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THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2010

Volume 9 Issue 54



DONE FOR THE SEASON
SEE PAGE 15

Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

THE STILL TALKING ISSUE

Four face trial for Brumfield murder

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

DOWNTOWN Four suspected gang members charged with the beating death of a Santa Monica man will stand trial after a Superior Court judge last week found there was enough evidence to move forward with the case.

Assisted by court-approved wire taps, Santa Monica police officers in October of last year arrested Sammy Murphy, 50; Gwindon Love Murphy, 65; Jason Anthony Hurtado, 26; and Jason Eddie Coleman, 27; all of Santa Monica, for the 2008 murder of Preston Brumfield, a resident who was beaten and left for dead on a busy street in the Pico Neighborhood.

The investigation was dubbed "Operation Tombstone," and led to the arrest of six other suspected gang members for selling rock cocaine within the city.

Deputy District Attorney Alva Lin said the four defendants charged with murder and conspiracy with a gang enhancement were held to answer on Thursday and are scheduled to be arraigned on Jan. 22, at which time they are expected to enter pleas of not guilty.

The Murphy brothers have also been charged with solicitation.

Attorneys for the defendants could not be reached for comment. One of Coleman's relatives said he is innocent and the target of police harassment.

The gang enhancement increases the amount of time a convict has to spend in prison, Lin said. If found guilt of murder and sentenced to life, the enhancement guarantees a minimum of 15 years before a convict can be eligible for parole. In a general felony it can add three, four or 10 years to a sentence depending on the charges, Lin added.

Brumfield was found during the late

SEE MURDER PAGE 10



CRUISIN'

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

With early-morning rains subsiding, cyclists take advantage of the sunny day by riding down the Strand bike path on Wednesday afternoon. The 22-mile long path runs from Will Rogers State Beach to Torrance County Beach.

Roadhouse still in limbo, but both sides negotiating

BY NICK TABOREK
Daily Press Staff Writer

SM CANYON A legal dispute between the owner of Patrick's Roadhouse and his landlord is nearing an out-of-court settlement, but there appear to be few options left for keeping the historic restaurant in business long term.

Lee and Christine Benchay, who own the property on Pacific Coast Highway just north of Santa Monica where Patrick's Roadhouse has done business since 1974, sent owner Anthony Fischler an eviction notice in November and followed up with a court summons when he hadn't left the property after 30 days.

A judge was scheduled to decide the

SEE ROADHOUSE PAGE 11

Kuehl to launch public policy institute at SMC

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

SMC Former state Sen. Sheila Kuehl was hired Tuesday by the Santa Monica College Board of Trustees to create a public policy institute at the school with hopes of providing residents with nonpartisan reports on key economic, social and political issues come election time.

Kuehl, who represented Santa Monica and other Westside communities in Sacramento for 14 years, plans to use her contacts to build a credible institute with a particular focus on the many issues facing the Westside and the region, including transportation, development, homelessness and housing.

"I want this institute to be of service to the west end of the county," Kuehl said. "There is no public policy institute like this in the state. The difference is most public policy institutes … focus on federal policy. The don't even focus as much on state poli-

SEE SMC PAGE 12

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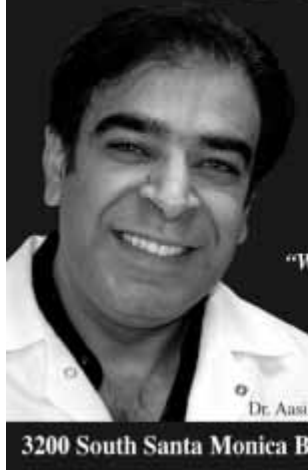
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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010

The world in pictures
Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
1855 Main St., 11 a.m. — 7 p.m.
The 19th Annual International Los Angeles Photographic Art Exposition will feature works from some of the finest galleries from around the globe. The show, dubbed photo l.a. 2010, will feture a preview installation of the upcoming Museum of Latin American Art exhibition, "Changing the Focus: Latin Amarican Photography (1990-2005)." For more information, visit www.photola.com.

Heal thy self
Santa Monica Senior Center
1450 Ocean Ave., 12:30 p.m. — 2 p.m.
Maria Locsin will lecture on the topic of easing pain and discomfort and pressing certain body points and working with areas of the body points and working with areas of the body to increase blood flow. For more information, call (310) 458-8644.

Sustainable economy
Sheraton Delfina
530 W. Pico Blvd., 8 a.m. — 11:30 a.m.
Join the Sustainable Industries Economic Forum for a series of keynote presentations by Paul Hawken, who draws from his wealth of expertise and vision to address both the triple-bottom-line opportunities and frank economic realities of these extraordinary times.

Friday, Jan. 15, 2010

Mariachi and dinner
El Texate Restaurant
316 Pico Blvd.
Mariachi Alta California fills the air with the sounds of Mexico every Friday night. Show times are 6:30, 8 and 9:30 p.m. There is no cover charge.

Ice skating by the beach
Arizona Avenue at Fifth Street
10 a.m. — 10 p.m.
Bring back childhood memories — and create new ones — as you slice through the ice in a festive atmosphere filled with holiday cheer and balmy ocean breezes. The ice rink will remain open through January. Admission is $10 and includes skate rental. The rink is periodically cleared for short periods to groom the ice. If raining, the rink will remain open in light rain or drizzle conditions, closing only for heavy downpours. For more information go to www.downtownsm.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.





USING HER HEAD

Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

Santa Monica High School's Kate Quinoes leaps into the air to make a play on a loose ball on Wednesday at John Adams Middle School. Samohi won the Ocean League matchup against Morningside, 5-0.

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS ROUNDUP

St. Monica's girls hoops on hot streak

BY DANIEL ARCHULETA
Managing Editor

ST. MONICA The Mariners appear to be peaking at the right time.

As St. Monica's girls basketball team prepares to open the Camino Real League season today against Mary Star of the Sea at home, the Mariners find themselves on a six-game winning streak that has Head Coach Therese Charkut pondering a league title run.

"We made some changes in the way everyone practices," she said. "The kids have made a commitment."

Charkut said that her team's reinvestment in hard work has turned around a season that began 4-7, giving her hope that the Mariners (10-7 overall) could potentially enjoy a long run into the postseason.

But for now, she's just worried about Mary Star.

"I feel like we're more talented," Charkut said, "but they play hard and come ready for us every year."

The Mariners won both matchups last season.

While the team has shown improvement during the current streak, it is the play of senior guard Kaitlin Wilcox that has been pacing the offense, Charkut said.

"It doesn't hurt that Wilcox hit eight three-pointers against CAMS (California Academy of Math & Science) and then nine against Marlborough," Charkut said. The nine threes against Marlborough is a school record.

Charkut said that Wilcox and her long-distance shooting touch helps the offense get going during scoring droughts.

"If we can spot her up, she hits them all day," she said of her sharpshooter.

Along with Wilcox, Charkut pointed to the play of junior forward Monique Boe and junior guard/forward Cory Laguardia as clear signs that her team may have the firepower to challenge for a league title.

"I like that we're getting in people's faces on defense," Charkut said. "Overall, things are going well for us."

LOCAL B-BALL TEAMS RANKED

Santa Monica's girls basketball team is ranked third in the most recent California Interscholastic Federation Southern Section's Division I-A rankings. Across town, St. Monica's squad is ranked seventh in Division 5-AA.

On the boys side, Samohi is ranked 10th in the Division 1-A poll. St. Monica's boys are ranked 12th in Division 4-A. Crossroads is 10th in the Division 5-AA rankings. Pacifica Christian is ranked 11th in Division 6-AA.

daniela@smdp.com

Event aims to boost sales on Main Street

BY NICK TABOREK
Daily Press Staff Writer

MAIN STREET After a dismal year for retailers, Main Street merchants are grasping for ways to boost sales.

This month, they're banding together to launch "Last Fridays," on Jan. 29. Participating stores will be staying open late and holding special events to bring in customers. The event is planned to take place the last Friday of each month and piggybacks on a similar event held the first Friday of each month in Venice's Abbot Kinney shopping district.

Laura Owen, vice chair of the Main Street Business Improvement Association, which is organizing "Last Fridays," said the weak economy prompted the group to kick off the event in January, several months before Main Street's busy season begins.

"I think any other year we might of waited," she said. "But the merchants are wanting something now.

"We're always looking to see what could bring more business to Main Street, especially in this economy."

Owen, who owns clothing store GIOIA, said shoppers can expect a range of different offerings from Main Street shops. Live music, cross promotions with restaurants and free food are all expected to be in the mix.

If the Abbot Kinney version of the event is any guide, "Last Fridays" could become a Mecca for gourmet food trucks. As many as 19 of the trucks have shown up for Venice's "First Fridays" promotion.

Matthew Geller, vice president of an association of food truck vendors, said his group is interested in discussing ways for food trucks to participate in Last Fridays without negatively impacting Main Street merchants. He said welcoming the trucks could mean bigger crowds for Main Street stores, especially since he said there's been little publicity surrounding "Last Fridays."

"They haven't done a very good job of getting the word out," Geller said. "We have something that people want to partake in and If they let us, we'll do our best to make their event really successful."

Owen said some members of her group

SEE **FRIDAYS** PAGE 10

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Wrong move, City Hall

Editor:

As a long-time resident, I just wanted to say kudos to Bill Bauer for his recent article about Santa Monica City Hall "authorities" shutting down the great new idea of a mobile truck food court (My Write, "SM's code enforcement leaves lingering bad taste," Jan. 11). Just as he states in the article, it wreaks of favoritism and rank hypocrisy. With all the recent negative press regarding local store owners complaining that the mobile food trucks take away business from the local restaurants when parking in their near vicinity, wouldn't this have been a terrific solution?

The real question is why would City Hall choose to shut this idea down in record time? I met Steve Taub once about 10 years ago and have known of his presence here in Santa Monica for years. He's a terrific person and operated his auto dealership in Santa Monica for years. Did he do something to upset City Hall? Highly doubtful. To say that a mobile food court wasn't zoned for an empty car lot on Santa Monica Boulevard is so wrong-headed, these officials should be concerned about their jobs going forward. Maybe they will let him put up pumpkins next Halloween and Christmas trees next December!

Rick Singerman
Santa Monica

Explaining the situation

Editor:

For many Santa Monicans, the constant headlines about disaster and fiscal crisis in Sacramento seem far away. But it is at the K-12 level that the Sacramento fiasco really hits home. The vast majority of our schools' funding comes from the state. Due to the budget mess in Sacramento, and the enormous cuts made to public education in this past summer's state budget, our school district is going to receive 18 percent less from the state next year than it was supposed to have under Proposition 98. In addition, there were extra cuts in our district's categorical funds. The district's budget deficit is a direct and causal result of those cuts in state education revenues.

We are pleased to report that along with consistently high test scores and student achievement rates, Standard and Poor's, the independent bond and credit rating agency, recently gave SMMUSD one of the highest ratings of any school district in the state. This rating is only given to districts exhibiting fiscal responsibility and excellent financial management. Our Financial Oversight Committee, Education Foundation, administration, board, parents, and teachers are carefully studying a wide range of creative fundraising, cost saving, and revenue-generating mechanisms. It's vital that we not leave any stone unturned when looking for savings.

