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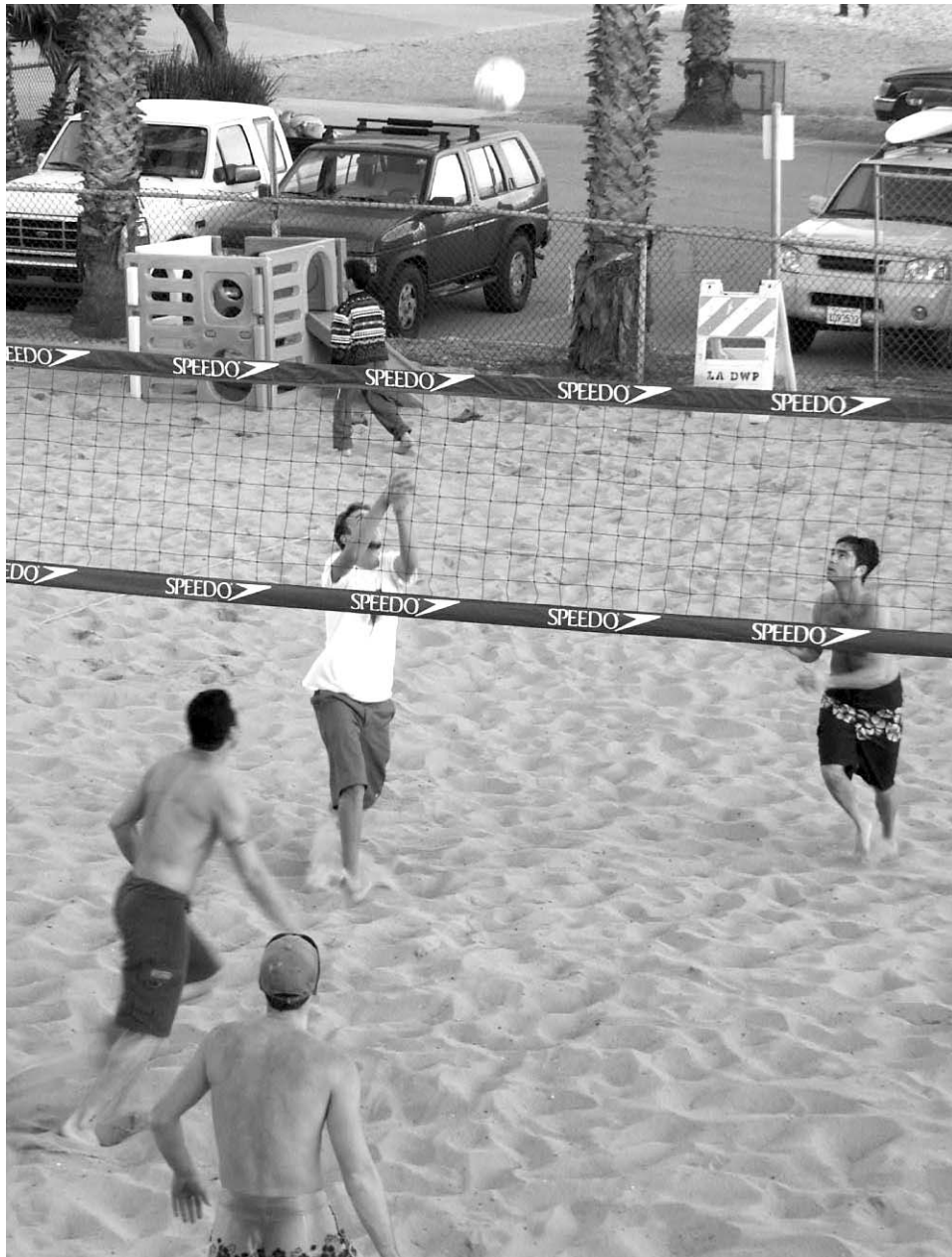
MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2002

Volume 1, Issue 54

Santa Monica Daily Press

Serving Santa Monica for the past 64 days

Bump and set!



Del Pastrana/Daily Press
Warm weather drew plenty of volleyball enthusiasts to Santa Monica Beach Sunday.

Voters face heavy November ballot

Mounting initiatives continually cram general election

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Special to the Daily Press

Residents this fall will be asked to make hundreds of choices on everything from condo ownership to rewriting city government.

Additionally, voters will be asked to elect a governor, a lieutenant governor, state assembly and senate representatives, congressional representation, and three new Santa Monica City Council members.

And that's before the state adds its initiatives.

In 1990, Santa Monica voters were asked to make more than 100 decisions, with many voters being sent to multiple booths to complete the entire ballot. If 2002 continues at its current pace, residents could be faced with another record year.

