WEEKEND EDITION

Santa Monica Daily Press

January 21-22, 2006 | A newspaper with issues | Volume 5, Issue 60

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO
4 7 10 16 17
Meganumber: 24
Jackpot: $83 Million

FANTASY 5
7 15 31 37 38

DAILY 3
Daytime: 2 9 3
Evening: 6 8 3

DAILY DERBY
1st: 07 Eureka !
2nd: 02 Lucky Star
3rd: 04 Big Ben

RACE TIME: 1.46.04

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

According to the Nov. 10 Evening News of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., a father was under investigation by police after War Memorial Hospital reported an assault on the man's 11-year-old son. Police said it appeared that the two were playing a video game, that the son had beaten his dad by using a secret upgrade that made his character more powerful, and that the dad, in anger, had spanked the kid, put soap in his mouth and slapped him several times in the head. (The father said only that he had punished the boy for lying.)

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 21st day of 2006.
There are 344 days left in the year.

On Jan. 21, 1793, during the French Revolution, King Louis XVI, condemned for treason, was executed on the guillotine.
In 1915, the first Kiwanis Club was founded, in Detroit.

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End of days



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

A colorful sunset over the Pacific, as viewed from Palisades Park, ends another mid-winter day in Santa Monica.

LOCAL

On second thought: DACs' roles revisited

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — School board members are having second thoughts regarding a decision made earlier this month to slightly revise the role community groups play in advising the district on educational programs and the budget.

Members of the Santa Monica-Malibu Board of Education voted unanimously on Thursday to revisit the removal of one sentence that outlines the duties of District Advisory Committees — groups of citizens who inform and make suggestions to the

See SECOND THOUGHT, page 13

Rogers that: Makeover at state beach underway

BY RYAN HYATT
Daily Press Staff Writer

WILL ROGERS BEACH — Construction has finally begun for beach improvements that were planned six years ago, though they will cost nearly twice as much as originally planned.

The LA County Department of Beaches and Harbors has begun an $11.6-million upgrade of facilities along Will Rogers State Beach.

The improvements will include modernized lifeguard quarters at Potrero Canyon, new restrooms, more concession stands, handicapped access, a new highway entrance at Temescal Canyon and five repaved parking lots.

When the plan was first unveiled in August 1999, the cost was estimated at $6.5 million with completion slated by Memorial Day 2001.

It's still a five-phase project with a 14-month completion schedule, now set for March 2007, said Dusty Crane, a public affairs representative for beach and harbors.

Crane said the project has been delayed due to permitting requirements and funding constraints.

Much of the extra expense associated with the project has to do with rising construction costs, Crane said. Another reason more funding was added was so that the buildings could be seismically retrofitted.

Four bathrooms, a concession building and a lifeguard substation will be torn down, said Paul

See WILL ROGERS, page 14

Slippery suspect on trial

BY RYAN HYATT
Daily Press Staff Writer

LAX COURTHOUSE — The jury trial is underway for the man suspected of kidnapping a Santa Monica elderly woman twice and who previously escaped from authorities.

Alfonzo Fitzgerald Taylor walked away from the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center in downtown Los Angeles the day before a separate jury trial was set to begin last May on charges of receiving stolen property and unlawful driving of a vehicle, an incident independent of the two alleged kidnappings of a Sunset Park woman that occurred in the fall of 2004.

Taylor, in his 40s, was captured in Georgia and returned to custody

See KIDNAPPING, page 11

Doing laps



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Hodji, a 2-year-old Newfoundland, stops to quench his thirst at a shower nozzle at Santa Monica beach.



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HOROSCOPES

Happy with people, Sag

Santa Monica Daily Press



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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ Others continue to call the shots, whether you like it or not. Still, you might find this situation quite agreeable, even if you cannot play the "alpha" person. You'll find it delightful if you manage to simply let go. Tonight: Say yes