We've already made $4.5 million in cuts last year, with more to come. But in the end of the day, the school district must find a way to sustain a whopping 18-percent-plus cut when most of its costs are relatively fixed.

And that's just this year. Right now, Sacramento is grappling with yet another $20 billion plus budget gap to fill, with more cuts to schools almost certainly coming down the pike.

The committee's recommendation, if adopted by the board and passed by the voters, would only cover about half of the district's projected deficit. But it would go a long way toward ensuring that Santa Monica continues to have a high-quality school system that benefits our community in immeasurable ways.

Ben Allen and Maria Leon-Vazquez
Santa Monica-Malibu School Board Members

✉WHAT DO YOU THINK?
■ Send letters to **editor@smdp.com**



Your column here

Jon Coupal — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Putting California on the road to recovery

FOR A DECADE, CALIFORNIA STATE government has spent more than it receives in revenue. The result: Our state has the lowest credit rating of all 50 states, we rank in the top four in unemployment, near the top in tax burden per capita, and we rank last or close to last in a number of surveys that measure business climate. Not coincidentally, California small business bankruptcies are up 81 percent over last year.

For lawmakers, spending is a compulsion. During the historic recall campaign of 2003, Arnold Schwarzenegger, who correctly labeled the spending problem as an addiction, promised he would be the antidote. His pledge to "blow up the boxes" and bring fiscal sanity to Sacramento led voters to support his candidacy by a huge margin.

Sadly, and perhaps predictably, the spending terminator quickly succumbed to a more regional strain of the Beltway fog — some have even likened it to the Stockholm Syndrome where, after just a few months in office, elected officials become more aligned with the tax receivers than the tax payers.

With California now facing another $20 billion dollar deficit, it is time to impose on California politicians the equivalent of the 12-step program pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous, to curb their addiction, compulsion and behavior problems.

But being longtime taxpayer advocates, let us be a bit more efficient by proposing a slightly simpler six-step program.

1. A key element of either a six- or 12-step program is admitting that one cannot control one's addiction or compulsion, so the answer is a spending limit with teeth. Lawmakers must be limited to spending no more than the state takes in, no ifs, ands or buts.

2. A growing percentage of the general fund is the repayment of debt. With more debt being piled on – in the form of general obligation bonds, other debt instruments and pension obligations — the state must begin to do that which it rarely does: prioritize this debt. Tough decisions must be made about what we really need as opposed to what we may want. Proven infrastructure projects, devoid of fluff, might pass the test. Other projects should be delayed, if not terminated outright.

3. To further curtail any tendency to relapse into mischief, the amount of time spent lawmaking should be reduced. The California Legislature should be reorganized around the more successful model of Texas, where lawmakers meet no more than 140 days every other year and are paid $7,500 annually.

4. To remove from legislators the temptation provided by public employee union enablers — who are responsible for the election of the majority of lawmakers — the state work force should be slashed by 15 percent. This will reduce not only their political influence, but since California state employees are the highest paid in all 50 states, relieve some of the pressure for extravagant spending.

5. To reduce the pressure to spend, spend, spend (especially on public employee salaries and benefits), new rules should be adopted to reduce the corrupting influence of the tax receivers on our political institutions. Allowing government employees to opt out of unions and paycheck protection laws would go far in leveling the political playing field.

AS CALIFORNIA ENTERS 2010 WITH A BUDGET DEFICIT OF OVER $20 BILLION, NOTHING BUT RADICAL REFORMS WHICH PRESERVE LIBERTY, REWARD INNOVATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND WHICH LESSEN THE INFLUENCE OF THOSE LIVING OFF TAXPAYER DOLLARS CAN SAVE THE GOLDEN STATE.

6. And finally, to make amends to those they have harmed, as directed in the 12-step program, taxes should be cut so that the per capita tax burden is reduced to no more than the national average. This would put more money in the pockets of struggling taxpayers and give a boost to the state economy as businesses that provide jobs again look to our state as a good place to relocate or expand.

As California enters 2010 with a budget deficit of over $20 billion, nothing but radical reforms which preserve liberty, reward innovation in the private sector and which lessen the influence of those living off taxpayer dollars can save the Golden State. The only question is whether we have the strength and wisdom to take the first steps to recovery.

JON COUPAL is president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association – California's largest grass-roots taxpayer organization dedicated to the protection of Proposition 13 and the advancement of taxpayers' rights.

INTERESTED IN YOUR DAILY FORECAST?
CHECK OUT THE HOROSCOPES ON PAGE 16!
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Life Matters

JoAnne Barge & Katrina Davy Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Baby, you can drive my CARR

DEAR NEW SHRINK,

I recently had an interview that did not go very well. I had a really hard time expressing my thoughts and answering the interviewer's questions. In particular, I had a hard time thinking of a workplace conflict that I've had to overcome. This is mainly because I haven't really experienced any conflict in my workplace and tend to be a pushover when it comes to confronting others. How should I deal with these questions? Do you have any advice to help me succeed in the interview in general?

Signed,

Nervous Interviewee

DEAR NERVOUS INTERVIEWEE,

Successful interviewing takes practice and confidence. First off, consider that you have already passed round one. They were impressed by your resume and experience and now it's up to you to confirm and strengthen their initial impressions.

The type of question you are describing is considered a behavioral interview question. Employers often ask these types of questions to get a better sense of your performance and the skills you utilize to handle situations that are also likely to come up in their company. The basic idea here is that past performance predicts future performance.

While you mention that you have not dealt with conflict in your job, I would encourage you to step back and consider whether there were any times when you and a coworker disagreed about a particular idea. It might have been when or how to contact a client, the allocation of responsibilities on an assignment, or how to approach a particular project. Regardless of what the content of the disagreement was, your answer should focus on how you have handled the situation and negotiated points with your colleague.

To answer behavioral questions I often advise my clients to use a four-step approach called CARR. This method is useful to ensure that you include all elements so the interviewer can easily understand and assess your background. Ideally, your answer should demonstrate your transferable qualities or traits that you bring to the company.

The C in CARR stands for "context." At the start of your response you should discuss the situation; who was involved, what did the project entail, and what was the issue that arose? Setting up the situation will help the interviewer to understand the context and circumstances revolving around the disagreement of ideas.

The A stands for "action." Describe the actions that you specifically took. Your answer should focus on the specific skills you utilized to handle the situation. The first R stands for "Results." Tell the interviewer what happened in the end and how you handled the situation.

The example you choose does not have to be a perfect example, sometimes the best answers to behavioral questions are circumstances where things did not work out but your answer focuses on what you learned from the situation and how you would handle things next time around.

The final R stands for "relate." Relate your experience, skills, and qualities gained to the traits requested in the job description. Focusing on how your past experience connects to their company will ensure that you make the most of your answer. Too many candidates just address the problem and therefore miss out on a great opportunity to highlight their skills and professional qualities.

Try practicing the CARR method by writing out a few case examples. While not all interviewers will ask about conflict, they may ask about other key qualities such as a time when you demonstrated leadership, strong communication skills, or initiative. Think back to work experiences or team projects where certain issues have come up. Consider writing down these examples and attaching specific elements to the CARR framework. Preparing your answers or brainstorming situations ahead of time will ensure that you have a strong answer ready to impress the interviewer.

Beyond this I think the most important thing is to practice. Saying your ideas out loud in front of a mirror or with a friend will help you to prepare. You may also want to tape or video record your answers so you can analyze your response. It is also important that you prepare for your interview. Research the company and re-read all of your interview materials and the job description. Every part of your interview should connect to what they are looking for. For instance if the job description notes that they are looking for someone with strong communication and analytical skills then your examples, answers and descriptions should focus on how you have exhibited and perfected these skills. Finally, consider your professional presentation. Wear a suit, speak with confident and well-paced speech, and always send a follow-up thank you note or e-mail. The more you practice and prepare, the more confident you will be in the real interview. Good luck and knock their socks off!

KATRINA DAVY is a professional career counselor who holds degrees from Cornell and Columbia universities. Send your questions to newshrink@gmail.com. All questions are kept anonymous; let us help you with your life matters!

The Q Line

Remembering Mayor Genser

With the passing of Mayor Ken Genser last week, a flood of memories come to mind. In his many years in office, he made quite a mark on local government.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:

What do you think will be the lasting legacy of the late mayor?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press.

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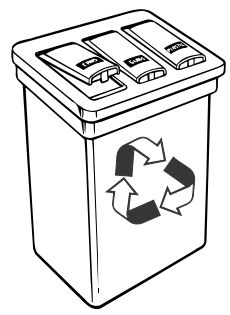
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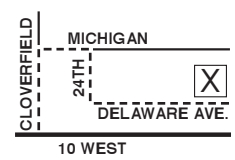
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California's wine choices expand

TRACIE CONE
Associated Press Writer

FRESNO Consumers of California wine easily can tell a red cabernet from a white chardonnay, and soon they will have a tool to determine whether it's green.

Winemakers and grape growers who forgo pesticides, sow cover crops, reduce waste and energy consumption, provide workers health insurance, and are mindful of their non-farming neighbors will be able to distinguish themselves as certifiably sustainable under a new third-party audit system announced Wednesday by the Wine Institute, a public policy advocacy group.

"People do want to know that the products they purchase are grown and produced in some sort of sustainable fashion," said Chris Savage, director of environmental affairs at Gallo Wines. "Our expectation is it will become even more important in the future."

Nearly a decade in the making, the Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing Program is part marketing tool, part voluntary self-regulation, and partly a way to help consumers navigate an increasingly complicated purchase.

Natural cork, synthetic or screw cap? Organic, organically grown or biodynamic? Elegant Napa cab or one from price-friendly Paso Robles? The program analyzes 227 practices that take place from the field to the glass for the most prolific fruit crop on the planet.

California is the world's fourth-largest producer of wine. The state's nearly 3,000 wineries produce 90 percent of the wines consumed in the U.S.

The "sustainable" certification is designed to not only tell consumers how the California grapes and wine were treated, but the field workers and neighbors as well. Growers and winemakers assess themselves in all areas of the production process, an exercise then verified by an outside auditor.

Growers and winemakers representing 62 percent of the 467 million gallons of wine California produces annually have signed up. Industry officials say the designation will help the state's wines stand out as retailers such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc. increasingly rate the products they carry.

"We get requests for sustainability score cards daily from restaurants and distributors," said Steve Smit of Constellation Wines U.S., which includes Robert Mondavi. "This certification helps us scale it down to something we can explain."

As wineries, vineyards and urban areas increasingly intersect, the risk of legislation looms in areas from nuisance abatement to stream degradation. Bird bombs, anti-fungal spraying, deer depredation and discing are the ugly side of a sublime process that the guidelines could theoretically reduce.

Nine years ago, the Wine Institute formed the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance to develop a measurable set of voluntary industry standards for sustainability. It has evolved into this third-party certification program similar to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program for buildings.

New Zealand, South Africa and Australia have sustainability standards in place, as does Oregon, the U.S.' fourth-largest producer. Oregon growers also can label their wines "Salmon Safe" if they protect watersheds from runoff. Washington state has a program that's self-regulated.

Some worry that the audited standards will mean more costs and paperwork for farmers, who might not recoup the money from the wineries they supply.