Already three complex local issues are crowding the Santa Monica ballot. One measure would allow tenants to purchase their condo when the buildings change ownership, another would allow for the

direct election of the mayor and district-based council members, and yet another referendum would decide the fate of the city's controversial living wage ordinance.

"This is hardly the least bit too complicated for a politically sophisticated community like Santa Monica."

— MICHAEL FEINSTEIN
Santa Monica mayor

Officials say voters are not easily overwhelmed, and those that make it to the polls typically are well educated and know exactly how they are going to vote.

"This year is going to be a very crowded ballot," said Robert Stern, president of the Center for Governmental Studies located in West LA, which studies voter initiatives. "Especially since you never know how many initiatives you'll have

See BALLOT, page 3

Little guy takes software giant to small claims court for trademark infringement

BY MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Business Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Entrepreneur Ken Bellanger is certain he has a strong case against Microsoft Corp. for trademark infringement, but figures a conventional lawsuit would never stand a chance against the software giant's cache of high-paid lawyers.

So Bellanger is taking his beef to a place made for little guys — small claims court.

Alleging Microsoft illegally latched on to the name "Pocket PC" for its handheld computer operating system, Bellanger paid \$20 last week to file a small claims

See LAWSUIT, page 3

SMC coach to take it through Santa Maria

By the Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Olympic Torch Relay was set to enter California early Monday en route to Salt Lake City for the Winter Games.

The relay, which began in Atlanta Dec. 4 and will reach its destination in time for the Olympics' opening ceremony Feb. 8, was set to cross the border into Imperial County from Yuma, Ariz. around 6:30 a.m.

The relay was scheduled to travel through San Diego on Monday and hit Orange County and Los Angeles on Tuesday, moving northward through the

state as the week progresses, organizers said.

On its way, the flame is being carried by 11,500 torch bearers, including celebrities and Olympic athletes, but mostly ordinary people nominated by friends and family members for their inspirational qualities.

Santa Monica College men's track and cross country coach Tommie Smith will take the hand-off in Santa Maria and carry the torch a short distance. Smith is a 1968 gold medal sprinter and has been teaching at SMC since 1978.

When the relay rolls through Orange County, one torch carrier will be 20-year-old Jason Annis of Placentia, a star athlete who was nominated by the mother of a boy with Down syndrome whom Annis

See TORCH, page 3

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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Don't lose your focus. Others respond to your leadership. Understand that you might not be absorbing the full impact of someone's words. Illuminate this conversation with questions. Schedule a meeting if need be. You derive success through groups. Tonight: Where the gang is.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Others enjoy the way you dote on them. Your innate kindness flows, even when attempting to be an authority figure. Partners share their feelings. You get strong feedback about decisions. Exchange concepts, ideas and perspectives. Demonstrate care with finances. Tonight: Work late.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Read between the lines with office gossip. Someone often expresses his or her caring in an odd manner. Your imagination takes you in a new direction, though you might project in an overly serious manner. Answer e-mails while researching a question. Tonight: Watch a favorite TV show.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Deal with someone head-on. Work with others' points of view. Carefully listen to someone's feedback. Creativity infuses a relationship. Your instincts follow through with others' ideas. A new beginning involves a key relationship. Dote on a friend or partner. Tonight: Talk over dinner.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Defer to others. Listen to the tune each person sings. You'll find out more of what is going on if you're more attentive. Others seem full of suggestions. Give each person the respect he or she deserves. A meeting provokes strong reactions. Tonight: Go along with someone's suggestions.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Remain mellow and even, despite a problem. Your positive attitude rubs off on others. Demands might overwhelm you, but only for a moment. Others trust in your creativity and ideas. Brainstorm and give others key information. Go with the moment. Tonight: Give up judgments.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ You easily become distracted. Look at your options within work and emotional situations. Think in terms of a complete vision. Your investments might not multiply as easily as you would like. Check out someone's theory. Tonight: Do something differently.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Your security speaks for itself when dealing with family and close associates. You don't feel a need to demand so much from someone. Carefully think through a decision that involves your family. Someone might be difficult to convince, but you succeed. Tonight: Home is where your heart is.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Express your gentleness, and others melt into your lap. Be careful when dealing with a severe or touchy personality in your life. Understand how much you offer through your talents and finances. Make calls to catch up on other perspectives. Tonight: At a favorite spot.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Others react to your presence. They feel how much you offer. Do nothing halfway, understanding your limits within a money dealing. Direct your hard-working time where it counts, and not toward pie-in-the-sky ventures. Discuss finances, just don't commit. Tonight: Pay bills first.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Your energy peaks. You might be unusually sensitive or romantic. Visualize more of what you want, and make it so. Your ability to harness your creativity draws success. Chat with a child or loved one about possibilities. Tonight: Dance away.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ Take your time when revealing what is on your mind. Sometimes playing cat and mouse pays off. Aim for the bull's-eye, but be subtle. A meeting provides an opportunity for networking and spreading good news. Listen to someone carefully. Tonight: At home.



