning team.

Nobody understands that feeling better than the players on the Santa Monica College men's basketball team, a squad that after suffering four straight losing seasons is now the proud holder of a 13-6 record entering tonight's game against Los Angeles Valley College.

"It feels good to be on a winning team," Ryan Avilez, a freshman shooting guard, said on Tuesday, a grin on his face.

The Corsairs finished 11-17 last season.

The team is under the direction of first-

year Head Coach Jesse Teplitzky, a 29-year-old Colorado native who spent nearly 10 years as an assistant coach at a Division II school and various junior college programs before leading the Corsairs from a low-profile program to the 12th ranked team in Southern California.

The key to the early-season success according to Teplitzky, whom players call "Coach T," is convincing the young group of student athletes to play together as a team, unselfishly.

"The secret as a coach is can you get the kids to buy into that (philosophy)?" Teplitzky explained on Tuesday.

The Corsairs start Western State Conference play tonight after suffering the first home loss of the season — a 77-60 defeat at the hands of El Camino College. With six of the seven teams owning a winning record — College of the Canyons being the lone exception — thus far, Teplitzky believes the conference is one of

the most competitive in Southern California.

All of the schools to which SMC fell victim to were ranked higher than the Corsairs, but the most recent loss at home seemed to sting more than the others.

"The first time losing on your home floor, it's not a great thing," Avilez said. "That's something we're trying not to repeat, hopefully not lose any more games at home or period."

Their setback last weekend could be attributed to its performance from three-point range, making five-for-21 three-pointers and going scoreless in their first 12 shot attempts. But while the team could make up for those slip ups by taking care of the ball and rebounding, those aspects of the game also seemed to have also gone awry against El Camino.

"We came back yesterday (Monday) and

SEE SMC PAGE 11



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Huckabee stands for nothing new

Editor:
Voters in both parties went for new faces, new voices and a new approach to politics in Iowa's caucuses. There is nothing new about the Republican winner Mike Huckabee. He is the product of three decades of religious and political inbreeding of the far right.

Mike Huckabee as George Bush's shadow and as a future Republican president would bring America four more years of Bush administration light; more war, more deficits, more lies and secrecy, and more policies out of touch with mainstream America.

How scary is Mike Huckabee? Fear factor 7.

Ron Lowe
Santa Monica

Pay attention to the road

Editor:
Drivers should be prohibited from using cell phones while driving. As we all know, cell phones are an important part of everyday life. Yet, when do you particularly know if a driver actually has given 100 percent to driving while taking on the phone at the same time? The person on the other end usually has something good to say that you would like to hear. Hmm...

First of all, there is almost always something interesting or exciting that the person on the other end has to say. This is highly dangerous to pedestrians. These attention-grabbing conversations can lead to lack of focus when driving. One of the reasons drivers don't look both ways for pedestrians is because they are on the phone. Sometimes when I walk outside, drivers aren't looking both because they are talking on the phone and it can easily be told that the person behind the wheel has loads of attention on the discussion and not anyone passing by. It has happened more than once. This is one of the reasons drivers should be banned from calling.

An estimated 6 percent of auto accidents are caused by phone-related incidents. Even though the percentage may seem very low, it means that, consequently, 2,600 people will be killed in a year and 330,000 will or might be injured. To add on, two out of five people admit they had close calls or misses while talking on the phone. This is very risky and can lead to disastrous endings.

Now you have heard my point of view on cell phones and driving. Though people do this every day, it can still lead to someone getting seriously hurt or injured, all because the driver was not paying attention. I know you think that cell phones will help people in case of an health emergency. And yes, they do. But most of the time, emergencies occur while not driving in a car, but rather when the car has stopped, so there are exceptions.

Yekun Ding
Santa Monica

All Zane all the time

Editor:
Let's just name Denny Zane as Santa Monica Prime Minister for Life, sparing our fair city from City Council chatter, community meetings and election yard-sign debris.

Mark Shepherd
Santa Monica



Hey, Mikey

Michael J. Tittinger

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Mahalo, my readers, for sharing thoughts

IT WAS WITH A HEAVY HEART, AND A heavy mai tai in hand, that I mulled over my decision to leave the Daily Press while vacationing in Kaua'i last week; the memories of five years in and out of the news-room streaming through my mind like the waterfalls coursing through the wettest spot on earth.

That ought to be the last misbegotten metaphor I write for the paper.

But as I pondered weak and weary — actually, it was more drunk and bleary — I thought of you, dear reader, and the mostly one-sided conversation we've been having these past few years. I say "mostly" because two of you actually stuck in my craw even as I surfed, snorkeled, hiked and crashed out in our little island house. The fact that they were there, jockeying for position in my mind alongside hula dancers, kava-drinking circles and slow-curling waves was no small feat considering we were holed up in a jungle house devoid of Internet, TV and cell phone reception. It was kind of annoying.

Still, there they were — Ron Lowe and Neil Macaulay — hanging around in Kaua'i like the dinner guests who not only stayed too long, but then drank all the Meyers's rum and passed out on the wicker porch couches. Lowe is the perpetual letter writer who e-mails his politically charged missives to the Daily Press newsroom on a daily basis. Macaulay is the grammatical Nazi who points out every metaphorical misstep and participle left dangling in distress.

Every paper has them, their respective versions of Lowe and Macaulay. Neither seems like the type you want to kick back with in Kaua'i and throw down some Kona Longboard longnecks, but at the end of the day, I was glad to have them around. They make us better — us journalists, and us readers.

Lowe, who's railing about Mike Huckabee or something in another letter smack dab next to this column, has been coming under fire for not writing about local issues, not writing about issues covered in the Daily Press, even not writing letters that are long enough. A preposterous amount of space in the letters section has been devoted to others' letters wanting the paper to wipe him out from inclusion in the paper. Yet, there he is each and every week, banging out three, four, five letters — short, concise and clean. All the i's are dotted, the t's crossed.

The fact of the matter is, there's no bottomless well of letters from our readers, sometimes the cupboard is downright bare. We're thankful to have readers such as Lowe. He's engaged, thoughtful and unwavering. Our other readers should be so interested. The surest way to knock off another letter writer from monopolizing space is to write letters yourselves. Most readers don't seem to get that.

Then there's Macaulay, whose condescending tact leaves most of us smarting, but whose critiques of our grammar are usually spot on. Being a Catholic school product, his thorough dressing down of us in the news-room feels, to me, like a nun rapping me over the knuckles with her metal ruler every time I let slip some slang. I take offense to

Macaulay's charges that our community paper has "deplorably low standards of English grammar" and that "we just don't seem to care," but at the end of the day, the mistakes he brings to our attention can be used as a learning tool, or at least a refresher.

I realize most readers can't appreciate what goes on behind the scenes at a daily newspaper, preferring to let the curtain remain between the news gathering process and the public. It ain't an exact science, folks (yes, I know ain't is not a word), just a group of hard-working, journ grads trying to inform, educate and entertain the masses as best they can.

EVERY PAPER HAS THEM, THEIR RESPECTIVE VERSIONS OF LOWE AND MACAULAY ... AT THE END OF THE DAY, I WAS GLAD TO HAVE THEM AROUND. THEY MAKE US BETTER — US JOURNALISTS, AND US READERS.

Do we not bleed? My successor should start slathering himself in urea to toughen up his skin. Prepare to be besieged by callers, e-mailers and snail mailers with two cents to offer on time management, but decidedly little in the way of content.

And that's the rub. Those same readers don't always grasp that they are as much a part of the paper as us staffers. Their news tips and ideas will lead to stories. Their submitted pictures end up on the front page. Their letters and op-eds comprise our opinion pages and shape the very voice of the newspaper.

As I sat on my Kaua'i porch contemplating whether to take Ron and Neil kayaking by sea turtles, hiking the Napali Coast or to Kapa'a for burgers and beers, it struck me that the Daily Press will do fine without me, for it was never mine to begin with. I was just a hired hand.

This newspaper is yours, do with it what you will.

MICHAEL TITTINGER is somewhere between being Editor in Chief of the Daily Press and being an unemployed screenwriter. He can be reached at tooroam@adelphia.net.

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Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Bill needs to give Hillary a dose of serious reality

I'M NOT THE KIND OF GUY TO SAY "I told you so." Besides, it's not like I need to. My readers know I predicted Barack Obama would be our next president back in April. Still, after he won the Iowa caucuses and took the lead in every poll in New Hampshire last week, I thought I'd be able to gloat a little, until I saw Hillary Clinton break down and cry on national television. Now I'm worried about her.