"The concern is that if you're not with the plan, you're a second-class citizen. Those who are willing to complete the paperwork, I hope they get a return on their investment," said Nat DiBuduo, who represents mostly large-scale grape growers in the San Joaquin Valley, the source of 60 percent of California's crop.

Consumers won't find a label on the bottle yet, but winemakers will be able to advertise and tout the designation on their Web sites. Already, Livermore's Cedar Mountain Winery, which has been participating in the program, is calling itself "the only certified green winery" in the region.

"We hope to gain a market advantage compared with others," said Kim Ledbetter-Bronson Vino Farms in Lodi, which has switched to biodiesel and solar power.

Not everyone believes the new standards will matter to wine consumers conditioned to consider sipping a sensory experience.

"Honestly, it's not an issue. People will buy it if it tastes good to them," said Stan Kato, owner of The Grape Tray, a Fresno institution.

NYC asks manufacturers to cut back on salt

DAVID B. CARUSO
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK City health officials have battled trans fat and high-calorie fast food. Now, they're taking on salt.

The health department planned to release on Monday draft guidelines suggesting the maximum amount of salt that should be in a wide variety of manufactured and packaged foods.

The recommendations call for sizable reductions in the sodium content of many products, from a 20 percent drop in peanut butter to a 40 percent decline in canned vegetables.

Unlike the city's recent ban on trans fat in restaurant food or rules implemented last year requiring chain restaurants to post calorie information on their menus, this initiative is purely voluntary.

But even though there will be no penalties for companies that ignore the guidelines, health officials say they think some manufacturers may be motivated to make changes.

"They all fully recognize that sodium is a major health problem that they need to address," said the city's health commissioner, Dr. Thomas Farley.

Seventeen national health organizations and 25 other city or state health agencies have joined with New York City in the effort, called the National Salt Reduction Initiative. It aims to reduce the average American's salt intake by 20 percent in five years.

Everyone needs some salt in his or her diet, but experts say Americans now eat about twice as much as they should. That can lead to problems including high blood pressure and an increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

The guidelines suggest that manufacturers lower salt content gradually over several years so consumers won't notice, and they aren't asking for big changes in every category.

For example, under the city's standards, by 2014 no restaurant hamburger should contain more than 1,200 milligrams of salt. Nearly every burger sold by McDonald's already meets that guideline, although there are exceptions like the double quarter pounder with cheese, which has 1,380 milligrams of salt.



The Re-View

Merv Hecht

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Culinary savvy on full display at Viceroy's Whist

IN EUROPE, A LOT OF THE BEST restaurants are in fancy hotels. Generally that hasn't been true in California, but it's getting more common. A good example is Whist, located on the ground floor of the Viceroy Hotel on Ocean Avenue.

If you look at reviews of Whist on the Internet, they are not so favorable. But it's misleading because the restaurant has undergone a change of chefs three times. I'm quite optimistic about the new team and the new menu.

Also, Kelly Weastler's décor offers an unusual setting for good food and drink. The out of the ordinary furnishings are, at the same time, soft and comfortable and all in all pleasing to the senses. There's a nice sized bar that's separated and yet close to the dining room that offers both tables and booths — or you can take the most popular option and sit outside on the beautiful patio. When I was last there, the Red Bull company was having a little get-together with drinks and appetizers for 300 people — yet we didn't hear a bit of noise from the crowd. In fact that's one of the best features of Whist: it's quiet.

The newly installed chef, Tony DiSalvo, began cooking when he was 13 at the Hotel Thayer in Highland Falls, N.Y. Later, he studied at the Culinary Arts Institute and received an AOS degree there. But perhaps his best training comes from his externship at Jean-Georges Vongerichten's renowned restaurants Vong and Jo-Jo, and his long-term association with that well known chef.

When he graduated in 1995, DiSalvo worked at La Goulue in New York under the tutelage of Philippe Schmidt, from whom he learned the basics of French-Mediterranean cuisine. Then he moved to one of New York's most popular restaurants, Gramercy Tavern, where he worked with Tom Colicchio.

In 1998, DiSalvo became the sous chef at Jeans-Georges Vongerichten's flagship restaurant, Jeans-Georges in New York's Trump Tower, where he became the executive chef in 2001. In 2004, he moved to La Jolla, Calif. to open Jack's La Jolla as executive chef and partner.

So he's moved around quite a bit, but let's hope he stays here. I had the pleasure of eating my way through his tasting menu last month. Chef DiSalvo is definitely in the same league with Michelin-starred chefs now working in Santa Monica. We started with a small slice of blue fin tuna on ciabatta toast, accompanied with a salsa verde of anchovies and capers, and nicoise olives and cherry tomatoes on the side. On the plate was a fennel salad in a Meyer lemon sauce. Next was a small beet salad, with one beet picked and the other roasted, served with a truffled cream. This was truly delicious.

The rich and creamy porcini mushroom soup with chestnuts has an earthy aftertaste, I could be satisfied with a bowl of this for a complete dinner. At $14 it is quite a bargain. After the soup came eggplant three ways — fried, diced and pureed, with a small piece of perfectly cooked wild sea bass with a crisp skin. The dish was redolent of Moroccan spices delicately applied.

This marked the half way point in dinner! But the portions were small, there was plenty of wine (more on that later) so we were not over-saturated. That was serendipitous because next came one of the chef's best creations, the ravioli with lobster — pancetta, corn, tomatoes and basil, a wonderful buttery specialty that demonstrates the chef's ability to mix a number of flavors and textures so that none is overpowering but all are flavorfully interesting.

Where's the beef? Forget that. For the meat course we were served a piece of Colorado lamb flavored with cardamom and perhaps cumin (again a Moroccan accent) accompanied by an orange and goat cheese salad.

Yes, there is a dessert chef. Her name is Brooke Mosley, and after tasting both a chocolate filled donut and the apple tart with caramelized nuts and blue cheese ice cream, I'm in love with her. I can do without the blue cheese ice cream, but I don't think I can live without more of that apple tart.

We had a number of different wines: a nice acidic pinot gris and a Bon Climate chardonnay (very little flavor) with the fish courses, a Heitz zinfandel (not a pleasant taste) and an excellent Hitching Post pinot noir. In general, the wine list is pretty ordinary, but they didn't have a wine person, so I'm sure it will improve. Meanwhile, on Mondays and Tuesdays they have a discount wine list at $25, so the price is right.

Prices at Whist are about what one expects in Santa Monica, and I consider the price range to be quite reasonable considering the setting and the quality of the food. Expect to spend about $50-$60 per person for a really good dinner, plus drinks.

If you go

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MERV HECHT, the food and wine critic for the Santa Monica Daily Press, is a wine buyer and consultant to a number of national and international food and wine companies. He can be reached at mervynhecht@yahoo.com

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121: one to one ADN: any day now AFAIK: as far as I know AFK: away from keyboard A/S/L: age, sex, location B4: before B4N: bye for now BAK: back at the keyboard BBIAB: be back in a bit BBL: be back later BBN: bye bye now BBS: be back soon BCNU: be seeing you **BF: boyfriend** BFN: bye for now BG: big grin BL: belly laughing BMTIPG: brilliant minds think in parallel gutters BRB: be right back BTA: but then again BTW: by the way BWL: bursting with laughter BWTHDIK: but what the heck do I know C&G: chuckle & grin CD: crying in disgrace CIM: confirmed in my next post CP: chat post CRBT: crying real big tears CSL: chuckle, snicker, grin CU: see you CUL: see you later CYO: see you online DBAU: doing business as usual DIIK: do I know you? DL: dead link DLTBBB: don't let the bed bugs bite DQMFF: don't quote me on this EE: evil grin EMFBI: excuse me for butting in EMG: email message EOT: end of thread F2F: face to face FC: fingers crossed FISH: first in, still here FWIW: for what it's worth GGE: got to go G-G: grin GAL: go ahead GAL: get a life GBAB: grinning, ducking, and running **GF: girlfriend** GFN: gone for now GIWIST: gee, I wish I'd said that GMTA: giggling my butt off GMTA: great minds think alike GAL: giggling out loud GTRM: going to read mail GTSY: glad to see you HAK: hug and kiss HAGN: have a good night **IDK: help delete online predators** IMHO: in my humble opinion IMSMV: in my not so humble opinion IMO: in my opinion IOW: in other words IPN: I'm posting naked IRL: in real life IWALU: I will always love you ITSWM: if you see what I mean JIC: just in case JK: just kidding JMK: just my opinion JTLYK: just to let you know K: okay KIT: keep in touch KOC: kiss on cheek KOL: kiss on lips KOTC: kiss on the cheek KWIM: know what I mean? LDR: later LD: later, dude LDR: long distance relationship LLTA: lots and lots of thunderous applause **LMIRL: let's meet in real life** LMSO: laughing my socks off LOL: laughing out loud LQWRR: laughing so hard my belly's bouncing LTM: laugh to myself LTNS: long time, no see LTR: long-term relationship LUAB: love you like a brother **LUAS: love you like a sister** LUWAMH: love you with all my heart LY: love you M/F: male or female MOOS: member of same sex MOTOS: member of the opposite sex NSS: message NIFI: more to follow NUDE: miss you so much NAIR: not a darn thing NFWJ: naked in front of computer NP: no problem NRN: no reply necessary OIC: oh I see **OLL: online love** OM: old man OTF: off the floor OTOH: on the other hand OTTOMH: off the top of my head PIP: peer to peer PDA: public display of affection PEBCAK: problem exists between chair and keyboard PLZ: please PM: private message PMFJI: pardon me for jumping in but PNAIF: put on a happy face **POS: parent over shoulder** PU: that stinks QT: cutie RL: real life ROFL: rolling on the floor laughing RPG: role playing games RSN: real soon now SAL: spam for life SETE: smiling ear to ear SHCOON: shoot hot coffee out of nose SHID: slaps head in disgust SF: surfer friendly SMEIR: snot nosed egotistical rude teenager SO: significant other SOMY: sick of me yet? SOTF: short of time STR: search the web SWAK: sealed with a kiss SWL: screaming with laughter TTFN: ta ta for now TU: thank you TY: thanks in advance TYVM: thank you very much TTYL: talk to you later UR: you're welcome WB: welcome back WFM: works for me WIBNI: wouldn't it be nice if **WITF: want to go private?** WTG: way to go WU: what's up WUF: where are you from? YBS: you'll be sorry YL: young lady YM: young man

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Alternatives Studied For Westside Subway Extension
Public meetings were held late last year to discuss various station locations along the proposed routes of the Westside Subway Extension. Metro is currently preparing an environmental study of two project alternatives: a Metro Purple Line extension under Wilshire Boulevard through Santa Monica; and a Metro Purple Line extension plus a subway extension from Hollywood.

$9.5 Million Returned To Cities From Measure R
The first installments in Measure R local return sales tax monies totaling $9.5 million have gone out to 38 cities in LA County for transportation improvements. First and second payments for sales taxes received from July through September ranged from $2,635 for the City of Irwindale to $6.1 million for the City of LA.