WEATHER

Today ... Partly cloudy High—67°F Low—46°F
Tomorrow ... Partly cloudy High—63°F Low—44°F
Wednesday ... Partly cloudy High—59°F Low—43°F



QUOTE of the DAY

“Better that a girl has beauty than brains because boys see better than they think.”

— Unknown

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Mayor: Loaded ballots are part of healthy democracy

BALLOT, from page 1

from the state."

However, Stern believes voters are able to sort through all the information and make informed decisions.

"We're always surprised at the intelligence of the voter," he said. "It's actually very gratifying to see."

Local officials say they will continue to add initiatives to the November ballot because of the high voter turnout in gubernatorial elections. The deadline for initiatives to be placed on November's ballot is June.

"I think it helps democracy to have a lot of good issues on the ballot. It tends to make people pay more attention and read into what's on the ballot," said Santa Monica Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown. "It also draws in a lot of news coverage which is always beneficial."

Stern said it's likely council members would want initiatives on the ballot in November because it would give them time to rally their supporters, a sentiment some residents echoed when the city council added the Voters Election Reform for a True Accountability System, or VERITAS, to November's general election.

"Don't wait long to put this before voters. If you do it will look like you are trying to bring out the union people," said resident Chuck Allord about some council members' union support. "Please do not allow the unions to come in here and march all over us. Put this before the voters before that can happen."

Overall, Stern said voters make educated decisions and understand completely the issues they are deciding.

"One of the things we do is go back and ask voters if they mistakenly voted for an initiative that they didn't want or if they are unhappy with the results of an initiative," he said. "And surprisingly, we generally find voters do not pass things unless they really want them to be passed."

That sentiment was expressed by authors

of the local initiatives, as well as city officials.

"We plan to get out there really soon and start staging our advertising campaign," said Paul DeSantis, author of the VERITAS referendum. "We anticipate using the entire amount of time from now until November educating people."

Santa Monica Mayor Michael Feinstein agrees, saying that there would be plenty of time to debate each initiative before voters even reach the polls.

"This is hardly the least bit too complicated for a politically sophisticated community like Santa Monica," he said, pointing out that there would be several televised debates and forums for each side to reach voters. "In 1990, there were at least three measures that if you were against them you had to vote 'yes' and if you were for them you had to vote 'yes.' But our residents saw through all the tricks and voted their minds."

Experts agree that Santa Monica, unlike many other cities in the Los Angeles region, are becoming quick experts at referendum and ballot initiatives.

"Most communities are not like Santa Monica," said Stern. "There's a very active local government and community groups there."

Feinstein defends loaded ballots, saying they are a legitimate part of an active electorate.

"It's a healthy function of our local democracy," Feinstein said. "In addition to participating on boards and councils, residents have a right to put initiatives on the ballot."

Both DeSantis and Feinstein said this year's elections would need a strong and healthy media presence to stir debate and bring the issues before voters.

"The press has the responsibility to start the process of debating the merits of these initiatives and talking about the issues they propose solving," said DeSantis. "If our media falls short of that, then they have truly failed our city."

Schwarzenegger to carry torch

TORCH, from page 1

befriended.

"I can never repay Jason for the impact he's had on Darren's life," Joy Crow said of Annis' relationship with her son. "This is my way of saying thank you for a gift you can't purchase."

"I feel a part of something so big and so good . . . so reaffirming to me."

— JUDY WILLIS
Torch carrier

Farther north, 52-year-old Judy Willis of Santa Barbara also will carry the torch the allotted 1,000-some feet.

"I feel a part of something so big and so good . . . so reaffirming to me," said Willis, a doctor and cervical cancer survivor who gave up practicing neurology to teach fifth grade.

Better-known torch carriers in California include astronaut Sally Ride, Olympic gold medalist Rafer Johnson and actor Arnold

Schwarzenegger.

The Los Angeles leg of the relay Tuesday includes three public celebrations — 11 a.m. at Olvera Street, 2 p.m. at the Coliseum and 7 p.m. at Universal CityWalk.

The first torch relay was created for the 1936 Berlin Games. This time around, a white-robed actress playing the role of priestess lighted the flame for the 2002 Games on Nov. 19 in Olympia, Greece.