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Stay even and don't push others too far. You might not realize that you are adding stress to your life. Deal with others individually, adding that especially nurturing Taurean touch. Others will respond. Tonight: Easy works.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Your playfulness and joie de vivre only add to the many friends and loved ones seeking you out. By letting go and being more childlike, you'll have a better time. It's the weekend — act like it, and help others enjoy the here and now. Tonight: Add more spice to a relationship.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Entertain from home, even if it means putting an extra effort in here and there. At the same time, if you have a project, you can invite friends over to pitch in, adding pizza and bubblies as a treat. Why not? Tonight: Your home is your castle.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Lighten up. Sometimes, especially lately, you are way too serious. Let go of problems and enjoy your life — be it your company, where you are or simply a good book. Reach out for others rather than cause yourself a problem. Tonight: Tell it like it is.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ Grab hold of your finances and use self-discipline. You will be much happier. What you want to add to your home environment can be done without costing you an arm and leg. A family member has suggestions. Tonight: Fun can also fit into your budget.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Happiness is your middle name. You will tend to luxuriate and enjoy the moment. You beam, and others respond. Make sure you zero in on what you want. Your lively ways strike others as fun and delightful. Tonight: As you wish.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Know when to develop a low profile. Also of significance is keeping your opinion to yourself. Sometimes the less said the better — as you will discover today. Your instincts guide you financially. Listen to your inner tom-toms. Tonight: Keep plans easy or null.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Go out of your way to touch base with friends. The more people you are with the merrier you are. You seem to touch off parties. Enjoy yourself. You find that friends will encourage you to overdo it. Tonight: Happy with people.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Your instincts tell you how to deal with those you look up to. Sometimes you are overwhelmed by everything you need to do. Today might be an example, but your best bet is biting the bullet. You will feel great later. Tonight: A must appearance.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ You might want to understand what is motivating someone at a distance. Your ability to read between the lines could make all the difference in an interaction with friends. Take off whenever you go. Tonight: Where music is played.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Deal with others directly, and don't hesitate to zero in on what you want. A key partnership could make all the difference in what goes down. Be open to change and adjustment. Show off your sweetie. Tonight: Out on the town.

CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL AUDIT PENDING

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LOCAL

Case closed



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

During the law enforcement recognition dinner at the Elks Lodge No. 906 on Thursday, Virginia Obenchain (pictured with SMPD Chief James T. Butts Jr.), a Santa Monica Police Department homicide detective, wins the 2005 Santa Monica Elks 'Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award." Obenchain has been with the SMPD since 1984.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

New year, new officers

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Sister City Association is getting a new set of officers.

Mayor Bob Holbrook will install the new officers for 2006 on Jan 21. at the Riviera Country Club. The new officers are: Ray Carriere, president; Judi Gaton, executive vice president.; Mel Risher, vice president Mazatlan, Mexico; Phyllis Morrison, vice president, Hamm, Germany; Nat Trives, vice president, Fujinomiya, Japan; Graydon Peak, treasurer; Helen Vasak, secretary.

The City Council founded the association to promote peace between the Santa Monica community and several cities around the world. A delegation of 90 visited Fujinomiya in September of 2005. Another delegation will be visiting Hamm, Germany in September of 2006.

For more information, call (310) 452-1807.

Do you have community news?

Submit news releases

Email to: editor@smdp.com or fax 310.576.9913

SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	8:00am - 4:00pm	12	9/12

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	96" - 120"	8:30am - 4:00pm	35	6/6

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	120" - 144"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	50	7/28

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	8:00 am - 10:00 pm	12	8/16

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	6"-12"	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	4	2/4

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	12	12/13

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	18"-12"	8:30 am - 9:00 pm	5	5/11

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

CONDITIONS WATER TEMP: 57°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (2-4 FT)

Today the swell fades even more with size dropping off to chest high. Our next NW swell is due, but it ain't much. This system, coming in from the western Pacific region, is not as strong as recent swells, and size is expected to reach only around waist to chest high +.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

Smaller NW swells on tap for first part of week...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

SATURDAY				
LOW TIDE:	8:21AM	2.1FT	6:35PM	1.7FT
HIGH TIDE:	1:38AM	4.2FT	1:12PM	2.9FT
SUNDAY				
LOW TIDE:	10:09AM	1.7FT	7:24PM	2.1FT
HIGH TIDE:	2:23AM	4.4FT	3:32PM	2.4FT
MONDAY				
LOW TIDE:	11:29AM	1FT	8:26PM	2.5FT
HIGH TIDE:	3:18AM	4.6FT	6:24PM	2.5FT
TUESDAY				
LOW TIDE:	12:22PM	0.3FT	10:12PM	2.7FT
HIGH TIDE:	4:17AM	5.0FT	7:27PM	2.9FT
WEDNESDAY				
LOW TIDE:	1:05AM	-0.4FT	11:31PM	2.6FT
HIGH TIDE:	5:13AM	5.5FT	7:58PM	3.2FT
THURSDAY				
LOW TIDE:	1:44PM	-1.1FT	N/A	
HIGH TIDE:	6:06AM	6.0FT	8:27PM	3.5FT
FRIDAY				
N/A				

SURF AND SNOW QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? EMAIL ALEX@SMDP.COM

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The Q Line

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THE Q-LINE RESPONSES ARE IN!