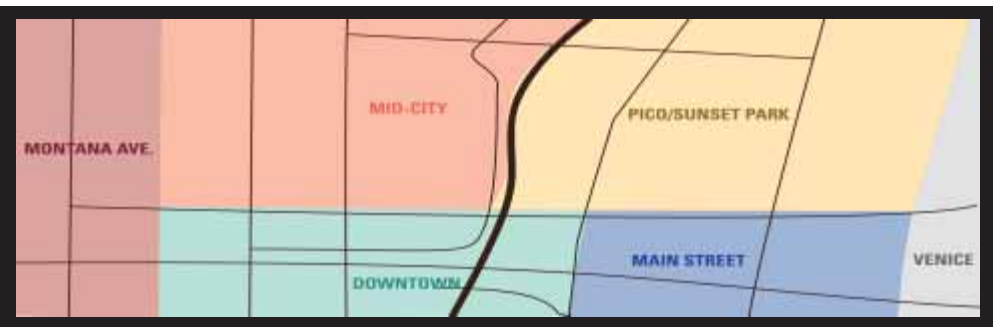


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Via Veneto 3009 Main St.	(310) 399-1843
The Victorian Baker Cafe 2640 Main St.	(310) 392-4956
Wildflour 2807 Main St.	(310) 452-7739
World Café 2640 Main St.	(310) 392-1661
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Baby Blues BBQ 444 Lincoln Blvd.	(310) 396-7675
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Wacky Wok 2805 Abbot Kinney Blvd.	(310) 822-7373

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C & O Cucina 3016 Washington Blvd.	(310) 301-7278
Cafe Del Rey 4451 Admiralty Way	(310) 823-6395
California Pizza Kitchen 3345 Fiji Way	(310) 301-1563
Casa Escobar 14160 Palawan Way	(310) 822-2199
Chart House 13950 Panay Way	(310) 822-4144
The Cheesecake Factor 4142 Via Marina	(310) 306-3344
Chin Chin 13455 Maxella Ave Ste 266	(310) 823-9999
Chipotle Mexican Grill 4718 Admiralty Way	(310) 821-0059
Harbor House Restaurant 4211 Admiralty Way	(310) 577-4555
Islands 404 Washington Blvd	(310) 822-3939
Jer-ne at The Ritz-Carlton 4375 Admiralty Way	(310) 823-1700
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Kifune Restaurant 405 Washington Blvd	(310) 822-1595
Le Marmiton 4724 Admiralty Way	(310) 773-3560
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Rainbow Acres Natural Foods 4756 Admiralty Way	(310) 823-5373
Sapori Ristorante 13723 Fiji Way	(310) 821-1740
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Wiretaps led to arrests

FROM MURDER PAGE 1

night hours of Sunday, May 11, 2008 severely beaten and laying in a pool of blood on the sidewalk in front of 1948 20th Street. He had a previous head injury which required him to have a metal plate installed in his skull, police said.

Brumfield was transported to Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center where he died four days later. Brumfield, 49, had been a recognizable street figure in the Pico Neighborhood, SMPD Chief Tim Jackman said, and residents in the area were "outraged" over his murder.

Detectives said Brumfield was beaten because he allegedly insulted one of the suspects, an alleged member of the Graveyard Crips.

Detectives were forced to use wiretaps because of the nature of the investigation. It was difficult to infiltrate the gang because of its small size — around 20 active members — and its level of intimidation within the community, Jackman said.

Detectives turned to the D.A.'s Office and the California Department of Justice for assistance in securing the phone taps, which were approved in late 2008. While listening for any information on the Brumfield murder, detectives heard suspects discussing drug deals.

The investigation expanded, leading to the arrests of six suspects for the distribution of cocaine.

kevinh@smdp.com

No food truck plan yet in place for Last Fridays event

FROM FRIDAYS PAGE 3

have already expressed concern about the trucks siphoning off business from restaurants. While there's been discussion about ways to limit gourmet food trucks' impact at the January event, she said no decisions have been made. One idea, she said, was to ask trucks to park only at the north and south ends of the commercial district.

"We're very protective of our restaurants not being hurt by [food trucks]," she said.

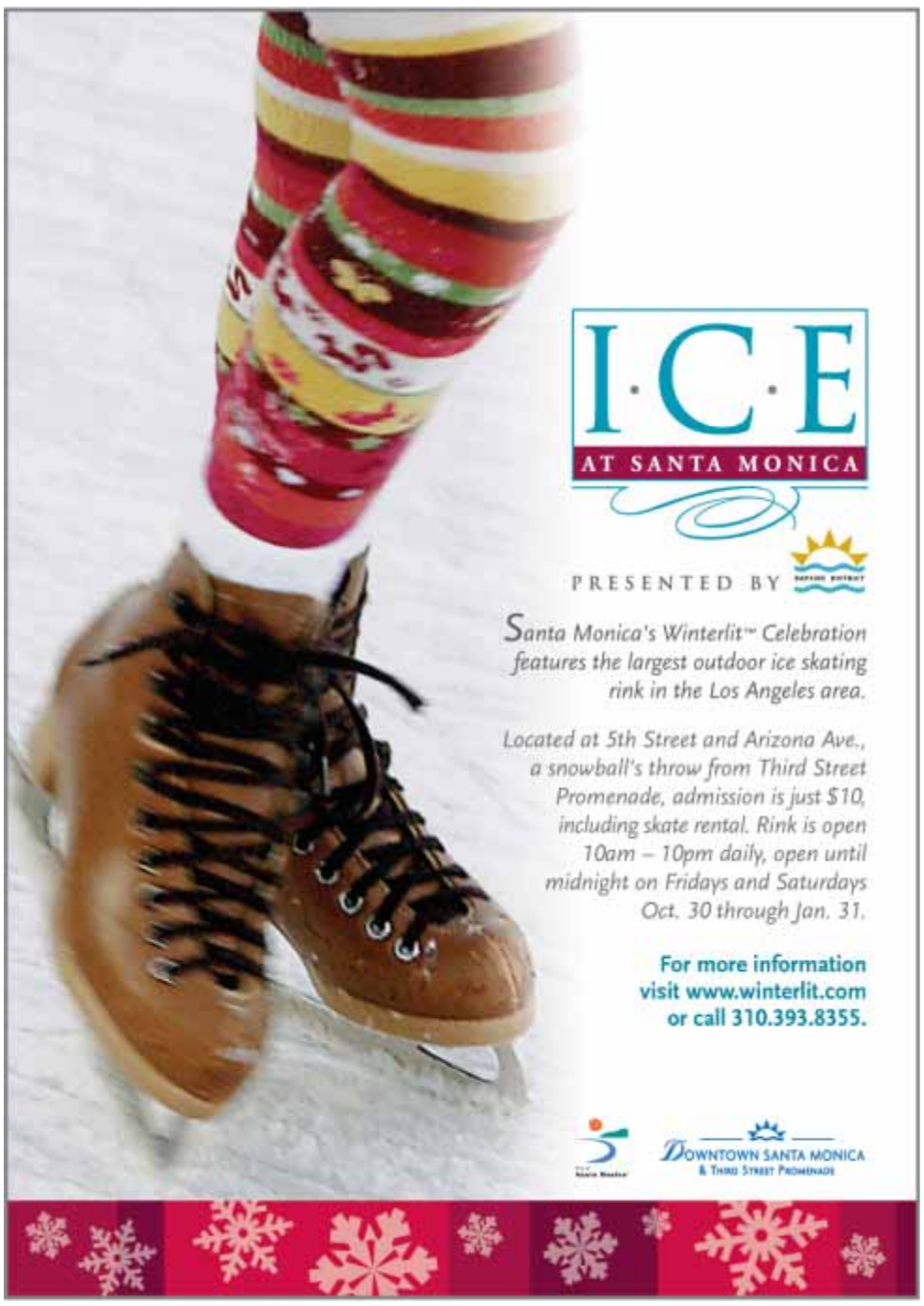
Geller said he's reached out to the Main Street merchant association through the group's Web site but hasn't yet discussed the issue with the association's members.

WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING TO SEE WHAT COULD BRING MORE BUSINESS TO MAIN STREET, ESPECIALLY IN THIS ECONOMY.

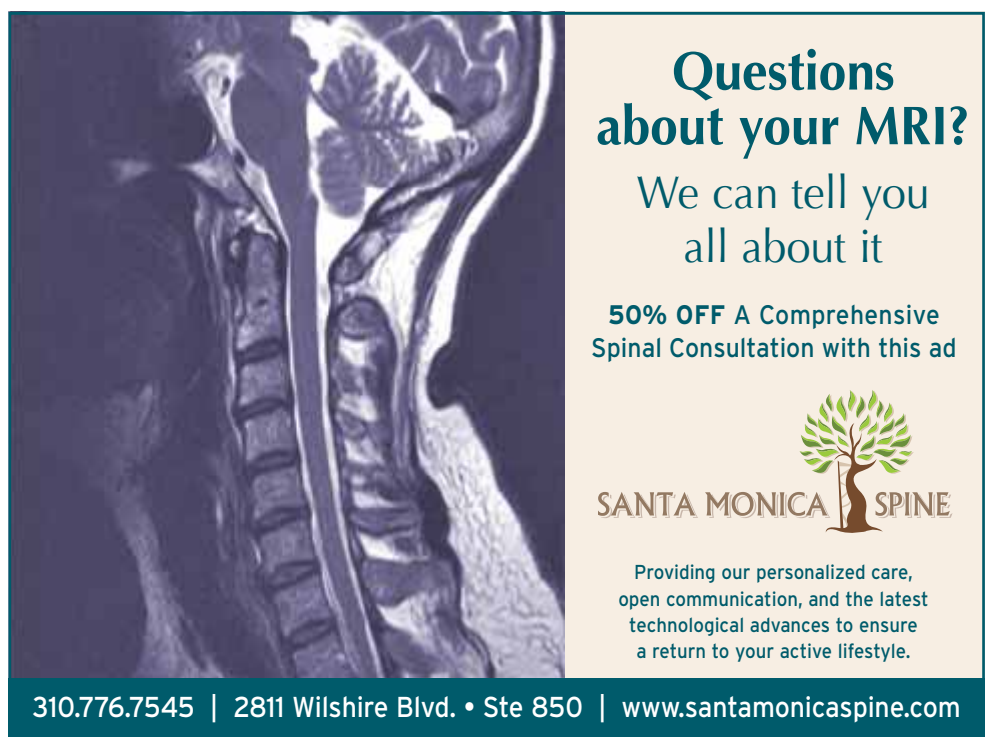
Laura Owen
Vice chair of the Main Street Business Improvement Association

nickt@smdp.com











Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

LOCAL ICON: **Customers stand outside of Patrick's Roadhouse on Pacific Coast Highway.**

Options running out for Roadhouse

FROM **ROADHOUSE** PAGE 1

Roadhouse's fate in a Santa Monica courtroom Wednesday, but lawyers from both sides said they agreed to postpone the trial and are in negotiations to settle the disagreement.

Over the years the restaurant has become a neighborhood favorite as well as a local landmark for its unique decor, lime green facade and celebrity clientele.

Duane Hall, who is representing the Benchays, said his clients agreed to let Fischler remain in business for another year if he would increase monthly rent payments from $5,400 to nearly $9,000.

It's an increase that Fischler said the business can't sustain.

"There may be a number that is doable, but what they're asking for is just not doable, not in this economy," he said.

Though the proposed increase is large, Hall said the Benchays are actually entitled to even higher rent on the property, and have been for years. Under the existing lease, which stipulates yearly rent increases and says the tenant is responsible for tax and insurance costs, Hall said Fischler should be paying about $13,000 per month. The Benchays have simply been letting the Roadhouse slide.