By the time it ends, the torch relay will have traveled 13,500 miles through 46 states, including Alaska. Already, it has been full of touching moments.

The torch's U.S. journey began in Atlanta, where Muhammad Ali passed it to Peggy Fleming, who ran the first leg.

Former New York Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani carried it in honor of emergency workers who died Sept. 11. In Oklahoma, the torch bearer paused at the reflecting pool memorial at the site of the Oklahoma City bombing.

More than 210,000 people were nominated to be torch bearers by friends, family or colleagues who wrote essays of 100 words or less and submitted them to the Salt Lake Organizing Committee, Coca-Cola or Chevrolet during March and April of last year.

Minding his manners ...



Del Pastrana/Daily Press

Larry Martinez, manager of Table Manners on Arizona Avenue, prepares the set-up for an evening of guests.

Trademark disputes are nothing new for Microsoft

LAWSUIT, from page 1

complaint against the Redmond, Wash.-based company. The dispute is scheduled to be heard Feb. 22 before a small claims commissioner in San Francisco.

With the case, Bellanger hopes to win the maximum \$5,000 award allowed in California's small claims courts and establish his legal right to the Web address pocketpc.com, a site that Microsoft launched two years ago.

Bellanger contends the name belongs to him because he began selling a gag gift called the Pocket PC in 1985. The product, meant to spoof the high-tech industry's hype about small computing devices, is a plastic poker chip bearing a unique serial number.

About 1,200 people have paid \$6.95 to \$9.95 for Bellanger's Pocket PC through the years. He believes he could sell as many as 500,000 more Pocket PCs online if Microsoft would stop trespassing on his trademark.

If he wins in small claims court, Bellanger reasons he can use the judgment to prove his ownership of Pocket PC to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, the online guardian best known as ICANN. Getting the rights to pocketpc.com, he says, is more important than the money.

"This isn't about holding up

Microsoft," Bellanger, 41, said. "This is about taking back something that is already mine."

Microsoft declined to comment specifically about Bellanger's suit.

In general, Microsoft views "Pocket PC" as a generic term used to describe an operating system for a variety of handheld computers made by a long list of manufacturers that include Compaq, Toshiba, Hewlett-Packard and Casio, said Microsoft spokesman Jim Dresler.

Trademark disputes are nothing new for Microsoft. Last year, the company reached an undisclosed settlement with Grand Rapids, Mich.-based Xbox Technologies to secure the trademark for the name of Microsoft's video game player. The Michigan company changed its name to the Knowledge Mechanics Group.

Although Bellanger never officially registered Pocket PC with the federal government, legal experts say he still may hold a "common law" trademark on the name in California. A common law trademark is established whenever someone sells a commercial product under a specific name, said Harvey Dunn, an intellectual property attorney in Dallas.

"It doesn't sound like a totally frivolous case," Dunn said. "The ultimate question may come down to whether anyone would confuse what he is marketing with what Microsoft is marketing."

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NATIONAL

Bush was not informed about Enron calls for help

BY H. JOSEF HEBERT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Two Bush cabinet members said Sunday they never considered intervening in Enron's spiral toward bankruptcy, nor informed President Bush of requests for help from the fallen energy giant.

"Companies come and go. It's ... part of the genius of capitalism," said Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, when asked if he was surprised at the sudden collapse of Enron. The company's failure has left the one-time energy trading behemoth's stock virtually worthless and thousands of workers' pension funds in disarray.

Last fall, a month before Enron declared bankruptcy, O'Neill received two telephone calls from Enron's chief executive, Kenneth Lay. Lay also called Commerce Secretary Don Evans at the time, reaching out for help to harness the energy company's financial slide.

O'Neill's view of Enron's collapse was characterized as "cold-blooded" and reflective of "the 18th century, but not the 21st century" by Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., whose Committee on Governmental Affairs is leading Senate investigations into the Enron debacle.

Separately, Lieberman said that an internal Arthur Andersen LLP memo on Oct. 12 directing that all but basic Enron working papers be destroyed "raises very serious questions about whether obstruction of justice occurred."

Andersen this past week revealed that Enron documents had been destroyed. But Lieberman said most troubling was that the memo, disclosed in a report in Time magazine, "was specifically about Enron" and not a general directive to clean out files. Congressional investigators want to find out why Andersen did not raise flags about Enron's business practices.

Lieberman and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said on CBS' "Face the Nation" the administration may have been right in not intervening to try to save Enron. But they said the government's response — as well as earlier federal monitoring of its business practices — may have been hampered by the energy company's free-wheeling flow of campaign contributions.