If it had been an isolated incident, I could move past it. But it wasn't. It began back in October at the debate in Philadelphia when she was asked her position on New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer's plan to give driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. As we all know by now, Clintons position themselves, they don't take positions. So she tried to have it both ways saying, "I did not say that it should be done, but I certainly recognize why Gov. Spitzer is trying to do it."

I started to get concerned around Thanksgiving when she was interviewed by Katie Couric. She was asked how disappointed she would be if she wasn't the nominee. She responded by saying, "Well, it will be me." When Katie pressed her about whether or not she had even considered the possibility that she won't be the nominee, she said, "No, I haven't." As someone who saw the writing on the wall a long time ago, I started to have questions about her mental health.

Then came Iowa — and there's no denying that Obama took her out behind the woodshed and gave her a good whooping. Across the board in every category, he won and she lost. He made her look exactly like what she is — a relic of a bygone era. After Iowa, he rode a wave of hope into New Hampshire and the debate last Saturday where Hillary went from denial to anger. She was literally angry that she wasn't being associated with the catchword of the campaign — change. "I want to make change," she said, "but I've already made change! I will continue to make change! I'm not just running on a promise of change, I'm running on 35 years of change!"

A few days later, with Obama taking an impressive lead over her in every poll in New Hampshire, she moved on to acceptance. She was at a coffee shop talking to a group of women (shocker) and was asked, "How do you do it?" That's when the woman who would be commander in chief showed that she is, in fact, just a girl (not that there's anything wrong with that). "It's not easy, it's not easy," she said with tears welling up in her eyes. When I saw it, I thought to myself, "are you crying? There's no

crying in presidential politics. There's no crying in presidential politics!"

Which brings me back to why I'm worried for her. A wise man once told me that the key to a lasting, happy marriage is to pick the hill you want to die on. I took that to mean the key to a husband's happiness is knowing when to let the wife win. Bill Clinton has been letting his wife win for so long that she's deluded herself into thinking she's a winner. Bill is the only person in her world who can speak the truth to her, and he's not doing it. He's the only person on earth who can tell her that she can't win the nomination, much less the presidency. He needs to do this right away because if she stays in this race until Feb., 6, she is looking at the worst month of her life: Consecutive losses in five states leading up to Tsunami Tuesday where she could actually lose her "home" state of New York (which would put her Senate seat in play in 2012).

A WISE MAN ONCE TOLD ME THAT THE KEY TO A LASTING, HAPPY MARRIAGE IS TO PICK THE HILL YOU WANT TO DIE ON. I TOOK THAT TO MEAN THE KEY TO A HUSBAND'S HAPPINESS IS KNOWING WHEN TO LET THE WIFE WIN.

At this point, Bill Clinton needs to tell his wife that it's time to find the least humiliating way out of this race. Because if she doesn't have the common sense to drop out of this race for the sake of her own future in the Senate, she should at least have the common decency to get behind the eventual nominee for the sake of her party. I know he doesn't love her any more, but his wife is crying on national TV. She needs you, Bill. Get her out of there and take her home.

KENNY MACK is a writer, comedian, and occasional pundit living in Santa Monica.



John McGrail, C.Ht.

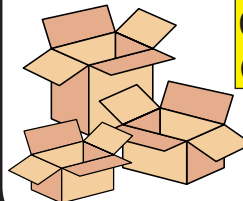
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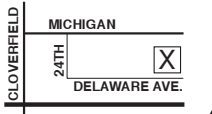
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The **Q-Line**

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Building Santa Monica

As the city transforms itself from a sleepy little beach town into a hustling and bustling metropolis there are some that believe that the brakes need to be put on commercial development.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Should City Hall continue on the path of overhauling the city or should something be done to limit development?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. Please limit responses to a minute or less.



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Out with spending, in with saving

IT'S NO SECRET THAT PERSONAL CREDIT card debt is currently at an all-time high, and it keeps growing every day. And it probably won't come as a surprise that the personal savings rate in the United States over the past few years has been at levels not seen since the Great Depression. Although some forms of debt may be necessary, allowing your debt to get out of control can rob you of valuable savings opportunities. Reining in credit card and other types of debt will allow you to focus your efforts on establishing and growing your financial nest egg.

As consumers today, we have many alternatives available to us to buy now and pay later. But while those offers may be tempting, we could learn a valuable lesson from previous generations who didn't have access to some of these things. Saving money first is not only a good idea for avoiding going



Market Matters

Brian Hepp
Send comments to
editor@smdp.com

into debt for larger purchases, it's also a good habit to get into for our finances in general.

Developing disciplined investment habits isn't always easy, at least at first, but there are several things you can do to improve your savings routine. One of the easiest ways to establish a systematic savings plan is by taking advantage of the convenience of electronic funds transfer (EFT). You may be familiar with this type of service if you currently receive or make electronic deposits to your bank account. This service is also available from other financial service firms, and paying yourself first by using an EFT system can help you get in the habit of saving.

Direct deposit allows you the opportunity to deposit all or part of your paycheck into the account of your choice, so you could choose to set aside a certain portion of your pay to go directly to a savings account as opposed to your checking account. Another way to take advantage of EFT is to set up an automatic monthly deposit. This is a simple, disciplined way to add to your savings, authorizing a specific amount to be transferred from one of your accounts to another (i.e. from checking to a savings or investment account).

Many times people feel that if they can't put away a considerable amount of money each month, then a savings program just won't be worth it. In reality, you can accumulate funds and reach your investment goals by investing even just a modest amount — but the key is to be consistent. If you think such a simple strategy won't make

a significant difference, consider the following example.

Let's say you decide to save just \$50 per month in your savings plan. After 10 years, you would have saved a total of \$6,000. However, if you had invested that money in a basic account that earned a six percent rate of return, the value of your account after 10 years would be more than \$8,000.

As you can tell from this example, saving just a small amount can be rewarding and get your finances on the right track. Avoiding debt in all forms may be a difficult proposition, but if you can keep it to a minimum and focus your efforts on simple savings strategies, your financial situation will be in better shape for it.

BRIAN HEPP is a financial consultant and can be reached at (310) 453-0077 or at brian.hepp@agedwards.com.

TECHNOLOGY

Intel hopes new chip technologies rev up portables

BY BRIAN BERGSTEIN
AP Technology Writer

LAS VEGAS Intel Corp. is betting on a big expansion of "ultra-mobile" computing, an idea that could hinge on how many gadgets people are willing to tote around.

In an interview Monday at the International Consumer Electronics Show, Intel CEO Paul Otellini said energy-efficient,

Web-connected computers with full keyboards and screens in the 4-inch neighborhood can give people more of what they want from the Internet than cell phones can.

To help stimulate the technology, Intel plans in the next few months to begin shipping processors and associated "chipsets" that demand relatively little power and are smaller than standard PC processors, allowing them to be crammed into tinier devices,

which would be built by other companies.

Eyeing a similar market, wireless chip maker Qualcomm Inc. also has built prototypes of little Web devices. Its chief operating officer, Sanjay Jha, said he expects manufacturers to take up the blueprints and begin selling what he calls "pocketable computers" by the end of this year.

So far, so-called ultra-mobile computers, smaller than average laptops but bigger and

more fully featured than most cell phones, have gotten a tepid response.

"How do you make people realize that this is something advantageous to them and different from the notebook experience?" said Richard Shim, an analyst with IDC, a market research firm.

But Otellini said such distinctions will cease to matter, especially since small Web devices can incorporate many functions.

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Real Estate 101

Mike Heayn

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Recession 101

CURRENTLY THERE IS A LOT OF TALK about recession in the media. Many people believe a recession is on the horizon due to the drop in home values and the subprime meltdown; however, an economic recession is usually caused by many factors of the economy.

What is a recession? A recession is defined as two or more quarters of negative growth. The main litmus test for negative growth is a drop in the Gross Domestic Product, or GDP. Before an explanation of a recession or the GDP can be given, it is important to understand what an economy is and how it works.

The economy — in a broad sense — is the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services. In a free market, which we have in the United States, prices are not fixed and move freely based on supply and demand. Economic growth must take place each quarter and is measured by the gross domestic product or GDP.

For our economy to grow the GDP must increase annually. If growth stops for two or more quarters, the economy is thought to be in recession. The actual determination of recession is made by the Bureau of Economic Analysis — which is a part of the Department of Commerce — and is based on broad-based analyses of several economic indicators.

The effects of a recession are

decreased production, higher unemployment, flat wages and declining consumer spending.

The word recession scares many people, but recessions are a normal part of the economy. Historically our economy goes through growth phases, which last between eight and 10 years. During these growth phases excesses build up which must be purged, and this purge takes place during a recession. During a recession, the economy is setting up for another growth phase and the cycle continues.