"The landlord's been more than generous," Hall said.

Hall said if the Roadhouse can't meet the financial burden his client will likely require the restaurant to close by the end of March.

"They have to leave, it's just a matter of when," he said.

Fischler on Wednesday acknowledged he's been getting a break from the rent required under the lease agreement, but said the lease was unreasonable and in any case was never enforced.

"That lease was signed a long, long time ago and those things were never exercised. At some point it just doesn't make sense."

> **"THE LANDLORD'S BEEN MORE THAN GENEROUS."**
>
> **Duane Hall**
> Attorney for Lee and Christine Benchay

Business, he said, has been steady, but there's only so much revenue an independent restaurant that only serves breakfast and lunch can generate.

"We're not the Red Lobster," he said.

While negotiations have centered around financial considerations, Hall this week confirmed that "the motive for the eviction has nothing to do with the money." He said Lee Benchay only took action against the Roadhouse after Fischler's divorce proceedings resulted in a subpoena for extensive business records.

"When he got hit with the subpoena to provide his records in connection with Fischler's divorce he said 'I can't do this, I can't deal with this,'" Hall said.

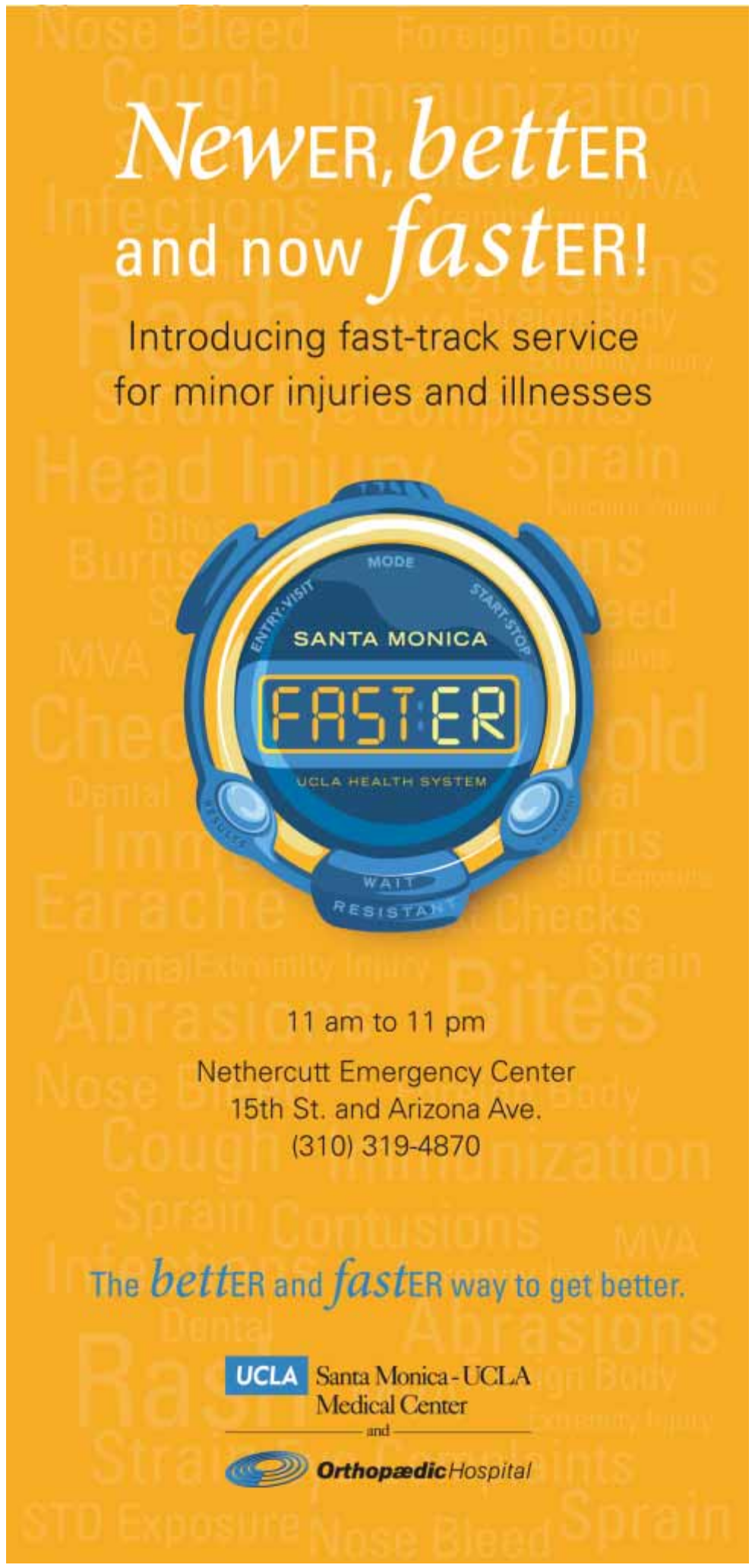
The last remaining hope to preserve the business in its current location could be for Fischler to sign the business over to the Benchays.

Fischler said his landlord proposed taking over the Patrick's Roadhouse brand during negotiations, and said he'd consider the offer if a way to guarantee the restaurant would have a long-term future and wouldn't be significantly altered or turned into a franchise could be devised.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MID-CITY

Big gift for the Duke's institute

Doctors at St. John's Health Center received a $1 million grant from a pharmaceutical company to improve the use of blood tests to spot cancer at early stages, the hospital announced.

The John Wayne Cancer Institute at Saint John's received the grant from Abraxis Bioscience Inc. Dr. Dave S.B. Hoon heads the research team, according to the hospital.

Initial work will be on diseased tissue from breast and prostate cancer tissues, Hoon said.

"We will use novel approaches, including mass spectrometry, to identify unique signature biomarker proteins in the tumor, then look for the same protein biomarker in the blood," he said.

Blood biomarkers are known to be important early clues to the presence of cancer in its beginning stages. Hoon said the goal at Saint John's is to develop efficient blood tests for monitoring cancer, similar to blood glucose tests used to monitor diabetes, or the new blood protein test being used to detect early signs of heart disease.

Abraxis BioScience makes a breast cancer-fighting drug called Abraxene. It is headquartered in Westwood and has major research facilities in Marina del Rey and New Jersey.

DAILY PRESS

Consumer chief: Don't let kids play with cheap jewelry

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES The country's top product safety regulator is warning parents and caretakers to take cheap metal jewelry away from children out of concern they may be exposed to toxic heavy metals like lead and cadmium.

Inez Tenenbaum, the chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission writes in a blog, to be posted Wednesday evening, "Do not allow young children to be given or to play with cheap metal jewelry, especially when they are unsupervised."

In making the recommendation, she cites an investigation by The Associated Press, which reported high cadmium levels in items including bracelet charms from Walmart and Claire's.

Lead and cadmium can hinder brain development in young children, according to research.

Institute would focus on local issues

FROM SMC PAGE 1

cy in terms of analysis.

"This institute would focus on the mission of a community college, which is to educate the public," Kuehl added. "The first leg of this three-legged stool is what I call critical thinking for voters."

The institute would be a resource for voters as well as locally-elected officials, heightening civic engagement, she said. There will also be opportunities for students at SMC to expand their service learning curriculum and become more engaged through internships and other opportunities in the field.

Providing guidance to newly-elected officials who may not have as much training as others will also be a focus, helping City Council members and others develop solutions to the many pressing problems facing Westsiders.

At a time when many community colleges are strapped for cash and cutting back on class offering because of the budget crisis in Sacramento, SMC is taking the aggressive step of creating the institute, and doing so without paying much out of pocket.

The non-profit Santa Monica Foundation is covering 50 percent of the start-up costs, with the remainder being matched by the college. Additional fundraising efforts are ongoing.

The contract with Kuehl is for $5,000 per month plus expenses and covers Jan. 1, 2010 to June 30, 2010, according to an SMC staff report.

"I'm very excited and frankly, this is an amazing bang for the buck," Kuehl said. "The cost is really minimal to establish a new institute."

Trustee Nancy Greenstein led the charge, having heard people talk about creating an institute for years but never putting any action behind it. Discussions began in earnest roughly a year ago to create SMC's first public policy institute.

"We are really looking at it as a local program that will help Santa Monica College maintain its reputation for being on the cutting edge," Greenstein said.

With funding in short supply, Greenstein said the goal was always to protect core programs and day-to-day operations, which is why the foundation was brought in to help cover costs. She feels creating the institute is needed during a time when so many people are talking about the negative.

"Everything is sort of dismal on the education front, and sometimes just galvanizing people around an idea or concept is encouraging," Greenstein said. "Sometimes when things are negative, that is when you have to take a chance."

For Kuehl, this is a chance to "restore some rationality in looking at how we make policy."

"It seems cities are doing a better job than Sacramento these days, being rational about policy and more deliberate," Kuehl said. "That's where we want to focus our efforts."

The institute is still in the infant stages. More details are expected to be released in the coming months.

kevinh@smdp.com

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Santa Monica Daily Press
Call us at (310) 458-7737

Metro

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority will hold public hearings in February 2010 to receive community input on proposed modifications to Metro's bus services. Approved changes will become effective June 27, 2010 or later. Details of the public hearing dates, times and locations are listed in this notice.

The upcoming public hearings are being held in conformance with federal public hearing requirements outlined in Section 5307 (d) 1 of Title 49 U.S.C., and public hearing guidelines adopted by Metro's Board of Directors in 1993, as amended.

Listed below are the service proposals to be considered at the public hearings, and the service sectors that will be conducting them. In general, the proposed modifications will improve the efficiency of the public transportation system through a better use of limited resources. The public can attend any of these hearings and comment on proposals of interest to them.

METRO SAN GABRIEL VALLEY SERVICE SECTOR

LINE	LINE NAME	PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGE
180-181	Hollywood-Glendale-Pasadena via Colorado Blvd & Los Feliz Blvd	Consider modifying route between the communities of Glendale and Los Feliz to serve Silver Lake area.
287	El Monte-Montebello Mall-East Los Angeles College-Indiana Station	Restructure route to serve 1st St from Atlantic Blvd/Cesar Chavez Ave to 1st St/Indiana St. due to proposed discontinuation of Line 31 service east of Indiana St.

METRO WESTSIDE-CENTRAL SERVICE SECTOR

LINE	LINE NAME	PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGE
30-31	Pico/Rimpau – Monterey Park via Pico Blvd & East 1st St	Cancel route 31. Line 287 will assume the portion of service currently operated by Route 31 from Collegian Ave/Cesar E Chavez Ave to 1st/Indiana Sts
33-333	Downtown LA – Santa Monica via Venice Blvd	Replace service on Limited-stop Line 333 with new Rapid Line 733
217	Vermont/Sunset Station – Fairfax/Washington – via Fairfax Ave & Hollywood Blvd	Consider implementation of short line trips at Hollywood/Vine Station.
733	Downtown LA – Santa Monica via Venice Blvd Rapid	Implement Metro Rapid service on Venice Blvd from Patsaouras Transit Plaza to Santa Monica.