"We're all tainted by the millions and millions of dollars that were contributed by Enron executives, which ... creates the appearance of impropriety," said McCain, a longtime voice for campaign finance reform. McCain acknowledged getting \$9,500 in Enron contributions in two Senate campaigns.

Lieberman, who said he received \$1,000 from Enron in his 1994 Senate campaign, said one focus of his committee's investigation will be "whether any of the influence" from Enron money affected the administration's handling of the Enron collapse, or oversight by federal agencies.

"I don't feel at all compromised," added Lieberman, referring to his committee's investigation.

Since 1990, Enron and its employees contributed \$5.77 million to political campaigns, about three-fourths of it to GOP candidates. About half of the money was spent in the 2000 election, with

President Bush a major beneficiary.

O'Neill and Evans said Sunday that while they received calls from Lay in late October and early November, they dismissed any suggestion of intervening to help the company.

Evans said that Lay was looking "for all the possible ways that he could stabilize his company" and asked that Evans consider contacting credit rating agencies. "I considered it and said, 'Thank you for the call,'" Evans said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

O'Neill said that Lay, in a call of three or four minutes, "asked me for nothing." But O'Neill acknowledged that during one conversation Lay said Enron's ability to sustain its credit rating "was a critical aspect" of keeping a merger with rival Dynegy on track. The merger later fell apart.

The Treasury Department has acknowledged that, around the same time in late October and early November, another Enron executive repeatedly contacted Peter Fisher, a Treasury undersecretary, trying to get the government to encourage banks to extend credit to the struggling company.

Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., whose Senate Governmental Affairs subcommittee has issued 51 subpoenas in connection with its Enron investigation, said Sunday on ABC, "I have no doubt that they were asking for the government to take action."

But an Enron spokesman, Mark Palmer, said the calls "were informational" and "not about trying to improve our credit rating."

Neither O'Neill nor Evans said they informed President Bush of the telephone calls. But Evans said he frequently discussed Enron's situation during general meetings with the president in November and December.

The tone of those conversations was "how sad it was to see what was happening to that once great company," Evans said on NBC.

Enron filed for bankruptcy on Dec. 2.

O'Neill said his concerns involving Enron were over the possible impact on U.S. and global capital markets, but he was assured by Fisher that there weren't going to be problems in that area. O'Neill said that at the time of the calls he was deeply involved in pushing the president's stimulus package in Congress, pursuing the financial trail of terrorists and dealing with other issues of greater concern.

"I didn't think this was worthy of me running across the street (to the White House) and telling the president," O'Neill said on "Fox News Sunday." "I don't ... tell the president every time somebody calls me."

As to the sudden collapse of Enron and the nosedive of the company's stock, O'Neill said he was not surprised.

"I've watched lots of corporations come and go. ... There are very few companies that have been around for 40 or 50 years. ... Companies come and go. It's part of the genius of capitalism."

"People get to make good decisions or bad decisions, and they get to pay the consequences or to enjoy the fruits of their decisions. That's the way the system works."

INTERNATIONAL



Musharraf declares no terrorist presence allowed

BY ROBERT H. REID

Associated Press Writer

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — President Gen. Pervez Musharraf declared Saturday that Pakistan will not be a base for terrorism and banned two extremist groups accused in an attack on India's parliament. Police raided religious schools and mosques and arrested more than 300 suspected militants.

There was no immediate reaction from the Indian government to the televised speech, in which Musharraf tried to defuse a crisis over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir that has pushed the neighboring nuclear powers to the brink of war.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, who will visit the region shortly, hailed Musharraf's "bold and principled stand" and said he believed the basis now exists "for the resolution of tensions between India and Pakistan through diplomatic and peaceful means."

In his hourlong address to the nation, Musharraf vowed that "no organization will be allowed to indulge in terrorism behind the garb of the Kashmiri cause. ... We will take strict action against any Pakistani who is involved in terrorism inside the country or abroad."

Musharraf also announced a crackdown on religious extremists in his country who had supported Afghanistan's Taliban rulers and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida movement. In addition to the two Kashmiri groups, he banned three Pakistani Muslim organizations, including one that sent members to fight alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Hours after the speech, police and militants reported authorities were sealing offices of all five extremist organizations throughout the country. Several militants were taken into custody, police said.

Musharraf spelled out new regulations for mosques

and religious schools — long considered a breeding ground for religious extremism. He also announced plans to review the status of foreign teachers and students at Pakistani religious schools.

"If in any mosque there is any political activities or any other ... extremism, then we will take strong action," Musharraf declared. He warned Muslim clerics to "spread the good points of Islam" or "there will be strong action against them."