WE HAVE THE QUESTIONS.
YOU HAVE THE ANSWERS.
CHECK OUT THIS WEEK'S Q-LINE RESPONSES ON PAGE 4.

EST. 1934 The Galley

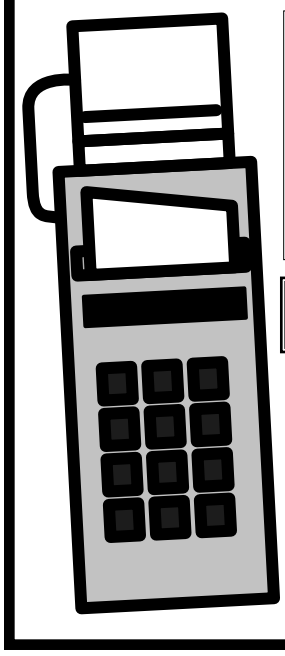
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OPINION

The Q Line

SOME TOUGH TALK ON IMMIGRATION

This past week, Q-line asked:

What's your take on the illegal immigration situation in Southern California? How should the government handle it?

Here are your responses:

✆ "I think that all the illegal aliens should be shipped back from where they came. The city of Santa Monica is doing too much good for them. 11th and Colorado have so many of them defecating on the streets. The National Guard should patrol the border, shoot anyone who doesn't want to stay out because we cannot have illegal immigration here."

✆ "The answer is quite simple as to how the government should handle the illegal immigrant situation. Just send them back. Check their credentials. If they do not have any, send them back. The citizens are scrutinized at the airports, everywhere. We are padded down and we are Americans. Send them back from where they came."

✆ "Years ago, when I redid my house, there were all these people there and I hired them. They did an excellent job. My question is how come there aren't blond, blue-eyed Americans doing this work. I think we should leave it alone."

✆ "Immigrants are individuals without a country. They are usually dissatisfied with the country from where they came and are not wanted in the country of their choice — the United States. There are many pitfalls to the immigrant situation beyond the obvious costs. Most are not formally educated and can only function as a subculture. They are not quite accepted and they are only measure by the amount of sweat that drips from their body. Immigrants have no understanding of the Constitution of the United States and the protections contained therein. They find themselves at the mercy of overworked public defenders and stand before an opinionated judiciary system which only knows one word of Spanish — adios. The quality of the immigrant is not at issue, it is the quantity of them. There are too many immigrants for the immigrants own good..."

✆ "There are way too many illegal aliens in this country. We need to do something about it, such as making it a felony to hire them. They keep bringing down the wages and taking jobs that could go to American citizens or people who are legally here instead of illegals. That is one thing, then they clog the hospitals and don't pay taxes, they use up all of our hospital funding and then they have babies . We don't need them. We need to change the law that makes an illegal alien born in this country not a citizen and let them go back to Mexico. They're Mexico's problem, they shouldn't be our problem. They need to build that big wall around the border and keep them out. They have to put the army down there and shoot a few people to keep them from coming in. They are invading our country, we can't let them do it. We have to do it because Mexico won't do it. They aid their people to come over here, we have to stop them. It's our country, not theirs. If Mexico doesn't like it we should tell them to go to hell. We do not need illegal aliens. Round them up and send them back."

✆ "Illegal immigration is just that — illegal. It should never have been allowed. And now in this very dangerous and threatening time our borders need to be secured in their entirety. I think the U.S. Army, or at least the National Guard, needs to be on continuous patrol against human and drug smugglers and the individual illegals. Our safety and survival as a nation is in jeopardy."