The last recession took place in 2001, which was partly caused by the technology dot com bust. Some experts believe that the meltdown of the financial markets — partly caused by the subprime meltdown — will lead this country into recession; however, others think that we are several years away from a recession.

Regardless of whether a recession is on the horizon, it must be remembered, although unpleasant, that recessions do not usually turn into more serious problems such as a depression. A recession is a normal part of the economic cycle and usually followed by several years of growth.

MIKE HEAYN is a Washington Mutual Multi-Family Loan Consultant. He can be reached at (310) 428-1342, or e-mailed at michael.heayn@wamu.net.

Feds work to make digital switch painless as possible

BY JOHN DUNBAR

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON Millions of \$40 government coupons become available Tuesday to help low-tech television owners buy special converter boxes for older TVs that might not work after the switch to digital broadcasting.

Beginning Feb. 18, 2009, anyone who does not own a digital set and still gets their programming via over-the-air antennas will no longer receive a picture.

That's the day the television industry completes its transition from old-style analog broadcasting to digital.

The converter boxes are expected to cost between \$50 and \$70 and will be available at most major electronics retail stores. Starting Tuesday, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration will begin accepting requests for two \$40 coupons per household to be used toward the purchase of the boxes.

To request a coupon, consumers can apply online at <http://www.dtv2009.gov> starting Tuesday. The government also has set up a 24-hour hotline to take requests, 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009).

Congress, in ordering the transition to digital broadcasting, set aside \$1.5 billion for the coupon program, which will fund 33.5 million coupons and other costs.

The giveaway basically works under the honor system.

The first 22 million coupons will go to all

households that request them. That includes a residence that gets cable service for one television but has a spare TV that still uses an antenna, for example.

The rest of the coupons, however, are meant only for those who do not subscribe to a pay-television service.

The Nielsen Co. estimates that 14.3 million households, or about 13 percent of the 112.8 million total television households in the nation, rely on over-the-air television broadcasts for programming.

Tony Wilhelm, director of consumer education for NTIA, said the agency expects to have enough coupons to satisfy demand. "We think the high number will be 26 million," he said. "Low end is 10 million."

Members of Congress have criticized both the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the Federal Communications Commission for their work on the transition to digital television.

In November, the Government Accountability Office, Congress' investigative arm, released a report that concluded there is "no comprehensive plan" for the transition.

Most of the concern rests with public education campaigns. While Congress allocated \$1.5 billion for the coupon program, only \$5 million was for education. The Association for Public Television Stations reported in September that 51 percent of participants surveyed were unaware that the transition was taking place.



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South of Wilshire	= \$ 1,099,000	\$ 669,500
Sunset Park	= \$ 1,308,059	\$ 683,385
Ocean Park	= \$ 2,122,800	\$ 996,865
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Amish man's new miracle idea helps home heat bills hit rock bottom

Miracle heaters being given away free with orders for real Amish fireplace mantles to launch the new invention that slashes heat bills, but Amish craftsmen under strain of winter rush impose household limit of 2

Saves money: uses less energy than a coffee maker, so leave it on day and night and never be cold again

By MARK WOODS
Universal Media Syndicate

(UMS) Everyone hates high heat bills. But we're all sick and tired of turning down the thermostat and always being cold.

Well now, brand new HEAT SURGE™ miracle heaters are actually being given away free to the general public for the next two days starting at precisely 8:00 a.m. today.

The only thing local readers have to do is call the National Distribution Hotline before the 48 hour deadline with their order for the handmade Amish Fireplace Mantles. Everyone who does is instantly being awarded the miracle heaters absolutely free.

This is all happening to launch the new HEAT SURGE Roll-n-Glow™ Amish Fireplace that actually rolls from room to room so you can take the heat with you anywhere. That way, everyone who gets them first can immediately start saving on their heat bills.

For the first time ever, portable Amish fireplaces are being delivered directly to the doors of all those who beat the deadline.

These miracle fireplaces have what's being called the 'Fireless Flame' technology that gives you the peaceful flicker of a real fire but without any flames, fumes, smells, ashes or mess. Everyone is getting them because they require no chimney and no vent. You just plug them in.

The Fireless Flame looks so real it fools everybody but it has no real fire. So what's the catch? Well, the soft spoken Amish craftsmen who hand make the mantles are imposing a strict household limit of 2 during the strain of the winter rush.

"We can barely keep up ever since we started giving heaters away free. Now that it's really cold outside, everyone's trying to get them. Amish craftsmen are working their fingers



■ **GENUINE AMISH MANTLES MADE IN THE USA:** Amish craftsman are pleased that Heat Surge officials have provided proof of certification of the coveted UL Listing for the miracle heater. Now, everyone wants to save money on heat bills this winter, so entire Amish communities are working from the crack of dawn to finish. These fine solid wood Amish made fireplace mantles are built to last forever. The solid oak mantle is a real steal at just two hundred ninety-eight dollars because all those who beat the order deadline by calling the National Hotline at 1-800-242-6155 to order the fireplace mantles are actually getting the imported hi-tech Fireless Flame HEAT SURGE miracle heaters for free.

to the bone to be sure everyone gets their delivery in time to save a lot of money," confirms Timothy Milton, National Shipping Director.

"These portable Roll-n-Glow Fireplaces are the latest home decorating sensation. They actually give you a beautifully redecorated room

while they quickly heat from wall to wall. It's the only way to dress up every room, stay really warm and slash your heat bills all at the same time," says Josette Holland, Home Makeover Expert to the rich and famous.

And here's the best part. Readers

who beat the 48-hour order deadline are getting their imported hi-tech miracle heaters free when encased in the real Amish built solid wood fireplace mantles. The mantles are being handmade in the USA right in the heart of Amish country where they are beautifully hand-rubbed, stained

HEAT SURGE™ Fireless Flame

How It Works: The HEAT SURGE miracle heater is a work of engineering genius from the China coast so advanced, you simply plug it into any standard wall outlet. It uses less energy than it takes to run a coffee maker. Yet, it produces an amazing 5,119 BTU's. An on board Powerful hi-tech heat turbine silently forces hot air out into the room so you feel the bone soothing heat instantly. It even has certification of Underwriters Laboratories coveted UL listing and comes with a full year Money Back Guarantee.



Hot air
comes out

Hi-tech silent
heat turbine
takes in cold air

How to get 2 free heaters

The National Toll Free Hotlines are now open. All those who beat the 48 hour order deadline to cover the Amish made Fireplace Mantles and shipping get the HEAT SURGE miracle heaters free.

They have imposed a strict limit of 2 per household. Since some home woodworkers want to build their own mantle piece, they are letting people get the imported miracle heater alone for just \$249. Or, with the Amish made mantle you get the miracle heater free.

Use the map below to locate the weather zone you live in and call the Hotline number for your zone.



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8:30 A.M. TODAY
1-800-310-7731

EVERYONE LIVING IN THE
Frost Zone: 3

START CALLING AT
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■ **ON THEIR WAY:** Winter rush orders have turned country roads into pipelines to the big city delivery system. Everybody wants a fireplace that comes fully assembled with a handmade Amish mantle in oak or cherry and gets delivered by truck right to your door. All you do is plug it in.

and varnished.

You just can't find custom made Amish mantles like this in the national chain stores. That makes the solid oak mantle a real steal for just two hundred ninety-eight dollars since the entire cost of the miracle heater is free.

This free giveaway is the best way to slash heating bills and stay warm through the dead of winter. The HEAT SURGE Roll-n-Glow Fireplace gives you all the beauty and warmth of a built-in fireplace but it can also save you a ton of money on heating bills.

Even people in California and Flor-

ida are flocking to get them so they may never have to turn on their furnace all winter. And since it uses less energy than a coffee maker the potential savings are absolutely incredible.

"We are making sure no one gets left out, but you better hurry because entire communities of Amish craftsmen are straining to keep up with winter demands. For now, we have to turn away dealers in order to let readers of today's newspaper have two per

household just as long as they call before the deadline," confirms Milton.

It's a really smart decision to get two right now because for only the next 48 hours you get both miracle heaters free. That's like putting five hundred bucks right in your pocket and you can save even more money on your monthly heating bills.

"Everyone's calling to get one but those who really want to save a lot on their heating bills are surprising the

whole family by getting two. So when lines are busy keep trying or log onto amishfireplaces.com. We promise to get to every call. Then we can have a delivery truck out to your door right away with your beautiful Amish made Roll-n-Glow Fireplace," Milton said.