The speech had been widely anticipated in hopes it would defuse mounting tensions with India that began with the Oct. 1 suicide bombing at the legislature building in Indian Kashmir and escalated on Dec. 13, when five armed gunmen stormed the Indian Parliament complex. Fourteen people, including the five attackers, were killed. India accused Pakistan and two Kashmiri separatist groups — Jaish-e-Muhammed and Lashkar-e-Tayyaba — for the December attack and dispatched hundreds of thousands to the border. Pakistan responded with its own buildup and warned it would resist any Indian incursions. That raised the prospect of an armed confrontation between two countries.

A spokesman for Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, Abdullah Sayyaf, vowed to continue attacks against India despite the ban. Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, or the Army from Medina, has carried out suicide attacks on the Indian army and has been declared a terrorist group by the United States. Both banned Kashmiri groups have links to al-Qaida.

Although Musharraf banned the two Kashmiri groups, he made clear that Pakistan would maintain "moral and diplomatic" support for Kashmir in its struggle for self-determination. India considers Kashmir its sovereign territory, a claim Pakistan has disputed since the two countries were carved out of British India in 1947.



Aijaz Rahi/Associated Press

Indian army soldiers, on their way to forward positions on the India-Pakistan border, read newspapers at Jammu railway station, India, on Sunday. India has already mobilized hundreds of thousands of troops along the 1,800-mile border to Pakistan on a full alert while Pakistan closed down some religious extremists' offices in the capital as part of efforts to avoid a possible war.

The Pakistani president appealed to the United States and other major powers to play a role in settling the dispute, which has triggered two wars between India and Pakistan.

"I want to address to the international community, especially to the United States: Pakistan rejects terrorism in all its forms and manifestations," Musharraf said. "Pakistan will not allow its territory to be used for any terrorist activity anywhere in the world. Now, you must play an active role in solving the Kashmir dispute for the sake of lasting peace and harmony in the region."

U.S. military troops fortify Afghanistan foothold

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER

Associated Press Writer

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Guarded by U.S. troops and attack dogs, a second group of suspected Osama bin Laden supporters departed Sunday for a U.S. prison camp in Cuba as U.S. bombers flew their most punishing raids in weeks on caves near the Pakistani border.

The 30 prisoners, shackled and with their faces covered, shuffled in the darkness onto a C-17 transport plane for the flight to the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba.

The men were among nearly 400 Taliban and al-Qaida suspects interned at Kandahar. A U.S. military official said one of them had identified Richard Reid, accused of trying to blow up a trans-Atlantic flight with explosives hidden in his sneakers, as someone he had trained with at camp run by bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Reid was identified from a photograph, but had no further details.

The 30 detainees flown to Cuba will join 20 others who arrived from Kandahar on Friday. Hundreds are to

be eventually flown to Guantanamo Bay.

Lights at the Kandahar base were shut off except for low-intensity red and green lighting as the men were marched onto the plane. Security was tight, with attack dogs and Humvees with 50-caliber machine guns patrolling the area.

In Kabul, state-run television reported that Afghanistan's interim government had ordered provincial officials to recruit 6,000 men to become the backbone of a professional military free of the ethnic and territorial divisions that have led to years of conflict.

In Pakistan, ahead of his departure for Kabul, Fazal Hadi Shinwari, Afghanistan's newly appointed chief justice, vowed to sentence bin Laden and fallen Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar to death if they were brought before him.

The war remained very much alive in the rugged hills of Paktia province along the Pakistani border. Daylight bombing that began in the morning over Zawar, the site of a suspected underground hide-out of al-Qaida and Taliban members, continued throughout the day and intensified at night into what appeared to be the heaviest attack since last month's strikes on the Tora Bora cave complex.

Buried beneath the slate gray mountains on the border with Pakistan, the Zawar camp has been hit by U.S. bombs over the past 10 days. It was the base of one of the Taliban's senior commanders, Jalaluddin Haqqani.

Sur Gul, security chief of Khost, 20 miles to the southeast, said the underground passages continue to shelter Islamic militants — mostly Pakistanis belonging to the now-banned Jaish-e-Mohammed group, Chechens and some of bin Laden's Arab warriors. Locals say Omar and other Taliban figures may be in the area.

Intelligence reports said al-Qaida fighters had been using the area to regroup and move out of Afghanistan, the Pentagon has said.

Villagers say the bombing has been relentless and deadly. One of them, Noorz Ali, said 15 people were killed and most of the 35 homes destroyed in his village, less than two miles from the military camp.