✆ "Which government — Santa Monica, Los Angeles County, California, the Feds, NAFTA, the U.N., Mexico? The illegal immigrant situation will never be addressed and here's why. The right-wing big-business wants millions more illegals to drive all wages down further. The left-wing, suicidal, can't-we-all-just-get-along, touchy-feely crowd thinks its some kind of human rights issue. Both the right- and left-wing leaders want millions more voters even more ignorant and stupid than those we already have. But solutions, you want solutions? Here are just a few: Of course, they will be ignored as politically incorrect. Build and continue building that fence along the border, beef up the border control and immigration service, round up and ship back all the illegals already here. If these things are not done California and Santa Monica will be even more of a cesspool approaching the likes of Mexico and Mexico City."

✆ "If you believe in a plantation economy, do nothing. If you want to keep unskilled labor costs low, do nothing. But if you want to solve the education crisis, the medical crisis, the low-income housing crisis, get the illegal aliens out of California. Unfortunately, it will never happen."

✆ "I think the illegal immigrant situation in Southern California has become completely out of control. Our health care, our schools and jobs have to go to people who are here legally by birth with legal parents have deteriorated. I think the government should heavily fine businesses, small and large, when employing illegal immigrants. Public schools should not be allowed to educate illegal children and children who are born in the United States who have parents who have come here illegally, they should not be allowed to become automatic citizens. The government must close down and arrest people in downtown LA, etc., who make false ID cards, etc. They're right on the street. You can go down there and they're not very shy about asking you if you need a false ID."

✆ "There are 36 million people in this state and over 10 percent are illegal. The government needs a tamper-proof social security card, fines for businesses that hire illegals and a serious deportation system. The quality of our life is fast disappearing with the low educated from Mexico. Let's face it, their system of government is very socialistic. The special interest in our country — medical, education, housing — make billions of dollars of taxpayers' money to support illegals. The pressure of progressives to demonize our system of government for not supporting these people will continue to destroy this country."

The Garver memoir: Truth or consequences



MODERN TIMES

BY LLOYD GARVER

The latest literary controversy involves the best seller, "A Million Little Pieces," a memoir by James Frey. It's supposed to be an inspirational tale about Frey's battles with drugs, alcohol, the law, and his turning his life around. The only problem is that Frey made up many of the details in his "memoir." In recent years, other writers, historians, and journalists were discovered to have fabricated things that they had passed off as facts. Those writers were scandalized, and often lost their jobs or even their careers. The difference this time is in the reaction to the discovery of the fraud: Instead of the many fans of the book being outraged by Frey, they seem to be angrier with those who have exposed him. Their reaction is that it's "close enough" to the truth, so don't make a big deal about it.

But the truth is a big deal. And let's face it, it's not all that hard to tell the truth. I'll prove it to you right here. I'm going to be completely truthful with you in this column.

Back when I was at Harvard Law School,1 I was impressed by the value given to telling the truth. And while working with Steven Spielberg as he put the finishing touches on "Schindler's List,2," I was amazed by how important it was to Spielberg for every frame of the film to be truthful. Sometimes, while exercising I see the importance of truth. Just the other day, while I was working out with two-time Oscar winner, Hillary Swank,3 I had one of those moments of clarity.

Frey's book has been the No. 1 nonfiction paperback best seller on the New York Times list for weeks. At this point, in the spirit of full disclosure, I should mention that I have a long-standing relationship with the New York Times,4. It became a big success after Oprah Winfrey touted it on her show and it became a selection of her "book club." Once again, in my attempt at being completely truthful, I should mention that I have been a guest on Oprah's show,5.

Now that it's been revealed that the memoir is not completely non-fiction, Oprah has surprisingly stood behind the writer. She's declared that the discrepancies between the book and the truth are "much ado about nothing,6." This is Oprah Winfrey talking. If fudging and telling lies is okay with Oprah, who's going to mess with the truth next? The president?7

Maybe we're so used to accepting lies in our everyday life, that we aren't particularly upset by something like Frey's book. Our politicians lie to us, and we barely blink. Viewers know "reality TV" isn't reality, but they watch it anyway. And we tell "little lies" every day: "Your hair looks great." "No, it's delicious. I'm just not very hungry." "I was just about to call you,8."

We rationalize these lies as things we say so that we don't hurt other people's feelings, or sometimes it's just "easier" than telling the truth. But isn't it possible that we are so used to hearing and telling these little lies every day that we allow ourselves to tell and be told bigger ones?