"You'll instantly feel bone soothing heat in any room. You will never have to be cold again," he said. ■

On the worldwide web: www.amishfireplaces.com

Rolls anywhere to throw an instant heat wave with no chimney, no vents, no wood and no smoke



■ **EASILY ROLLS ANYWHERE:** This is the portable Roll-n-Glow™ Fireplace that easily rolls from bedroom to living room. No vents, no chimney and no tools. Just plug it in.



■ **SAVES ON BILLS:** Everyone gets low bills and stays warm and cozy. Naomi Abrams' new Roll-n-Glow Fireplace saves a ton of money and makes her front room look like a million bucks.



■ **SAFE:** The Fireless Flame looks so real it fools everybody but there is no real fire. That makes it safe to the touch. It's where the kids will play and the cat and dog will sleep.



■ **FREE:** Get this \$249 miracle heater free. It is being given away free to all who beat the 48 hour order deadline for your choice of the oak or cherry Amish Mantles. The free heater comes already encased.

Comparing markets coast to coast

WHAT DOES NORTHAMPTON, MASS. HAVE in common with Santa Monica? Besides Northampton being the town I grew up in and Santa Monica being my adult home, not a lot. Northampton has around 50,000 residents, instead of 500,000. The five colleges within 15 minutes of it's downtown center are it's major industry, while Santa Monica's homeowners are employed at the highest levels in a myriad of economically strong professions. It's an old New England town most famous for it's all women's school Smith College. Santa Monica is famous for a lot of things. Northampton is the home of indie rock bands, the Pixies, Dinosaur Jr., Sebadoh and now the residential home of Sonic Youth. So, it's cool, in an indie rock type of way. I'm not sure Santa Monica is as cool, but it certainly has better weather and more opportunity for lucrative employment.

I've been reading articles and watching news clips about the housing slump in recent months. It is a legitimate claim? Yes, the housing market in the U.S. is in a slump and all the



Simon Says

Simon Salloom
Send comments to
editor@smdp.com

"experts" predict it is going to get worse. The news people pull numbers from the worst hit areas of the country and tend to omit the areas affected to a lesser degree. Northampton has been affected to a lesser degree, so I thought it would be interesting to compare it to Santa Monica's housing market.

In Northampton, according to Denny Nolan an accomplished and very active residential Realtor (and my Father's agent), single family home values are down about 10 to 12 percent and condo values are down 20 percent. The number of home sales has also decreased by about 10 to 15 percent, while the average single family home sales price has stayed the same. In Santa Monica, we had about the same dollar volume of single fam-

ily home sales in 2007 as we did in 2006. Additionally, the median sales price had gone up by about \$100,000 in 2007 over 2006.

The main reason for condo values being down so dramatically in Northampton is the fact that prior to the recent housing boom, there were very few condos in the area. Speculators came in and bought up buildings and converted them. Unlike Santa Monica and Los Angeles, there are no restrictions on condo conversions. In Santa Monica for example, the only way you can convert an apartment building to condos is if the owner filed the appropriate TORCA paperwork about a decade ago (read more about TORCA's on my Web site.) There are only a handful of TORCA eligible properties left. In Northampton you call up your attorney and within a few days your apartment building is a condo building ready for resale on the public market.

Like in Florida, Nevada and the other areas of the country where property values have been the hardest hit, Northampton's

condo market was over saturated by out of area speculators looking to make a fast buck. In Santa Monica this just wasn't possible. This would explain why in Santa Monica the median sales price for a condo in 2007 was \$783,000 up from \$755,000 in 2006. Santa Monica's condo market went down from \$418 million to \$359 million for sales volume in 2007. This is likely due to the difficulty for many buyer's in this price range to attain financing, which occurred around August of 2007.

Northampton has about as much in common with Santa Monica as Santa Monica has in common with the heavily hit real estate markets of Stockton, parts of Nevada and parts of Florida. The national real estate market is in flux — how this affects you depends on where you live, not which newscast you hear.

SIMON SALLOOM is a Realtor who specializes in Santa Monica and Brentwood Real Estate with Colwell Banker. View his web-site and blog at www.SantaMonicaSimon.com.

ENTERTAINMENT

Golden Globes and NBC try to salvage broadcast

BY LYNN ELBER | AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES The Golden Globes, the ceremony known for getting Hollywood's awards season off to a rollicking start, will be reduced to a news conference Sunday by the writers strike and will likely draw picket lines and lack star power.

Despite the revamped ceremony announced Monday by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the Screen Actors Guild said it was encouraging its members to skip the show in support of the two-month walkout by the Writers Guild of America.

"The WGA informed us they will picket the event on Sunday," the actors guild said in a statement.

Patric M. Verrone, president of the Writers Guild of America, West, said union leaders were uncertain if they still would picket outside the Golden Globes since they were unclear about what form the awards announcement would take.

"I would say an awards show in news conference clothing would still be picketed, but I just don't know if it's been definitively decided," Verrone said.

As he arrived at Monday's Critics' Choice Awards, George Clooney said he belongs to six unions and would not cross any picket lines.

Later, as he made a presentation, Clooney said, "Our hope is that all of the players involved will lock themselves in a room and not come out until they finish. We want this to be done."

Nikky Blonsky, also on the red carpet, said she was undecided about whether to attend the revised Golden Globes, where she is a nominee for "Hairspray."

"The writers are the backbone of the business. So we don't want to lose them in any way," she said.

The press association, which owns the Globes, issued a bleak statement about the ceremony that was to have showcased the likes of nominees Angelina Jolie and Denzel Washington.

"We are all very disappointed that our traditional awards ceremony will not take place this year and that millions of viewers worldwide will be deprived of seeing many of their favorite stars celebrating 2007's outstanding achievements in motion pictures and television," association president Jorge Camara said.

"We take some comfort, however, in knowing that this year's Golden Globe Award recipients will be announced on the date originally scheduled," he said in a statement.

Besides Jolie and Washington, this year's nominees include such other A-listers as Clooney, Tom Hanks, Daniel Day-Lewis, Keira Knightley, Cate Blanchett and Johnny Depp.

Among the nominated films are "There Will Be Blood," "American Gangster" and "Sweeney Todd."

Faced with a potential celebrity vacuum because of the picket line, the association and NBC Universal Chief Executive Jeff Zucker had to devise another approach for the Globes broadcast.

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SWEET MOVES: SMC's Carl Kindborg (left) sneaks a pass by Pierce College's Daniel St. Hubert during a recent game. The Corsairs are currently ranked 12th in Southern California.

Corsairs begin conference play

FROM SMC PAGE 3

had a good practice," Teplitzky said. "We're mentally very focused ... on our next game."

Ranked 10th in Southern California, Los Angeles Valley College enters tonight's match-up with an 11-5 record, also coming off a close loss against Irvine Valley College last Saturday.

The Corsairs are led by Venice High School graduate Noah Gottlieb, a sophomore guard who is averaging roughly 14 points a game and has recorded 29 steals this season.

A battle between ranked teams, the game will also be a match-up against familiar on-court foes — the Monarchs are coached by Virgil Watson who coached at Contra Costa

College while Teplitzky was an assistant coach at Ohlone Community College and Chabot Community College, all schools in Northern California. The SMC coach said his previous teams have come out victorious on numerous occasions against Contra Costa.

This could be the first time in five years that the Corsairs make the playoffs. SMC has not won a conference championship since 1999 and a state championship since 1972.

"I think we've accomplished a lot for being what I consider being a first-year program," Teplitzky said, referring to the new coaching staff and players. "We've come a long way and there's still a long way to go."

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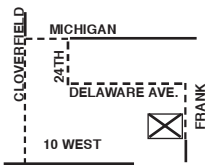
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Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

STREETS TAKE A POUNDING: City Hall is looking to give downtown a face lift. The sidewalks along the Third Street Promenade have become worn-out due to the massive amount of foot traffic.

Economic engine due for a tune-up

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Editor in Chief

DOWNTOWN To ensure that the Third Street Promenade and the surrounding streets continue as a popular destination for locals and visitors alike, City Hall will need to invest at least \$10 million to repair cracked sidewalks, add ambient lighting to street trees and enhance existing outlets and electrical wiring.

That's according to an infrastructure assessment study conducted by independent consultant NBCE, Inc. on behalf of City Hall.

"The sidewalks along Third Street Promenade are in need of transformation," the study states. "There are too many patch-works, various textures, conflicting colors and score marks."

The study, which was reviewed by members of the Bayside District Corp. board on Tuesday, also looked at curbs and gutters, the alleys, possible streetscape improvements along Arizona Avenue, from Ocean Avenue to Fourth Street, and up-lighting street trees along Wilshire Boulevard.

The sewer and water system was also reviewed and found to be in good condition.