Special forces, sighted several days ago in the Khost area, remained in the region Sunday, apparently seeking



Wolfram Steinberg/Associated Press

U.S. Lance Cpl. Patrick Distin from Wethersfield, Conn., of the 3/8 Anti Terrorist Marine Expeditionary Brigade, guards the entrance of the U.S. embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sunday.

Taliban and al-Qaida holdouts but refusing to discuss their mission. Seven soldiers, weighed down with weapons and communications equipment and accompanied by heavily armed local guards, were sighted meeting with Bacha Khan, the governor of Paktia province.

MUSICA ANGELICA

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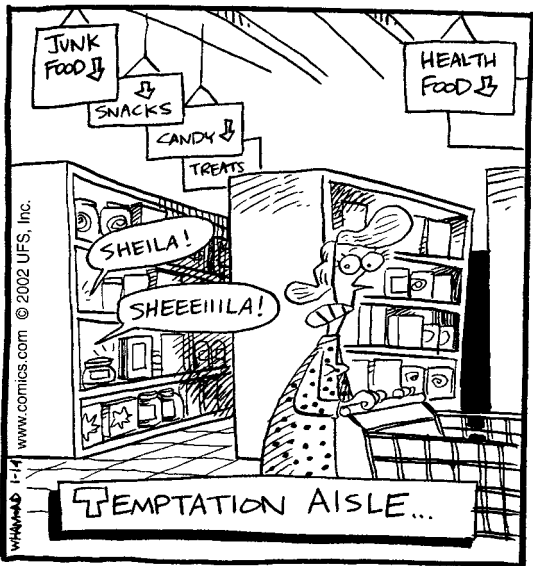
Clarence the Angel finally gets his wings, and is ... well, a little disappointed.



by TERRY & PATTY LABAN



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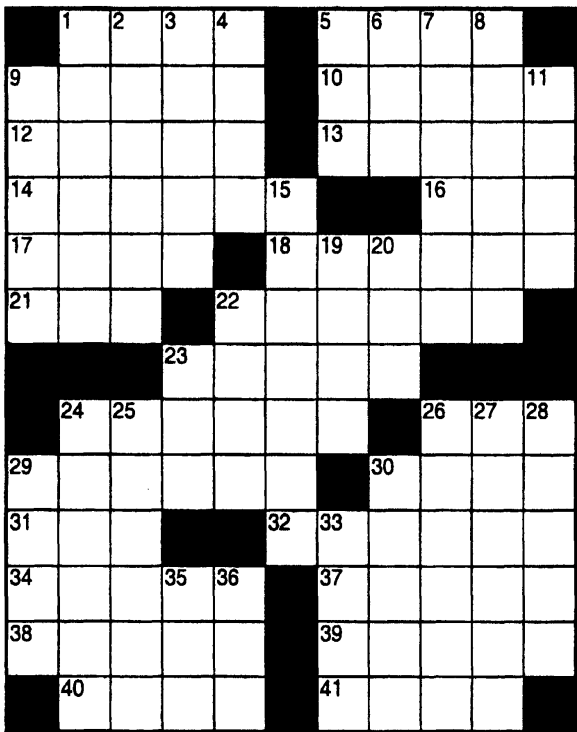
CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS
- 1 Porgy's love
 - 5 Used the pool
 - 9 Sprite
 - 10 Of the Arctic
 - 12 "My Fair Lady" heroine
 - 13 Foot connector
 - 14 "Give me the details!"
 - 16 Commer-cials
 - 17 Chopping tools
 - 18 Place for a plug
 - 21 Topper
 - 22 Listen to the radio
 - 23 Singer Callas
 - 24 Swiss home
 - 26 Insect
 - 29 Springy quality
 - 30 Garden waterer
 - 31 Sleeve filler
 - 32 Knight's foe
 - 34 Break
 - 37 Take as one's own
 - 38 Vietnam-ese city
 - 39 Chess wins
 - 40 Give for a time
- 41 Baseball's Musial
- DOWN
- 1 Mississippi port
 - 2 Left
 - 3 Shoe choices
 - 4 Close an envelope
 - 5 Masseur's place
 - 6 Took the trophy
 - 7 Acid opposer
 - 8 Actor Karl
 - 9 Bike part
 - 11 Take it easy
 - 15 "Walk on the Wild Side" singer
 - 19 Foot or hand
 - 20 Brewed beverage
 - 22 Bath powder
 - 23 Stag party attendee
 - 24 Ranch pen
 - 25 Compas-sionate