If you believe that some of us are being too picky when it comes to the truth, then you also probably believe that this column is just as valid without the footnotes as with them,9.

So, let's see just how hard it is to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Let's "just say no" to lying,10. We'll declare today "National Truth Day." Let's all try to tell the truth for 24 hours,11. Will we alienate our friends? Will we lose our jobs? Will we incriminate ourselves?12.

Let's see what happens. Write me and tell me how it went for you. If it works out for a day, maybe soon we'll try it for a week or even longer. One good thing is that if each of us tells the truth, we won't have to wonder if the other guy is lying to us. But best of all, maybe we'll feel better about ourselves. I think there is some real value in taking those words of Shakespeare seriously: "... to thine own self be true" — "Hamlet,"13.

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



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COMMENTARY

GUEST COMMENTARY **BY JOHN W. WHITEHEAD**

Bush just flaunts McCain anti-torture law

Shortly after signing into law this year's Defense Appropriations Bill, which included the McCain Amendment forbidding the torture of detainees by all U.S. personnel regardless of the physical location of the detainee, President Bush issued a "signing statement" — which is an official position by the president that pronounces his interpretation of a new law. In this instance, Bush's signing statement declared that he views the new torture law to be limited by his "inherent authority" as commander-in-chief to protect the national security of America.

The essence of Bush's assertion is that he can unilaterally ignore a congressional law and continue the torture when he sees fit. In fact, New York University law professor David Golove states, "The signing statement is saying 'I will only comply with this law when I want to, and if something arises in the war on terrorism where I think it's important to torture or engage in cruel, inhuman, and degrading conduct, I have the authority to do so and nothing in this law is going to stop me.'"

Notwithstanding certain administration officials' assurances that the president would only bypass the law in an emergency situation such as that of a "ticking time bomb," this signing statement provides the president with essentially the same power that the McCain Amendment sought to prevent.

This is a serious but continuing trend of the Bush Administration to claim that the president has the ultimate power to execute and interpret the law, thus bypassing the other branches of government. Indeed, the Bush Administration has been espousing a view of the separation of powers, specifically presidential wartime powers, that is largely novel and without precedent. In the process, the Bush Administration has been blatantly ignoring and violating federal law. Now, the Administration is "interpreting" the law to support the idea that the "inherent power" of the president includes the ability to ignore a congressional act that was overwhelmingly approved by Congress and signed into law by none other than himself.

Furthermore, despite the Bush Administration's assurances that the president would not utilize this "inherent power" with impunity, why should we believe it? Will we even know if the president exercises this right — with or without impunity? For example, the Bush Administration has been secretly engaging in domestic spying for the last four years and torturing foreign detainees — and seeking congressional approval to torture — while assuring the American people that they do not torture, nor promote torture. The agenda of the Bush Administration is clear — that is, an exponential expansion of the power of the president, in effect creating an imperial presidency.

This is not an idea that originates with President Bush — a man who admits that he is neither a lawyer nor an expert on the Constitution. The notion of unprecedented presidential powers is the brainchild of Bush's advisors. And sadly, he is listening.

For example, in a congressional hearing, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales suggested that the president could invoke his authority as commander-in-chief to conclude that a law was unconstitutional and refuse to comply with it. However, under the Constitution, the authority to declare laws unconstitutional belongs to the judiciary.

Similarly, a memorandum prepared by influential advisor Deputy Assistant Attorney General John Yoo claims that the president has the inherent authority as commander-in- chief to bypass all laws that conflict with Bush's war on terrorism. Yoo has been reported as saying that Congress has no power to "tie the president's hands in regard to torture as an interrogation technique." And perhaps even more striking is Yoo's definition of torture, which to a large degree has been accepted and endorsed by the Bush Administration. Torture, according to Yoo, requires physical pain that is "equivalent in intensity to the pain accompanying serious physical injury, such as organ failure, impairment of bodily function, or even death."

Although Bush's advisors, along with others, claim that the president can ignore the law, not all those in Washington agree. In fact, on Jan. 4, three key Republican senators condemned Bush's assertion that his powers as commander-in-chief grant him the authority to bypass the new law. In a joint statement, Senators John Warner (R-VA) and John McCain (R-AZ) said, "We believe the president understands Congress's intent in passing, by very large majorities, legislation governing the treatment of detainees."