City Hall paid for the study after Bayside, a public-private management company that advises City Hall on issues affecting downtown, raised concerns about the condition of concrete sidewalks on the promenade.

Members of the Bayside board said investing \$10 million is a drop in the bucket compared to the amount of money the promenade and surrounding businesses contribute to the local economy. They said the promenade is one of the economic engines that drive Santa Monica, attracting 3.8 million visitors annually from outside Los Angeles County for pleasure, vacation or business.

It's been 15 years since the last major overhaul of the promenade, which opened in 1989, according to the study.

"The promenade really drives a lot of what we do as a city," said Patricia Hoffman, a Bayside board member. "A lot of the programs that we have could not be possible without the sales tax revenue generated by the promenade. When we first came to the city, there was not a lot of spending going on down here. It was a

dead street. Now it is a model that is studied by people from all over the world."

Rob York, a consultant for Bayside, said before the promenade was created, Santa Monica had a hard time attracting hotels and other businesses. Now, many people in the entertainment and hospitality industries are located here because of the popularity of the downtown shopping district.

"Now, the issue is: Can we maintain it?" York said. "Many of these shopping districts are cyclical. This is a good time to take a fresh look to see how we can enhance services and stay on top of our infrastruc-



THE PROMENADE REALLY DRIVES A LOT OF WHAT WE DO AS A CITY. A LOT OF THE PROGRAMS THAT WE HAVE COULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SALES TAX REVENUE GENERATED BY THE PROMENADE.

Patricia Hoffman
Bayside board member

ture needs."

York said downtown faces stiff competition from other shopping destinations, such as Century City and The Grove.

City maintenance staff will use the study to see where they can make immediate repairs and improvements, and Bayside staff will use it to make recommendations to the City Council for capital improvement projects.

Barbara Bryan, a Bayside board member and operator of the Interactive Café on Broadway in downtown, had one suggestion

SEE REPAIRS PAGE 14

Committee holds off on BB projects

FROM BB PAGE 1

process were from Malibu, a community that became upset after the Board of Education cut Malibu's appropriation from \$27.5 million — a district staff recommendation — to \$13.5 million — a Measure BB District Advisory Committee recommendation.

"To stop this process I think would be a great, great mistake," said Laura Rosenthal, a Malibu parent and committee member.

Rosenthal had made a motion earlier in the meeting to allocate funding to all the middle schools, including Malibu Middle School, which parents say is in need of its own separate classroom building, which would be separate from the high school. That motion was superseded by the motion that was eventually acted upon.

Colleen Baum, a Malibu parent who made a presentation to the school board in November asking it to reconsider the appropriation to Malibu High School, took another chance at the advisory committee, asking it restore funding.

The committee members took a tour of

the Malibu campus, which doubles as both a middle and high school late last year.

"I want to explode because there are people talking about putting off allocating funds (until all the schools are visited)," Baum said.

Superintendent Dianne Talarico reminded committee members that the district spent more than \$1.5 million to work with three consultants — Harley Ellis Devereaux, Concordia and Sidewalk Studio — to draft the Facilities Master Plan, a 20-year-outline guiding the future of the facilities in the district.

"We can tour all we want to tour, but we did pay a lot of money to have experts in the field to do that," Talarico said.

Several committee members were in favor of visiting the schools, including attorney Chris Harding who said he learned much more about Malibu High School in his recent tour than he did in reading the Facilities Master Plan.

"The students at Lincoln want (us) to come see the school," he said. "I can't come up with a justification for telling them no."

melodyh@smdp.com

Gov. Schwarzenegger outlines pending fiscal crisis in address

FROM STATE PAGE 3

Department of Finance determined the state was starting to run a deficit.

Those predictions would be made three times a year, in November, January and June. If the deficit were 1 percent or less, state spending would have to go down by 2 percent. If the deficit were higher, spending would go down 5 percent.

Schwarzenegger is hoping to persuade state lawmakers to place the budget reform measure on the ballot. But that requires two-thirds majorities in both houses, which may be hard to get. Democrats dislike automatic cuts and helped defeat Schwarzenegger's two previous attempts at budget reform.

Democrats refused to adopt the spending cap he requested when he first took office. And they rallied to defeat a ballot measure he proposed in 2005 that would have adopted a cap and given the governor midyear budget-cutting authority.

Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata, D-Oakland, said the governor's call for automatic cuts in this year's budget was "like a blind man with a chain saw: Everybody gets cut or nobody gets cut."

He counseled Schwarzenegger to give up on the idea and said California should not be emulating Arkansas.

"It's almost a joke," Perata said after the speech. "If I wanted to live like Arkansas, I would move to Arkansas."

But Republicans generally applauded the idea of automatic cuts.

"You're in a crisis stage, you need to do something about it," said Senate Minority Leader Dick Ackerman, R-Tustin. "The time to act is now."

The governor's proposed budget reform is in the same vein as his failed attempts to control state spending in 2003 and 2005, but comes with a twist: the Legislature, not the governor, would have the first crack at making the cuts.

It also would prevent K-12 education

from automatically claiming windfalls in good years, which many blame for escalating state spending to unsustainable levels.

And it would enable lawmakers to decide in advance — on a majority vote basis — how to make the automatic cuts should the budget fall into deficit.

The state's current budget situation is grave. Schwarzenegger plans to declare a fiscal state of emergency when he reveals his 2008-09 budget on Thursday to force lawmakers to deal with a projected \$1.9 billion shortfall in the current year's budget.

And lawmakers are facing a brutal fight over next year's budget. Schwarzenegger wants to close the deficit with across-the-board spending cuts instead of tax increases.

Democrats say such deep cuts would imperil critical state services, such as education and public health programs, and they want tax increases to be part of the mix.

They have floated a variety of ideas, including raising the vehicle license fee, which Schwarzenegger scaled back when he first took office. That reduced state revenue by about \$6 billion a year in today's terms.

"If there's a \$14 billion deficit, you could close every one of the state's public universities and still be nowhere close," said Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles. "You could kick every Medi-Cal patient out of their nursing homes and still be nowhere close."

Despite the state's budget woes, Schwarzenegger made a pitch for his \$14 billion health care plan, which has stalled in the state Senate. Perata wants to see the full extent of the governor's proposed budget cuts, as well as an analysis of how the health plan could affect future budgets, before he allows his house to vote on the plan.

The governor insists the health plan does not require general fund revenue and will bring in new money from the federal government.

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The Students Run L.A. program is to challenge students to experience the benefits of goal-setting, character development, and improve health by providing a truly life-changing experience by training for and

completing the City of Los Angeles Marathon - 26.2 miles.
*A medical examination is required for all participants in the SRLA Program.

All trips will leave the PAL Youth Center (1401 Olympic Blvd) and returns to the PAL Youth Center upon the completion of the race.
For more information please call PAL at (310) 458-8988.

The PAL Youth Center is accessible to wheelchairs. If you have any disability-related requests, please contact (310) 458-8988 or (TTY: 310/458-8696) at least 24 hours prior to the trip. Santa Monica Blue Bus Lines #5 & #11 serve the PAL Youth Center.

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SURF REPORT



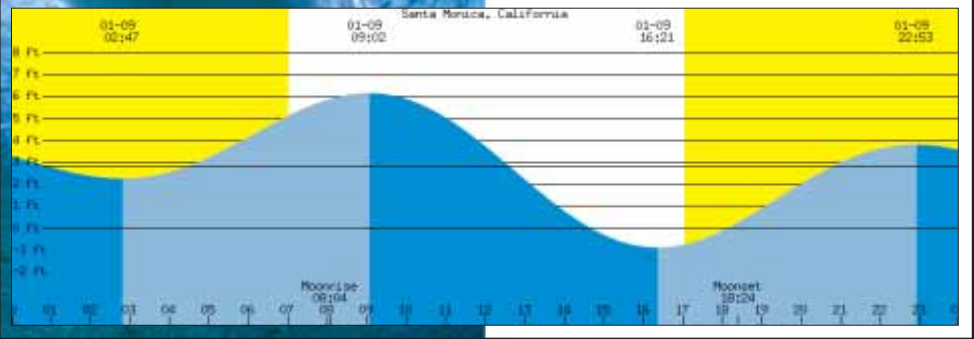
SURF CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 55°

SWELL FORECAST (4-6 FT)
Today could see some less than favorable winds and/or lump and bump on the surface from a storm passing through the region Tuesday night. The storm should affect primarily areas north of OC, but the winds and texture could affect all areas. Surf will also drop to just waist to chest at west facing breaks, and we'll have an extremely high tide midmorning.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS
BIGGER WNW SWELL THIS WEEKEND...
TRACKING SIZABLE WNW SWELL FOR 16TH...
SANTA ANA WINDS DUE THIS WEEKEND...