METRO SAN FERNANDO VALLEY SERVICE SECTOR

LINE	LINE NAME	PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGE
96	Downtown LA-Sherman Oaks via Riverside Dr, LA Zoo	Make permanent minor reroute from Riverside Dr to Glendale Blvd between Fletcher Dr and Glendale Blvd in Silver Lake.
166-364	Chatsworth Station-Sun Valley via Nordhoff St, Osborne St Local/Limited	Minor reroute from Nordhoff St via Reseda Blvd to proposed transit center at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), near Plummer St and Darby Ave.
167	Chatsworth Station-Studio City via Plummer St, Coldwater Canyon Blvd	Minor reroute from Plummer St to proposed transit center at CSUN, near Darby Ave.
168	Chatsworth Station-Pacoima via Lassen St, Paxton St	Minor reroute from Lassen St via Reseda Blvd to proposed transit center at CSUN, near Plummer St and Darby Ave.
240	Northridge-Universal City Station via Reseda Blvd, Ventura Blvd (Branch route of Line 150)	Minor reroute from Reseda Blvd to proposed transit center at CSUN, near Plummer St and Darby Ave.
741	Northridge-Tarzana via Reseda Blvd Rapid	Extend route to Universal City Station via Ventura Blvd; Minor reroute from Reseda Blvd to proposed transit center at CSUN, near Plummer St and Darby Ave. Route to terminate at CSUN or continue to existing terminal at Reseda Bl and Devonshire Bl.
750	Warner Center-Universal City Station via Ventura Blvd Metro Rapid	Reduce weekday peak service and reallocate resources to Line 741.
902	Pacoima-North Hollywood Station via Van Nuys Blvd, Burbank Blvd Local/Limited	Make permanent new demonstration line; Implement new midday service.

METRO PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY SECTOR
February 3, 2010, 6:30 PM
Marvin Braude Constituent Service Ctr
6262 Van Nuys Blvd
Van Nuys

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY SECTOR
February 8, 2010, 6:00 PM
San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
3449 Santa Anita Ave
El Monte

WESTSIDE-CENTRAL SECTOR
February 10, 2010, 5:00 PM
La Cienega Tennis Center
325 South La Cienega Blvd
Beverly Hills

Additional details about these proposals will be available for public review after January 20, 2010. To obtain this information contact the address listed below, or visit a Metro Customer Relations Center. Information will also be available at: metro.net.

These proposals may be approved in whole, or in part, at a date following the public hearings. Approved changes may also include other alternatives derived from public comment. Interested members of the public are encouraged to attend the upcoming hearings and provide testimony on the service proposals under consideration. All public comment received will be forwarded to the responsible Sector Governance Council for consideration prior to taking action on these proposals. Persons unable to attend the hearings may submit written testimony postmarked through midnight, February 12, 2010, the close of the public record.

Comments sent via e-mail should be addressed to:

customerrelations@metro.net
Attn: June 2010 Service Changes

Written testimony sent via U.S. Mail should be addressed to:

Metro Customer Relations
One Gateway Plaza, 99PL4
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2932
Attn: June 2010 Service Changes

Comments sent via FAX should be addressed as indicated and sent to:

FAX Number 213-922-6988

Although the governance council's for Metro's Gateway Cities Sector and South Bay Sector are not making major service changes next June that require public hearings, the public may attend their regular monthly meetings in February and comment on service changes under consideration by the other sectors. Comments received at these meetings will be forwarded to the appropriate service sector proposing the change. Shown below is the regular meeting schedule in February 2010 for the Gateway Cities and South Bay governance councils, respectively:

Metro Gateway Cities Sector
February 11, 2:00 pm
The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Blvd
Downey

Metro South Bay Sector
February 12, 9:30 am
Carson Community Center
801 Carson St
Carson

Upon request, foreign language translation, sign language interpretation, materials in alternative formats and other accommodations are available to the public for MTA sponsored meetings and events. All requests for reasonable accommodations must be made at least three working days (72 hours) in advance of the scheduled meeting date.

Please telephone (213) 922-4600 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Americans move quickly to assist Haiti after earthquake

MATT SEDENSKY
Associated Press Writer

MIAMI Hans Mardy has dialed the numbers hundreds of times, praying someone — his father, his sister, one of four brothers — will pick up the phone.

He waits, passport in pocket, ready to board the next flight to earthquake-ravaged Haiti. He writes frantic text messages. "Are you alive? What happened? Give me a sign of life."

No one answers.

Across the U.S., which has about 800,000 residents of Haitian descent, Haitian-Americans desperately tried to get word Wednesday from relatives and friends in the devastated island nation. Most, like Mardy, heard nothing back.

Some poured their energy into relief efforts, joining Americans with no connection to Haiti who collected bottled water, canned goods, medical supplies and money. Others bowed their heads in prayer or sat transfixed by their televisions.

In Evanston, Ill., Bernard Geto couldn't hold back tears as he watched CNN at Sweet Nick's Caribbean restaurant, jumping each time his cell phone rang. In South Bend, Ind., Slandah Dieujuste learned an aunt lost her house but escaped. She could not get information about anyone else.

And as community organizers in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood tried to develop response plans, 29-year-old Katia Saint Fleur scoured Facebook, tears welling in her eyes.

"Please if you can, contact us any way, do so," she wrote on a cousin's page. "We are going crazy trying to reach you guys."

The State Department has established a toll-free number (888-407-4747) for people seeking information about family members in Haiti. The government advises that some callers may receive a recording because of the heavy volume of inquiries.

At the Haitian Consulate in Manhattan, diplomats struggling to locate their own families sobbed as they tried to help countless callers.

"It is indescribable," said counsel general Felix Augustine.

People did what they could to mobilize aid to Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. The U.S. dispatched ships, helicopters, planes and a 2,000-member Marine unit. Cabdrivers transported relief items to collection points, search-and-rescue teams headed to the island to comb through the rubble, and companies prepared to send heavy equipment.

In New York, which has a large Haitian-American population, Mayor Michael Bloomberg pledged assistance and suggested residents donate money to established organizations rather than try to send supplies like food and water to a place that does not have the infrastructure to distribute them.

"We saw the world come to our aid back on 9/11," he said, and now New York wants to "make sure that the world comes to the aid of the Haitian people."

For many still waiting for word, the uncertainty made it difficult to focus on anything else.

"You have no life anymore," said Anel Calixte, a cab driver sitting with his friend Geto at Sweet Nick's. "You don't know what to feel anymore because your whole family there, your whole family."

Some tried to hold out hope, blaming the lack of contact from relatives on Haiti's poor communication network, but the uncertainty was crushing. Edeline Clermont of Miami got word that her 12-year-old nephew was dead. The boy's parents, brother and sister are unaccounted for. And all told, she has more than 20 relatives on the island she has been desperately trying to reach.

"I didn't sleep at all. I just lay there, waiting for answers," she said with tears in her eyes. "I'm afraid that everybody is gone."

Senator wants tough penalties for airport offenders

GEOFF MULVIHILL & SAMANTHA HENRY
Associated Press Writers

NEWARK, N.J. A Georgia man dashes through a checkpoint at the Atlanta airport and gets 10 days in jail. A hairdresser in a hurry bypasses security in Philadelphia and gets a $500 fine. A drunken man stumbles onto a Chicago airfield and gets 18 months' supervision. All caused major air travel delays costing millions of dollars — and all got what critics call a slap on the wrist.

The recent shutdown of the Newark, N.J., airport after a similar breach is drawing calls for harsher penalties and highlights concerns about punishments not much worse than what someone would get for tossing a hamburger wrapper out the car window on the New Jersey Turnpike.

At least one senator wants to make such trespasses a federal offense. Other ideas include six-figure fines and flying bans, though security experts and traveler advocates doubt whether harsher punishments will deter anybody from breaking the rules. They suggest a better way to prevent breaches is by improving training of airport security staffs — and perhaps using new technology to help them.

"In most cases, it's a stupid mistake," said Douglas Laird, who runs an airport security consulting business in Reno, Nev. "Most people don't say: 'I'm going to breach.'"

The bill proposed by Sen. Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey will call for the tougher penalties, but he has not offered specifics other than calling for allowing the federal government to charge people who create scares — even those who are more bonehead than bomber. Such offenses are now regulated by local law and often fall far down the scale of criminal offenses.

The man charged in the Jan. 3 New Jersey case, 28-year-old Rutgers University graduate student Haisong Jiang, faces only a $500 fine — the same as a first offense for littering in New Jersey — if he's convicted in municipal court. Friends have said he walked through a terminal exit to say goodbye to his girlfriend before she flew to Los Angeles.

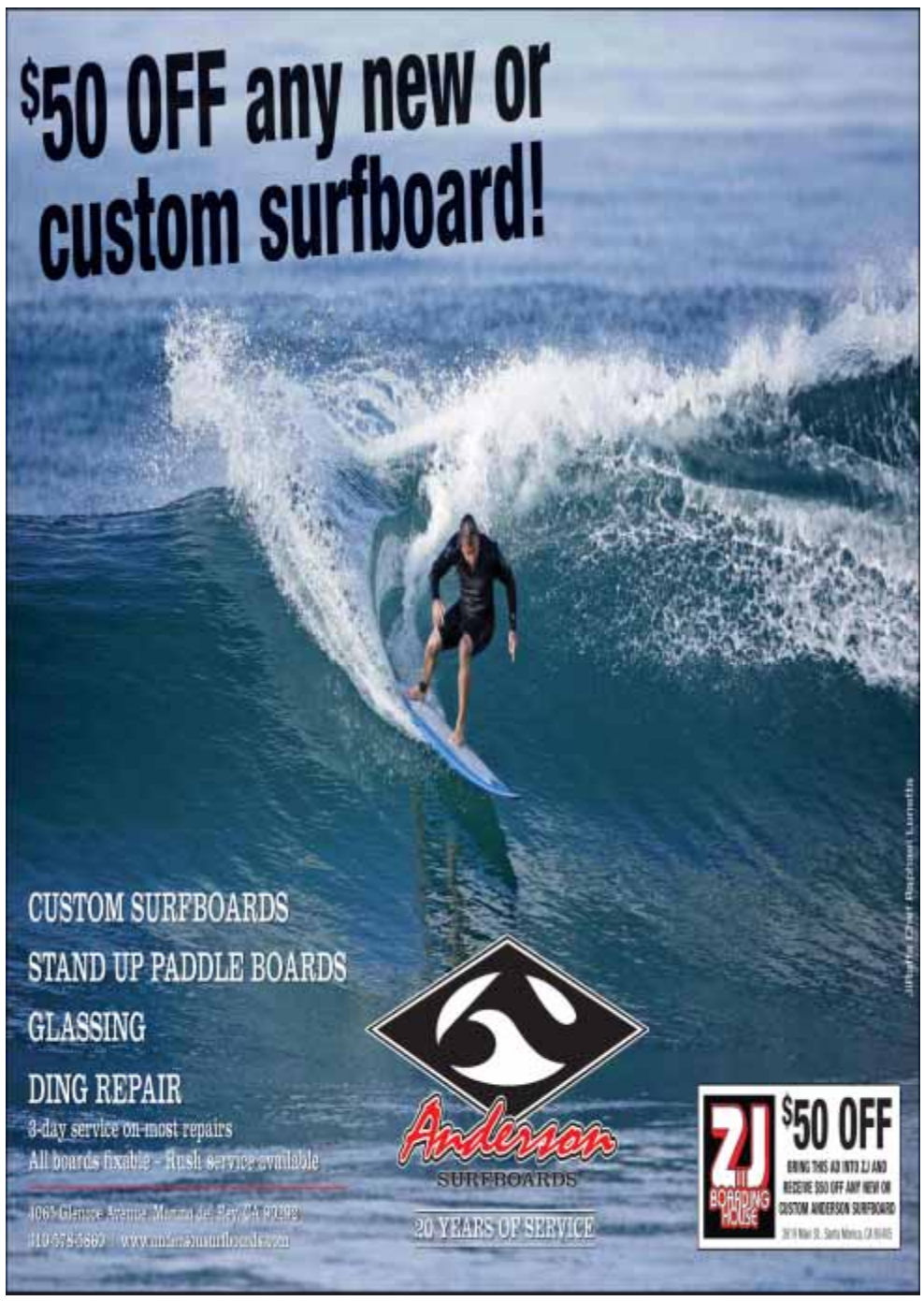
A video shows a guard leaving his post right before Jiang slips under the ropes. The guard, an employee of the federal Transportation Security Administration, has been suspended.