In fact, as the senators pointed out, "The Congress declined when asked by administration officials to include a presidential waiver of the restrictions included in our legislation. Our committee (Senate Armed Services Committee) intends through strict oversight to monitor the administration's implementation of the new law." Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) concurred, stating, "I do not believe that any political figure in the country has the ability to set aside any … law of armed conflict that we have adopted or treaties that we have ratified." Graham also acknowledged, "If we go down that road, it will cause great problems for our troops in future conflicts because (nothing) is to prevent other nations' leaders from doing the same."

The fundamental issue is the rule of law. Neither the president, nor Congress, nor the courts are above the law. All public officials are under the law. And for the president, that means he is subject to the document he took an oath to uphold — the Constitution. Otherwise, our governmental scheme is being altered to resemble the regimes that we supposedly oppose.

(Contact constitutional attorney John W. Whitehead at johnw@rutherford.org.)

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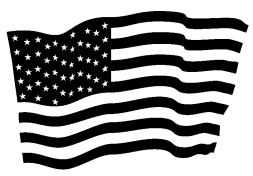
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STATE

STATE BRIEFS

Teacher suspect stayed on the job

By The Associated Press

LA VERNE — A Bonita High School math teacher snared during an Internet sting operation targeting suspected pedophiles continued working at the school nearly a week before district officials were notified.

California law states police must notify school officials immediately when a teacher is arrested for a sex offense, but Bonita Unified School District officials said Riverside County sheriff's deputies took almost a week to tell them about the arrest.

Walter Edward Babst, 43, of Corona was one of 50 men arrested during the three-day sting operation in Mira Loma last week. Babst's lawyer notified the district of his arrest before the Sheriff's Department.

"We were shocked, stunned and totally upset that we were not notified in a timely manner. I was livid," board member Ed Jones said. The school board placed Babst on unpaid administrative leave on Wednesday.

Babst was booked Jan. 7 for investigation of an attempted lascivious act with a child under 14, attempted oral copulation and attempting to send harmful matter with the intent to seduce a minor. Babst posted bail of $25,000 and was released the same day.

"We're not pleased we didn't hear about it sooner," Superintendent Robert Otto said.

Babst, who has worked at the high school since 1999, could not be located Thursday. There was no comment from the Bonita Unified Teachers Association, which provided Babst with a defense lawyer, union president Dan Harden said.

"We notified the district six days after his arrest. That also included a written notification to the district and a written notification to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing," sheriff's spokesman Sgt. Earl Quinata said, adding he didn't know why there was a delay.

"We're going to look into the delay," he said.

The parents of about 160 students in Babst's classes were being notified of the change in teachers. Otto said the principal met with the classes and explained the situation.

The Jan. 6 to Jan. 8 sting was conducted by sheriff's detectives in conjunction with Pervertedjustice.com, which used fictitious Internet profiles of 12- and 13-year-old boys and girls to chat with the suspects on the Internet.

The men were arrested when they showed up at a house in Mira Loma expecting to meet the children. Deputies said the suspects used sexually explicit conversations, which ranged from talk of various sex acts to sending of pornographic pictures and videos.

Soccer coach charged with molestation

By The Associated Press

SANTA ANA — The coach of a traveling soccer team of 16-year-old boys was arrested and charged with felony child molestation and showing pornography to a player.

Melesio Juarez Lopez, 49, was also charged with two misdemeanor sex charges, prosecutors said. He was released on $100,000 bail.

Lopez allegedly improperly touched a player at the coach's Santa Ana home on New Year's Day after showing a teen soccer player pornography, said Susan Kang Schroeder, spokeswoman for the Orange County district attorney's office.

The coach allegedly offered money for a sex act and the boy fled the home and told his father, who contacted the Police Department, investigators said.

Boeing gets busted

By The Associated Press

SIMI VALLEY — Regional water officials rejected Boeing Co.'s request to ease water quality limits at the Santa Susana Field Lab and said the company will be punished for nearly 50 water-quality violations at the old Rocketdyne site last year.

Boeing and the U.S. Air Force asked the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board to relax pollution limits on storm water flowing off the hilltop lab the past four years.

The board refused and sided with environmentalists and lab neighbors who complained that Boeing has repeatedly violated its water-quality permit with impunity.