TIDE FORECAST FOR TODAY IN SANTA MONICA



BEACH REPORT CARD



NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **January 1, 2008**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - www.healthebay.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS
(for the last 28 days)

Number of sewage spills -- 0

Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0

Number of wet days -- 11

Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 43 / 27

Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 4 / 19

The Beach Report Card is made possible by a grant from 

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth (leocarrillo)	A+	A+
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A+
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Aliso creeks	A+	A+
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	C
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	A+
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	A+
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	B	B
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	A+	A+
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A+
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach	A+	A+
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth	A+	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	A+	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	A+
Surfrider Beach (beach location)- daily	F	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A	A
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A	A
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	A+
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	A+	C
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	F
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	A	D
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	F
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	C
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	A+

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone

WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days

ns -- no sample taken



Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay

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Heal the Bay's Beach Report CardSM is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A-F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

Countrywide shares tumble, raises fears

BY ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES Shares of Countrywide Financial Corp., the nation's largest mortgage lender, sank to an all-time low Tuesday as a major homebuilder offered a grim outlook for the industry and the Bush administration signaled it is growing more concerned about rising mortgage defaults.

KB Home reported a mammoth loss for the fourth quarter and said there are no indications that the housing market is stabilizing. The head of Fannie Mae, a government-sponsored mortgage lender, predicted the housing market would weaken through 2009 and said a turnaround wasn't likely until 2010.

President Bush, meanwhile, conceded, "It's going to take awhile to work through the downturn," and Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said he is concerned about the potential for additional home defaults.

Paulson said the administration is exploring expanding a deal it brokered

with mortgage lenders last fall to include relief to people who borrowed at prime, conventional rates as well as those with subprime, adjustable-rate mortgages that were due to reset.

Countrywide stock fell in morning trading after The New York Times reported about accusations that the company had fabricated letters submitted in a court case involving a foreclosure in Pennsylvania.

By early afternoon, the New York Stock Exchange temporarily halted trading of Countrywide shares before the company issued a statement denying rumors that a bankruptcy filing was imminent.

"There is no substance to the rumor that Countrywide is planning to file for bankruptcy, and we are not aware of any basis for the rumor that any of the major rating agencies are contemplating negative action relative to the company," the statement said.

When trading resumed, the shares rebounded somewhat, but then slid again. They finished with a decline of \$2.17, or 28.4 percent, to \$5.47 after falling to an all-time low of \$5.05 earlier in the day.

Damaged sidewalks on long list of repairs

FROM REPAIRS PAGE 12

for the council — more lighting. She said the cafe draws plenty of tourists who often comment on how dark downtown is.

"They view Santa Monica as being dark and unsafe," Bryan said. "That is not good."

Bryan said she would like to see a study done on what it would cost to add lighting to Broadway and Santa Monica Boulevard.

One issue that will need to be addressed is how will the improvements be made without significantly impacting businesses. Would the work be done in phases or in one fell swoop? Should it be done at the same time the owners of Santa Monica Place remodel the mall?

The study states that the average time necessary to construct the sidewalk within

one block of Third Street is estimated at two months. The construction time could vary depending on urgency of the project.

Just patching broken sidewalks will not achieve the uniform look and consistency expected, according to the study.

"The new uniform and fresh look will bring a positive characteristic to the pedestrian environment," the study states.

There is also the question of financing. Will City Hall issue a bond and will businesses contribute in the form of an assessment?

"The study does not address financing," said Miriam Mack, economic development manager for City Hall. "This is a superficial look at needs at this time. A number of issues still have to be looked at in more detail."

kevinh@smdp.com

Aspiring local playwrights meet at library to talk shop

FROM WRITERS PAGE 1

Lee Strasberg's Actor's Studio in Los Angeles.

"Working with actors and writers is a passion of mine," said Stramese.

Although, Stramese has done work in both film and theatre, she wanted to see if there was "a desire for writers in the area to focus on playwriting rather than screenwriting".

The six-week long workshop has a capacity of 16 students, with about 10 attending Tuesday's opening session.

Phyllis Grossman, another writer in attendance, said she had felt very disconnected from her community and went to the library to reconnect. She found a lot of resources there, including the playwriting

workshop. Grossman has also taken writing classes at Emeritus College, a college for seniors on Second Street, and said she's always loved writing.

"Somewhere in my writing, I have the starting of a play," declared Grossman.

The playwriting workshop is structured into six parts. Tuesday's dealt with imagination and the creative process of story. The five remaining meetings will focus on character and place, the first moment, believable actions, playable dialogue, and crisis to climax, respectively.

While the workshop is free, attendees must register.

For more information, call (310) 392-3804.

news@smdp.com

Lost and found Spears' ride towed by Los Angeles cops

BRITNEY SPEARS' car was impounded after police found it abandoned on the street. Police said Spears was driving Monday night when she had a flat tire on Sunset Boulevard some-

time before 8 p.m. "She left it unattended and it was blocking traffic, so it was towed," Officer Karen Smith, a police spokeswoman, said Tuesday of Spears' car. Police said it was

unlikely the 26-year-old pop star will be ticketed because the car was disabled when it was left in the street. "She probably will have to pay to get her car out of the impound lot," Smith

said. Spears was hospitalized last week after an hours-long standoff at her home that was triggered by a custody dispute with ex-husband Kevin Federline over the couple's two

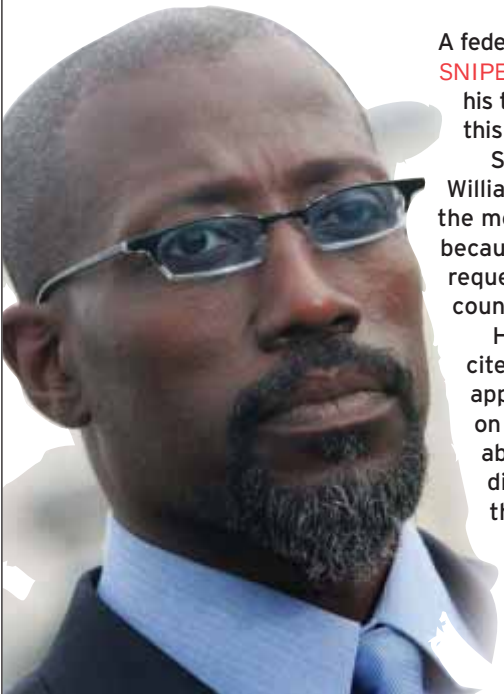
young sons. A court commissioner took custody of her children from Spears the next day. The singer has had a series of problems involving her car in recent months.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A judge is sending **JESSICA SIERRA** to rehab. The former "American Idol" contestant was sentenced Monday to a yearlong stint at a California rehabilitation clinic and three years' probation. Sierra, 22, was arrested last month for disorderly intoxication and resisting officers. She remained jailed Tuesday in Tampa. In July, she entered a California rehab facility that was to be documented on the VH1 reality show "Celebrity Rehab With Dr. Drew," hosted by Dr. Drew Pinsky. Circuit Judge Daniel Perry said he didn't want the sentence to be another screen test for Sierra.

AP

Judge denies Snipes' most recent request to have his trial moved



A federal judge has denied **WESLEY SNIPES'** most recent request to have his tax-evasion trial moved from this central Florida city. Senior U.S. District Judge William Terrell Hodges said Monday the motion was meaningless because the change of venue request applied only to some counts and not all. Hodges also said the motion cited no legal authority for an appeal, making it "frivolous both on the merits as well as the absence of any established jurisdiction" for the appeals court, the Ocala Star-Banner reported. Snipes' lawyer, Robert Barnes, filed the motion last week in an attempt to delay the trial, scheduled to start Jan. 14.

The actor's legal team argued Snipes cannot get a fair trial in Ocala, located about 80 miles north of Orlando. Snipes previously filed two motions to dismiss or transfer the trial because of racial prejudices. A telephone message left for Snipes' attorney Monday evening wasn't immediately returned. Last month, Hodges denied Snipes' motions to relocate and postpone the trial. Federal prosecutors have previously said there is "no basis in reality" for Snipes' claims. A federal indictment charges Snipes with fraudulently claiming refunds totaling almost \$12 million in 1996 and 1997 for income taxes already paid.

AP

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS
The stars show the kind of day you'll have:
★★★★ Dynamic ★★★★★ Positive ★★★ Average ★★ So-So ★ Difficult

Your treat, Capricorn

Happy Birthday!