The violation delayed or canceled about 200 flights around the world, affected an estimated 16,000 travelers and may have cost airlines millions as a terminal was emptied and passengers were rescreened.

The TSA now says it's evaluating its security practices.

There have been several other costly situations over the past decade in which the perpetrators have gotten off light.





NBA

Clippers' Griffin to miss season

GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES Blake Griffin's first season with the Los Angeles Clippers is over before it even began.

Griffin will have surgery on his broken left kneecap, keeping the No. 1 draft pick out for at least more four months, the eternally star-crossed Clippers announced in a statement Wednesday.

Griffin hasn't played a regular-season game yet for the Clippers after injuring his kneecap in their final preseason game Oct. 23, wincing in pain as he landed after a dunk. After resting the stress fracture for several weeks, the former Oklahoma star recently increased his workload in rehabilitation by running on an anti-gravity treadmill.

The power forward developed pain in his knee, and an examination Tuesday revealed his recovery wasn't progressing properly. The Clippers said more details would be announced soon.

After a loss in Memphis on Tuesday, the Clippers will play at New Orleans on Wednesday night before returning to Los Angeles for a road game against the Lakers on Friday.

The top pick hasn't been such an honor in recent NBA drafts. Griffin is the second No. 1 selection in the past three years to miss his entire first season with an injury.

Greg Oden, the Ohio State center chosen by the Portland Trail Blazers in 2007, had microfracture surgery on his right knee three months after the draft. Last month, Oden also broke his left kneecap and was lost for the rest of this season.

Griffin was the consensus college player of the year with 22.7 points and an NCAA-best 14.4 rebounds per game last season for the Sooners, and the Clippers eagerly chose him in last June's draft.

Griffin averaged 13.7 points and 8.1 rebounds during the preseason, and coach Mike Dunleavy and his new teammates all expected him to be a major part of their comeback season. Instead, Griffin has never been fully healthy in Los Angeles, even straining his right shoulder during summer league play in Las Vegas.

Griffin's woes sadly can't be surprising to fans of a team with just two winning seasons in the last 30 years and just one playoff series victory since moving to town in 1984.

The Clippers also have a long history of disappointing draft picks, including a pair of No. 1 overall choices that didn't dazzle.

Danny Manning played just 26 games in his rookie season in 1988-89 after tearing his knee ligament and undergoing surgery, though he eventually became an All-Star before fleeing town. Michael Olowokandi, the top pick in 1998, played just 45 games in his rookie season, and he wasn't much help even when healthy during five underachieving seasons.

NFL

Junior Seau retires again

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

bJunior Seau is retiring again.

The 12-time Pro Bowl linebacker, who returned to the New England Patriots this season, said in remarks to be broadcast on Showtime on Wednesday night that he has played his last game.

Seau first retired in August 2006 after 13 seasons with San Diego and three with Miami. But he signed with the Patriots four days later and played 27 games for them over two seasons. He retired again after the 2007 season, then came out of retirement for the final four games in 2008 before retiring after that season.

Seau played seven regular-season games this season, all as a backup, and made 15 tackles. In last Sunday's 33-14 playoff loss to Baltimore, he had a season-high five tackles.

"That's going to be my last game," he said on Showtime's Inside the NFL.

SPORTS SCIENCE

Study casts doubt on popular sports injury therapy program

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO New research casts doubt on increasingly popular blood-based injections reportedly used by Tiger Woods and other athletes to speed recovery after orthopedic surgery.

In a small study at a hospital in The Netherlands, the treatment worked no better than salt water injections in patients with overuse Achilles tendon injuries.

The Achilles is the body's largest tendon, connecting calf muscles in the lower leg to the heel bone and it's prone to overuse injury from sports including running.

The treatment studied involves injections of platelet-rich plasma, or PRP, extracted from patients' own blood. Platelets help blood clot and they release growth-promoting substances that help repair damaged tissue.

Tiger Woods is reported to have had these injections after June 2008 knee surgery.

In the study, 27 adult patients got PRP injections and 27 got injections of salt water. A week after the injections, both groups gradually began three months of exercise therapy including stretching.

Six months after treatment, both groups reported the same amount of improvement in pain and activity levels.

The results appear in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

Patients were treated at The Hague Medical Center. The study authors called the results disappointing but also called for more research and said it's possible the platelet treatment works for other types of injuries.

Previous, less rigorous studies had more promising results.



SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 59°

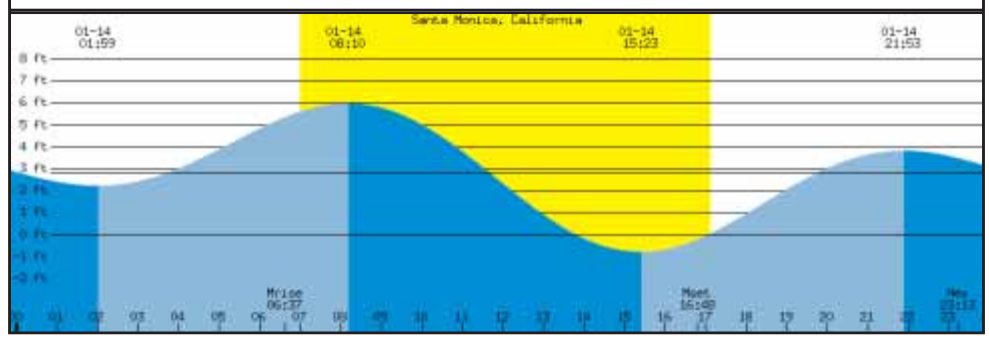
Swell Forecast

Swell should back down, but it looks like DOH surf should persist around west facing breaks. Pluses are possible.

Long Range Synopsis

Looks smaller, perhaps head high+ around west facing breaks.

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 30 days up to the ending date of **January 6, 2010**

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

QUICK STATS (in last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 13
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 38 / 16
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 5 / 23

The Beach Report Card is made possible by: The Diller – von Furstenberg Family Foundation; simplehuman; SIMA

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

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence.	A+	C
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain.	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain.	A+	A
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua).	A	B
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain.	A+	F
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain.	A+	F
Santa Monica Municipal Pier.	F	D
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain.	B	C
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms).	A+	B
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain.	A+	C
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain.	A+	A
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain.	A	C
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain.	A+	C
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south.	A+	B
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St..	A+	B
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower.	A	B
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth.	A	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain.	A	C
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach.	A+	C
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty).	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain.	A+	F
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant.	B	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. 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 Card® 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.

MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(323) 466-FILM

Broken Embraces (Los abrazos rotos) (R) 2hrs 08min
7:30

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (PG) 1hr 28min
12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:20

Sherlock Holmes (PG-13) 2hrs 14min
12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30

Up in the Air (R) 1hr 49min
1:55, 4:35, 7:10, 9:45

Daybreakers (R) 1hr 38min
12:25, 2:45, 5:05, 7:30, 9:50

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

Avatar 3D (PG-13) 2hr 40 min
12:00, 2:15, 3:30, 6:00, 7:00, 9:45

Princess and the Frog (G) 1hr 35min
1:50, 4:20, 7:05, 9:40

Up in the Air (R) 1hr 49min
12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:45, 10:15

It's Complicated (R) 1hr 54min
1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:05

Sherlock Holmes (PG-13) 2hrs 14min
1:30, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

An Education (PG13) 1hr 55min
1:55, 4:40, 7:30, 10:00

Young Victoria (PG) 1hr 44min
1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:40

Loss of a Teardrop Diamond (PG-13) 1hr 42min
4:50, 9:55

Coco Before Chanel (PG-13) 1hr 50min
4:20

Irene in Time (PG-13) 1hr 35min
1:45, 7:10

Precious (R) 1hr 49min
2:10, 7:20

Twilight Saga: New Moon (PG-13) 2hrs 10min
9:30

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

Nine (PG-13) 1hr 50min
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:20

The Blind Side (PG-13) 2hrs 6min
12:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40

Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus (PG-13) 2hrs 02min
1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10

Youth in Revolt (R) 1hr 30min
11:30am, 12:30, 2:00, 3:00, 4:20, 5:20, 6:30, 7:40, 9:00, 10:00

For more information, e-mail news@smdp.com

Chat over dinner, Gemini

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ As difficult as one day might be is as good as the next can be. See the error of your ways, or see where you can change a situation as it evolves through to resolution. Be willing to give that extra push of self-discipline mixed with determination. Tonight: A must appearance.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Do needed research; be willing to get past another person's anger. How you handle a matter and the decisions you make define the potential of a change. Be willing to call a spade a spade. Tonight: Meet a friend at a new restaurant.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ An agreement or decision makes relating to a key individual easier later. In a sense, you have pushed too far and done too much. Now this person needs to demonstrate his or her true colors through actions, not words. Tonight: Chat over dinner.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Though you might have felt you had reason to be angry, let go and claim responsibility for your side in this difficult situation. Your vision could be informative and important. Listen to another perspective, and get past an issue. Tonight: Defer to others.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ You might want to understand more of what is happening behind the scenes. Be a listener, but ask questions that help you resolve a mental conflict. As a result, you can make a new resolution or change your direction. Tonight: Put your feet up.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Once more, your creativity means something. Resolve an issue involving a child or new friend. Someone you meet today could be very important in the long run. This person has a way of re-energizing you. Tonight: Go into weekend mode.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ Stop and be willing to understand more of what is going on with you. Sometimes you do nothing or project on someone else when you need to resolve the issue once and for all. Tonight: Laughter helps you relax.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Talk is cheap and takes you in a different direction. Resolution comes through communication. You could be surprised by how someone looks at a situation. Innovate and change directions. Tonight: Hang out. If need be, clear the air with a friend.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Nearly anything you do has positive results. Your ability to edge through a personal situation and come out on top could mark your finances. You have the financial wisdom and knowledge to make a situation work. Just do it! Tonight: Your treat.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ You manage to do something very differently and come up with as-yet-unseen results. A new approach and beginning become distinct possibilities if you are willing to change gears. Tonight: As you like it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Your sense of self and direction take you to a new level. Realize what is happening behind the scenes with you and perhaps a close friend. If you want to change directions, please do. Tonight: Take some much-needed personal time.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ A friendship influences your decisions and direction. Take time to renew this bond; after all, it means a lot to you. Discussions open you up to possibilities as yet unthought-of. Think before you leap. Tonight: Think and act like it is the weekend.