P	E	T	S			N	A	S	A	L
A	L	O	H	A		E	L	O	P	E
C	E	D	E	D		T	E	N	E	T
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D	E	T	A	I	N		S	T	A	N
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			H	E	N	I	E			
	F	L	O	R	I	D	I	A	N	
T	E	A	R		T	E	N	N	E	R
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A	R	E	N	A		A	S	I	D	E
M	E	D	A	L		N	A	K	E	D
S	T	O	P	S		P	A	D	S	

Saturday's answer

- 19 Foot or hand
- 26 Colombian capital
- 27 Annual golf event
- 28 Blokes
- 29 "St. John Passion" composer
- 30 Attacked
- 33 St. Louis team
- 35 Swindle
- 36 Make fun of



1-14

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Curriculum considers reading the stars

News of the Weird reported in 2001 that Kepler College in Seattle had won state higher-education certification for a curriculum in astrology and that the U.S. Department of Education had decided that vocational astrology students could qualify for federal loans and grants. Recently, India's higher-education curriculum planners decided that colleges in that country could offer courses in astrology at the graduate, post-graduate and research levels, and about 25 programs have been established. Critics say the policy is an ill-conceived plan by Hindu nationalists to extend their influence, but a New Delhi astrologer applauded the move, pointing out that astrology "seek(s) wisdom which no other science provides."

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BACK PAGE

One-person air scooter gets off the ground

BY BRIAN BERGSTEIN

AP Business Writer

SUNNYVALE, Calif. — When you've spent millions of dollars and nearly six years trying to turn science-fiction fantasy into reality, little bits of progress are huge developments.

So it's understandable that the inventor of a personal flying machine is touting his most recent breakthrough — getting the 325-pound SoloTrek a few feet off the ground for 19 seconds — as a test “flight.”

“We have to walk before we can run,” said inventor Michael Moshier, a former Navy pilot and aerospace engineer whose project is supported by NASA and the military. “We're getting more confident, and not yet taking it too far before we get too comfortable.”

The 8-foot-tall SoloTrek Exo-Skeleton Flying Vehicle has a gasoline engine that drives two large fans, which are surrounded by metal ducts to improve their aerodynamic efficiency. The pilot flies it in a standing position and controls its movement with two joysticks.

The machine is designed to go 80 mph and fly 150 miles on one tank of gas. Moshier plans to add a global positioning system for navigation, mechanisms to prevent pilots from running out of gas in the air and a parachute-equipped ejector seat.

Moshier and his 10 employees at Millennium Jet Inc. have fired up the SoloTrek a few times in front of the company's headquarters on an industrial cul-de-sac in Sunnyvale, drawing astonished looks from passers-by. He hasn't yet invited reporters to see a liftoff in person, but he has a video clip of the longest flight, which happened Dec. 18.

The video shows Moshier, with his pants flapping in

the wind from the SoloTrek's air fans, getting the machine to hover about three feet off the ground. For Moshier's safety and the protection of his sole prototype, the SoloTrek was tethered to a crane and to poles on the ground.

Moshier plans to test the SoloTrek without any leashes within a few months.

“At this point, he has shown remarkable progress in getting as far as he has in such a relatively short amount of time,” said William Warmbrodt, chief of aeromechanics at the nearby NASA Ames Research Center. Warmbrodt's team has helped Moshier research his project and let him use an Ames wind tunnel. “I think it holds genuine promise.”

The Defense Department is giving Moshier \$5 million over three years in hopes that the SoloTrek someday can help soldiers get in and out of dangerous spots quickly. Moshier says he is on schedule to deliver a prototype to U.S. Special Forces by the end of 2003.

He also plans to begin developing an unmanned version of the SoloTrek known as the MULE, which he believes can serve as a flying beast of burden for troops. But that depends on whether he can line up more investors, because the military's \$5 million is not enough.

Of course, unless they suffer from acrophobia, potential investors are sure to ask whether they ever will be able to ride a SoloTrek. Moshier believes consumer use is a possibility someday.

But technology forecaster Paul Saffo, a director of the Institute for the Future in Menlo Park, isn't so sure. He wonders whether SoloTrek can be made idiot-proof enough to persuade government regulators the



Julie Jacobson/Associated Press

Millennium Jet Inc. president and chief executive officer Michael Moshier mans the controls of the SoloTrek Exo-Skeleton Flying Vehicle while showing it outside the company building Friday in Sunnyvale, Calif. Moshier recently managed a breakthrough with his experimental personal flying craft hovering the 325-pound SoloTrek a few feet off the ground for 19 seconds, as a test “flight.”

machines are safe.

“The moment you move through three dimensions, that takes special skills,” Saffo said. “So what this is is a specialty for military, police and less obvious things — like power line inspection. If it works as advertised, this could be a high-performance, low-cost alternative to things people try to use helicopters for today.”

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