You make a difference this year. You have an impact on many people. Picking and choosing the right situations to demonstrate this magnetism might involve reflection and hard thought. You might wonder about your limits and choices. Know that processing is healthy. Work with facts rather than suppositions. Forget using deductions or feelings – facts, just the hard facts, please.



Born Today
Singer Crystal Gayle (1951)
Singer Joan Baez (1941)
Guitarist Jimmy Page (1944)
Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>
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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ You might know more than you think you do about a situation; however, the confusion that surrounds this issue could force you to rethink. What might be obvious to one person might not be to another. Listen to others with great care. Tonight: Think positively.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ You might not want to think in the same way or handle a situation in the manner that you have been. In fact, you might decide just to assume responsibility, whether others like it or not. You feel you have the control you need. Tonight: A must appearance.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Clearly you don't see eye to eye with others. Observe and understand what makes them tick. Walk in their footsteps. Imagine what it would be like to be them. If you do this, you might be well on your way to finding answers. Tonight: Keep on smiling.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Allow greater give and take. As a result, you will see life with renewed interest. Investigate what needs to happen with an eye to positive change. Listen to what is going on more carefully with a close friend or associate. Tonight: Someone wants to be heard.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ You might want to rethink an alliance. If you do something in a very different manner, you might find the other person difficult. Step back from the situation and enjoy possibilities. You see life with renewed hope and interest. Tonight: All smiles.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Intention is half the game. If you hit a problem – especially one that impacts your daily life – you might want to step back some. Answers arrive when you are past immediate confusion. Sort through facts. Tonight: Make it early.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Creativity flows, even with an element of confusion or a change of mind. Use your imagination, and you'll come up with answers. Lighten up and discuss a problem. Laughter proves to be healing. Tonight: Time for a well-earned midweek break.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Whatever you say gets turned around. Try as you might, the right words might not be forthcoming. Examine questions others ask. Is there an implicit agenda being revealed? Learn from using good listening skills. Tonight: In the whirlwind of life.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ You might want to rethink a personal matter more carefully. Your ability to move through hassles will make a substantial difference. Listen and understand someone better. You want to break through present barriers. Tonight: Ever playful.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ What starts out as a confusing situation could reverse itself as quickly as it happens – if you stay mellow. Listen to others and find out the purpose of certain actions. Investigate and understand. Grow and evolve. Tonight: Your treat.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Your energy might be admirable, but think before you launch into action. You might not be getting the whole or complete message. You smile, and others respond. Listen to your sixth sense with someone close. Tonight: Your decision to make.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You might feel like you can't hold yourself back any longer. Any action you take could backfire. Realizing what needs to happen rather than what is happening could be most different. Touch base with your needs. Tonight: Go in your own direction.

MOVIEGUIDE

AERO THEATRE
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(310) 260.1528

Check theatre for showtimes

AMC LOEWS BROADWAY 4
1441 3rd Street
(310) 458-1506

Aliens vs. Predator - Requiem (R)
1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
Atonement (R)
1:35, 4:30, 7:25, 10:15
The Great Debaters (PG-13)
1:20, 4:15, 7:10, 10:10
P.S. I Love You (PG-13)
1:10, 4:05, 7:00, 9:55

AMC 7 SANTA MONICA
1310 3rd Street
(310) 289-4262

Charlie Wilson's War (R)
1:20, 4:40, 7:15, 9:45
Enchanted (PG)
1:10, 4:10, 7:05, 9:40
The Kite Runner (PG-13)
1:45, 4:35, 7:25, 10:15
National Treasure: Book of Secrets (PG)
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:55
Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (R)
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:05
The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep (PG)
2:00, 5:00, 7:40, 10:20

LAEMMLE'S MONICA
FOURPLEX
1332 2nd Street
(310) 394-9741

Juno (PG-13)
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
No Country for Old Men (R)
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:55
Persepolis (PG-13)
12:45, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15
The Savages (R)
1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 9:55

MANN'S CRITERION
THEATRE
1313 3rd Street
(310) 395-1599

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG)
11:40am, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:30
The Bucket List (PG-13)
12:00, 1:30, 2:30, 5:00, 6:30, 7:30, 10:00
I Am Legend (PG-13)
12:10, 2:50, 3:50, 5:20, 7:50, 9:00, 10:20
One Missed Call (PG-13)
12:20, 2:40, 5:10, 7:20, 10:10
Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story (R) DLP-Digital Projection
11:50am, 2:20, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30

Janric Classic Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

Difficulty
GOLD

		4	7		3	8		
	6		9		4			
	2							9
2	7	5				4		1
				8				
3		8				6	9	7
5							2	
			6		1		5	
		9	8		2	1		

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GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

8	4	3	6	5	2	9	1	7
9	1	6	8	7	3	4	5	2
5	7	2	1	4	9	8	3	6
2	8	1	3	9	5	7	6	4
4	3	5	7	6	8	2	9	1
7	6	9	4	2	1	5	8	3
1	9	4	2	8	6	3	7	5
3	2	8	5	1	7	6	4	9
6	5	7	9	3	4	1	2	8

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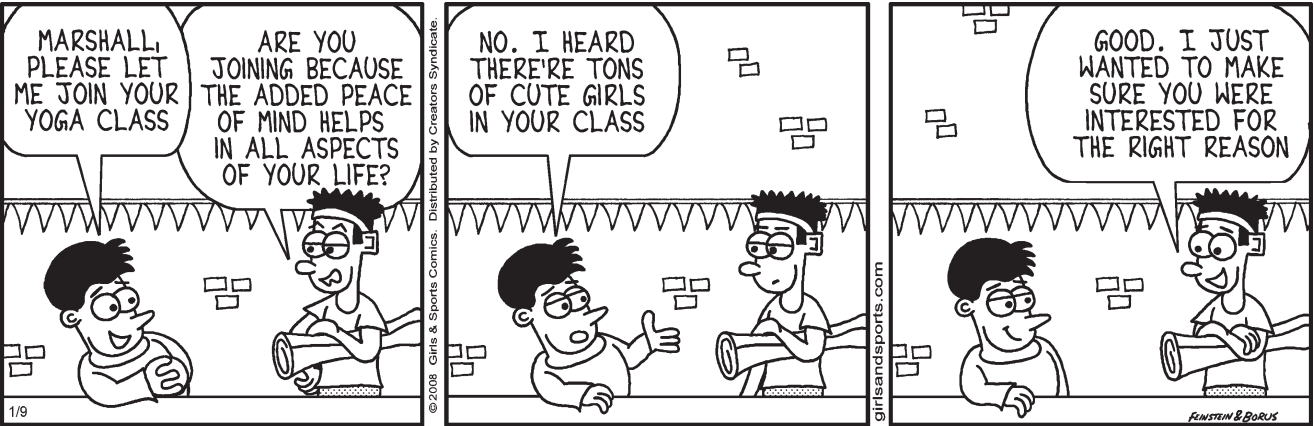
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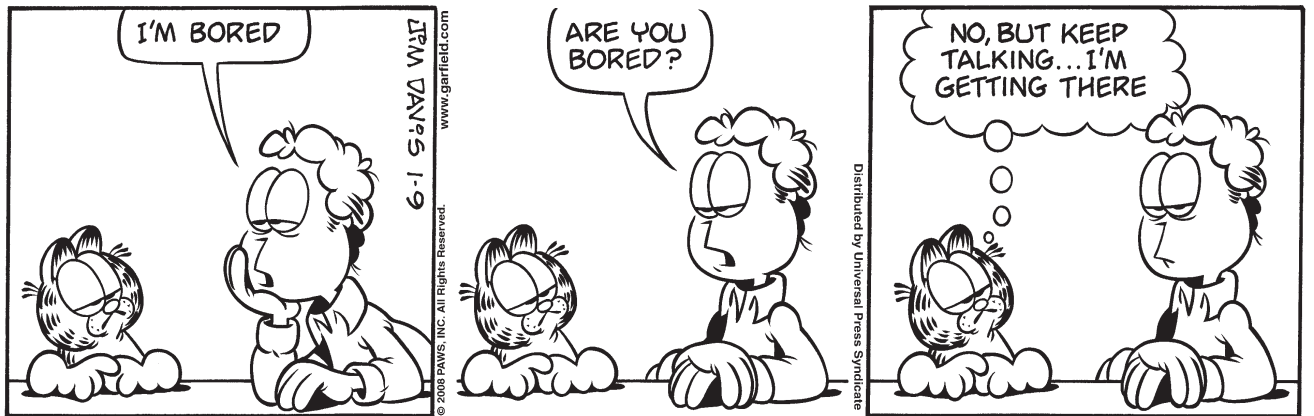
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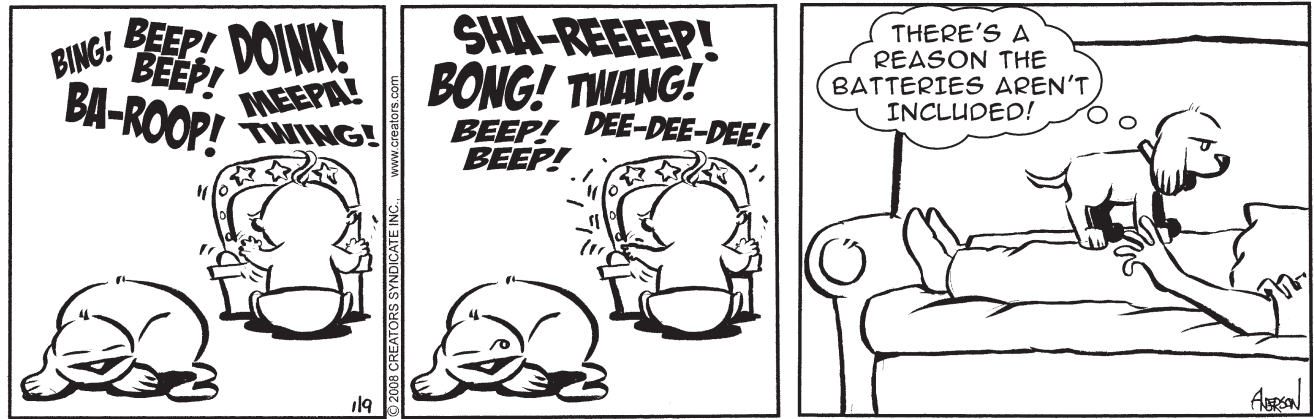
Garfield