Happy birthday

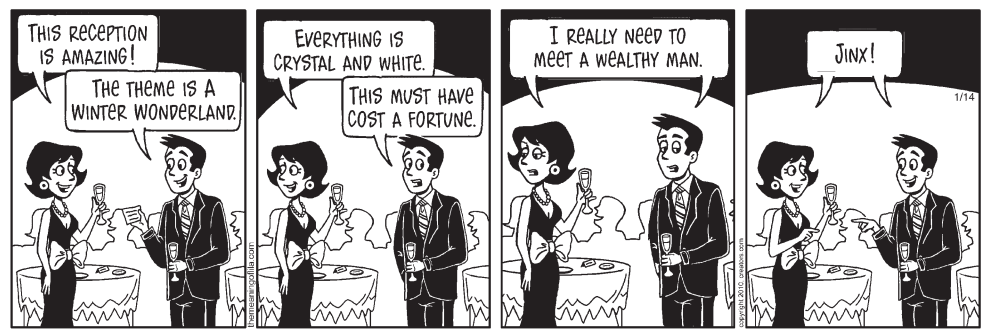
This year, you get a chance to renew, to begin again in some area of your life. You become increasingly creative and more dynamic. Do be careful about being too me-oriented. Be honest with yourself about what you would like to change. Sudden events could point to areas that don't work. If you ease up and relax more, you will let go of what isn't working. Every so often, we need to revise our goals, as they become outdated as we transform. If you are single, you'll discover the power of a strong relationship. Just remember that a relationship is a two-way street. If you are attached, give your mate power by giving more weight to his or her ideas. He or she, too, can have unusual solutions. CAPRICORN reads you cold.

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

Girls and Sports
By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



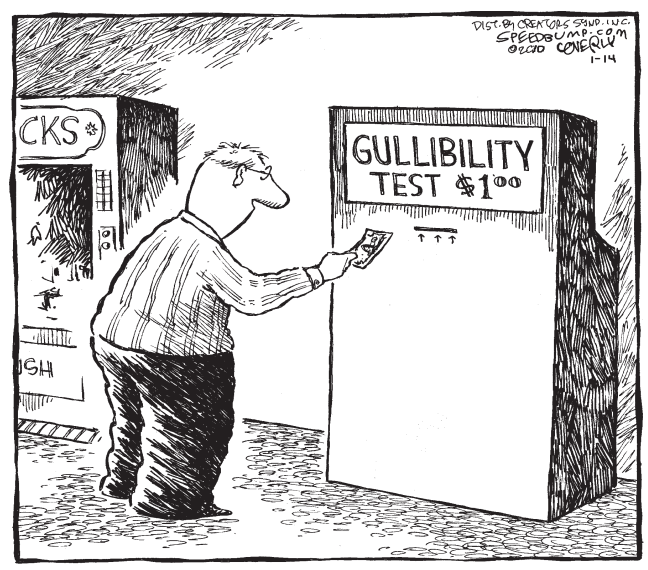
Garfield
By Jim Davis



Strange Brew
By John Deering



Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



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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 ★ (easiest) to ★★★★★ (hardest).

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

King Features Syndicate

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

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

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Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Composer Erik
6 Kidney-related
11 Torment
12 Send away
13 Choreographer Cunningham
14 Bobbing goal
15 Cotton cloth
17 Cigar bit
19 Do something
20 Freight weight
23 Make happy
25 U2 singer
26 Inspiring leader
28 Foil's kin
29 Makes law
30 — Moines
31 According to
32 Work the garden
33 Gem units
35 Hayride need
38 "Oh boy!"
41 Be real
42 Bert's pal
43 Cars' scars
44 Church tenet

DOWN

1 Rick's pianist
2 Ripen
3 Tall lamps
4 Cuzco native
5 Mascara holder
6 Respond to stimuli
7 Trade show
8 Wee taste
9 Maximum amount
10 Director Ang
16 1990s brew
17 Director Michael
18 Incline
20 Cabaret offering
21 — a customer
22 Like Thor
24 Stunning serve
25 Lamb lament
27 Furious
31 Suit part
33 Price
34 Bullfight beast
35 Unite
36 Log chopper
37 Collins base
39 None too smart
40 Supporter's vote

A	B	I	D	E	■	■	W	E	E	P
D	E	N	I	S	■	S	H	A	V	E
D	E	T	R	E	■	H	I	T	I	T
S	H	O	E	■	R	O	T	A	T	E
T	I	N	■	P	O	P	■	T	A	R
O	V	E	R	R	I	P	E	■	■	■
■	E	R	I	E	■	E	A	S	E	■
■	■	■	O	V	E	R	R	I	D	E
I	S	M	■	I	N	S	■	N	I	X
D	I	O	D	E	S	■	M	A	T	T
A	R	R	O	W	■	R	A	T	I	O
H	E	A	R	S	■	E	R	R	O	L
O	N	L	Y	■	■	D	E	A	N	S

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, 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			
26						27				
28				■	29					
30			■	31			■	32		
■	■	■	33				34		■	■
35	36	37			■	38			39	40
41					■	42				
43					■	44				

1-14

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Fantasy 5: 4 6 17 35 36

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 0 2 5 EVENING: 3 6 7

DAILY DERBY: 1st: 02 Lucky Star 2nd: 12 Lucky Charms 3rd: 05 California Classic RACE TIME: 1.42.01

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Salvadorean citizen Ernesto Gamboa, who worked for 13 years in the Seattle area as a snitch for federal drug agents and contributed to at least 92 convictions for drug- and weapons-smuggling, was "fired" by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in May after asking the agency for regular employment. Gamboa originally entered the U.S. as a visitor but overstayed and now aspires merely to an "S visa" granted aliens who assist law enforcement. Not only did ICE deny that request but, according to a November Seattle Times report, the agency informed Gamboa that he should prepare to be deported.

■ "It is the Christian commandment to love your enemies and to do good to them. I did that," explained Dan Ross, 61, a retiree in Lehigh Acres, Fla., who in November wired a dozen yellow roses to Maj. Nidal Hasan, the accused Fort Hood spree killer. "Whereas the ministers out there in Fort Hood are praying for (Hasan) ... I went one step further," Ross told the Naples Daily News. The card Ross ordered with the flowers read, "In God's eye, and those who submit, you are a hero!" The Texas florist who received the order notified the FBI.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1913 First Balkan War: The Greek army defeats the Turks at Bizani.

1938 Norway claims Queen Maud Land in Antarctica.

1943 World War II: Operation Ke, the successful Japanese operation to evacuate their forces from Guadalcanal during the Guadalcanal campaign, begins.

1943 World War II: Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill begin the Casablanca Conference to discuss strategy and study the next phase of the war.

1943 World War II: Franklin D. Roosevelt becomes the first President of the United States to travel via airplane while in office when he travels from Miami, Florida to Morocco to meet with Winston Churchill.

WORD UP!

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 20091869674 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as AUDITECHS, 7003 ALCOVE AVE, NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91605. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : JENNIFER ARAGON, 7003 ALCOVE AVE, NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91605; ROBERT MARIN, 12812 DILWORTH ST, NORWALK, CA 90650 This Business is being conducted by, a general partnership. Signed: Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name or names listed herein.. /s/: ROBERT MARIN
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 12/9/2009. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 1/7/2010, 1/14/2010, 1/21/2010, 1/28/2010

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December of 2008 compared to December of 2009

Santa Monica Single Family Homes

Santa Monica Canyon	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	1	2	100%
Average Days on the Market	18	121	572%
Lowest Price	$1,750,000	$1,150,000	-34%
Median Price	$1,750,000	$2,550,000	46%
Highest Price	$1,750,000	$3,950,000	126%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$795	$887	12%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	92%	90%	-2%

North of Montana	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	4	4	0%
Average Days on the Market	22	25	14%
Lowest Price	$2,000,000	$1,294,000	-35%
Median Price	$3,807,500	$1,700,000.00	-5%
Highest Price	$5,920,000	$2,108,929	-45%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$965	$809	-16%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	94%	97%	3%

Between Wilshire and Montana	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	1	3	200%
Average Days on the Market	53	36	-32%
Lowest Price	$2,750,000	$579,505	-79%
Median Price	$2,750,000	$805,000	-71%
Highest Price	$2,750,000	$1,558,000	-43%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$604	$836	38%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	83%	87%	5%

South of Wilshire	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	1	1	0%
Average Days on the Market	210	28	-87%
Lowest Price	$1,100,000	$775,000	-30%
Median Price	$1,100,000	$775,000	-30%
Highest Price	$1,100,000	$775,000	-30%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$938	$581	-38%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	79%	86%	9%

Sunset Park	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	4	4	0%
Average Days on the Market	49	186	280%
Lowest Price	$825,000	$560,000	-32%
Median Price	$1,255,000	$901,654	-28%
Highest Price	$1,400,000	$1,350,000	-4%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$602	$604	0%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	93%	103%	11%

Ocean Park	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	1	4	300%
Average Days on the Market	19	58	205%
Lowest Price	$1,900,000	$700,000	-63%
Median Price	$1,900,000	$1,135,500	-40%
Highest Price	$1,900,000	$1,450,000	-24%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$905	$719	-21%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	91%	92%	1%

Santa Monica Condo's & Townhomes

Santa Monica Canyon	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	0	0	n/a
Average Days on the Market	0	0	n/a
Lowest Price	$0	$0	n/a
Median Price	$0	$0	n/a
Highest Price	$0	$0	n/a
Average Price Per Square Foot	$0	$0	n/a
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	0%	0%	n/a

North of Montana	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	0	2	n/a
Average Days on the Market	0	88	n/a
Lowest Price	$0	$750,000	n/a
Median Price	$0	$1,275,000.00	n/a
Highest Price	$0	$1,800,000	n/a
Average Price Per Square Foot	$0	$847	n/a
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	0%	85%	n/a

Between Wilshire and Montana	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	6	15	150%
Average Days on the Market	58	68	17%
Lowest Price	$485,000	$419,000	-14%
Median Price	$696,000	$799,000	15%
Highest Price	$752,300	$1,400,000	86%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$452	$608	35%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	95%	98%	3%

South of Wilshire	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	6	12	100%
Average Days on the Market	83	173	108%
Lowest Price	$366,200	$248,000	-32%
Median Price	$518,500	$529,000	2%
Highest Price	$900,000	$650,000	-28%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$536	$488	-9%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	95%	98%	3%

Sunset Park	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	1	4	300%
Average Days on the Market	58	81	40%
Lowest Price	$835,000	$353,000	-58%
Median Price	$835,000	$637,500	-24%
Highest Price	$835,000	$830,000	-1%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$431	$514	19%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	93%	96%	3%

Ocean Park	previous period December 2008	current period December 2009	% change
Number of Sales	1	6	500%
Average Days on the Market	210	108	-49%
Lowest Price	$699,000	$289,000	-59%
Median Price	$699,000	$632,500	-10%
Highest Price	$699,000	$1,065,000	52%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$536	$583	9%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	100%	96%	-4%

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