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Dog eat Doug

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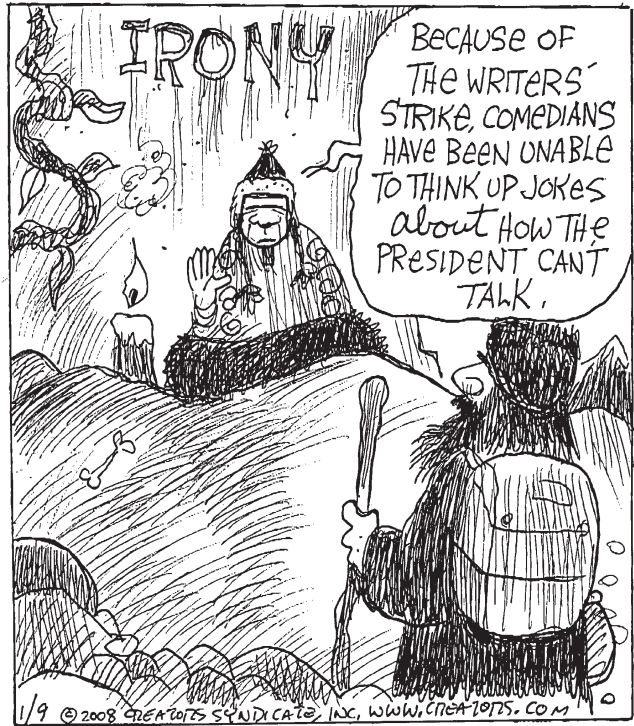


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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 46 Game

1 Religions dog

7 First name?

11 Misbehave

12 Start of a Hamlet line

13 Greg's TV love

14 Banish

15 Leapt

17 Twice tetra-

20 Sad sack

23 Scary cry

24 Arms collection

26 Running bird

27 Pool need

28 Sturm — Drang

29 Division

31 Golf support

32 Old anesthetic

33 Org.'s kin

34 Collared

37 Sentence subject, usually

39 Cochise, for one

43 Opposed

44 Patch

45 Do studio work

DOWN

1 Mania

2 German cry

3 "Give — rest!"

4 Trunk

5 Camel feature

6 Reward from the teacher

7 Immedia- tely

8 Tasty rings

9 Crunch targets

10 Got together

T	A	L	E	S		E	N	A	C	T
A	T	O	L	L		M	O	C	H	A
C	O	F	F	E	E	B	R	E	A	K
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Yesterday's answer

16 Plus 33 Rework

17 Rotund 35 Cell

18 Telescope dividers

19 Difficult sight

21 Lions puzzles

22 Of yore 37 Forty

24 Caustic 38 Lennon's

25 Baseball 40 Jazz

26 Nasty sort 41 "Get thee

27 Pool need 42 Blunder

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11							12			
13							14			
			15			16				
17	18	19				20			21	22
23				24	25					
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29				30				31		
32							33			
			34			35	36			
37	38					39			40	41
43						44				
45						46				

Comics & Stuff

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 24 31 39 40 56
Meganumber: 32
Jackpot: \$16M

Super LOTTO 3 15 18 40 41
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Jackpot: \$33M

Fantasy 5 13 15 34 36 37

DAILY 3 MIDDAY: 3 3 8
EVENING: 7 8 1

DAILY DERRY 1st: 01 Whirl Win
2nd: 02 Solid Gold
3rd: 08 California Classic
RACE TIME: 1:40.95

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ A 21-year-old man was seriously injured by a hit-and-run driver in the early morning hours of Nov. 3, in Suffolk County, N.Y., as he was walking away from his disabled SUV. Police said that the victim was probably the same driver who, a few minutes earlier, had himself rear-ended a sedan and driven off without stopping. (And the day before, in Jacksonville, Fla., a 19-year-old man was seriously injured by a hit-and-run driver when he climbed over a barricade after being hit by another hit-and-run driver.)

■ Many of today's environment-friendly new buildings are apparently terrible for birds. According to ornithologist Daniel Klem of Muhlenberg College, between 100 million and 1 billion birds are killed each year colliding with glass, with a big culprit being the generous glass construction on buildings meeting the rigorous energy and environmental standards of the U.S. Green Building Council.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1788 Connecticut became the fifth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

1793 Frenchman Jean Pierre Blanchard, using a hot-air balloon, flew between Philadelphia and Woodbury, N.J.

1861 Mississippi seceded from the Union.

1908 French philosopher and feminist Simone de Beauvoir was born in Paris.

1945 during World War II, American forces began landing at Lingayen Gulf in the Philippines.

1958 President Eisenhower, in his State of the Union address to Congress, warned of the threat of Communist imperialism

1964 anti-U.S. rioting broke out in the Panama Canal Zone, resulting in the deaths of 21 Panamanians and several U.S. soldiers.

1968 the Surveyor VII space probe made a soft landing on the moon, marking the end of the American series of unmanned explorations of the lunar surface.

1972 reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes, speaking by telephone from the Bahamas to reporters in Hollywood, said a purported biography of him by Clifford Irving was a fake.

1997 a Comair commuter plane crashed 18 miles short of the Detroit Metropolitan Airport, killing all 29 people on board.

WORD UP!

mimetic \mim-ET-ik\, *adjective*: 1. Apt to imitate; given to mimicry; imitative. 2. Characterized by mimicry; - applied to animals and plants; as, "mimetic species; mimetic organisms."

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Ad Copy (attach copy if necessary)

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____

7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____

10 _____ 11 _____ 12 _____

13 _____ 14 _____ 15 _____

Requested Start Date: / / **Requested End Date:** / /

Extras (Additional 20 cents/word):
☐ ALL CAPS ☐ bold ☐ italics
☐ Box (.50/day) ☐ Reverse(\$1/day)

Payment:
☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX ☐ Check

Exp: | 20 **Check #:** _____

Make checks payable: Santa Monica Daily Press

NO CASH PLEASE

Signature: _____

Mail.

Fill out this form and mail to:
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Suite 202
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Fax.

Fill out this form and fax to:
(310) 576-9913
ATTN: Classifieds

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852 - 21st Street Unit D
\$949,000
2 + 1.75 Condo Amazing Patio!

Easy to Show
Call for appointment



1754 - 11th St # 102
\$599,000
Large, Bright 2 + 2.5 Townhome

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Single Family Home
Gillette's Regent Square - North of Montana

Average Price of Properties Listed for Sale As of Early January 2008

		<u>Single Family Homes</u>	<u>Condos & Townhomes</u>
Santa Monica Canyon	=	\$ 2,663,286	No Listings
North of Montana	=	\$ 3,375,650	\$ 2,062,294
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	\$ 2,124,500	\$ 977,654
South of Wilshire	=	\$ 1,099,000	\$ 669,500
Sunset Park	=	\$ 1,308,059	\$ 683,385
Ocean Park	=	\$ 2,122,800	\$ 996,865

Statistics updated every Friday

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