"The public has borne these costs and now it's time for the polluter to bear these costs," board member Francine Diamond said.

Water officials didn't disclose the penalties Boeing might face.

The field lab is a 2,800-acre property at the top of the Simi Hills at the border of Los Angeles and Ventura counties. Starting in the late 1940s, scientists conducted nuclear research and tested rocket engines in the hills.

"Boeing has done everything within its power to meet these limits," Boeing attorney Sharon Rubalcava told officials, and she argued that the board's lack of flexibility "set us up for failure."

Tee time requires some 'C' notes

By The Associated Press

RANCHO PALOS VERDES — Donald Trump's cliffside National Golf Club opened to the public on Friday.

Greens fees are $145 to $300, including a golf cart.

The $200 million-plus public course boasts ocean views from every hole and 25-foot waterfalls. Documents required by state and city officials to get the course open weren't signed until Thursday afternoon.

STATE

Olympic Games run all day, and then some

BY DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

PASADENA, Calif. — There aren't enough hours in the day to watch all the Winter Olympics coverage that NBC and its cable partners are serving up.

Seriously.

Even if you want to watch someone hurtling headfirst down a mountain or actually know what the biathlon is, it's impossible to see it all live. NBC's planned 416 hours of coverage (including the broadcast network and cable outlets) from Turin, Italy, averages out to 24.5 hours a day.

"We are reinventing the clock," said David Neal, executive producer of NBC Sports.

The Winter Games open Feb. 10 and competition stretches for 16 days after that. NBC executives are privately trying to downplay ratings expectations, given that Olympics on U.S. snow and ice — like Salt Lake City in 2002 — tend to draw more interest. But they're hoping a strong United States team will spike the TV turnout.

"The thing that our viewers will immediately notice each day is the strength of the U.S. Olympics team," Neal said. "It's the most accomplished Winter Olympics team that the U.S. has ever fielded."

It's not like NBC is going to wrap itself in a flag and ignore accomplishments of foreign athletes, but it helps if there are more competitions with a national rooting interest, he said.

For the winter Olympics to really take off for NBC, it requires some kind of story, some personalities that intrigue viewers. Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan won't be around this time, but Michelle Kwan is continuing her quest for ice-skating gold.

And American skier Bode Miller introduced himself to the world away from snow-covered mountains with his "60 Minutes" interview on CBS admitting he has skied after drinking.

"I'm waiting for my thank-you card from my good friend (NBC sports boss) Dick Ebersol for picking out a star for the Olympics and promoting him so well," joked CBS News and Sports President Sean McManus.

NBC's prime-time coverage will feature high-profile sports like figure skating, skiing and snowboarding. And,because Turin is six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time, those competitions will be taped instead of shown live earlier in the day.

That's an increasing risk in a wired world — even NBC's Olympics Web site will provide up-to-the-minute results — but Neal said research shows viewers want to watch those sports when it's most convenient to them.

NBC has assembled a veteran, familiar announcing corps, led by prime-time host Bob Costas. Daytime and late-night host Jim Lampley is working his 13th Olympics, surpassing the record set by ABC's Jim McKay.

New to NBC's team is longtime skating analyst Dick Button, a 1948 gold medal winner. He'll join Tom Hammond, Scott Hamilton, Sandra Bezic and Andrea Joyce in talking over the skating competition.

During the figure-skating competition, the USA Network will air a one-hour show at 6 p.m. EST called "Olympic Ice," providing news, analysis and interviews on the sport.

USA, MSNBC and CNBC will provide many hours of coverage — USA and MSNBC during the day and CNBC for three hours in the early evening after the stock market closes.

"For the first time in the Winter Games, every session of every sport will have at least some coverage," Neal said.

That includes, for die-hards, a numbing 26 curling matches — 15 of them shown live.

All 54 games of the men's and women's hockey games will be shown live, mostly on the cable networks. All games involving the U.S. teams will be shown commercial-free. Gold medal games for the men and women will be shown on NBC.

The Spanish-language Telemundo will offer Olympics news updates and a late-night highlights show. NBC's digital channels will offer high-definition coverage of much, though not all, of the competition.

NBC promises relatively few new technological twists. A yellow line, similar to those shown to mark the first down on football games, will be used in ski jumping to show the mark an individual skier needs to win a gold medal.

The network has also improved its virtual graphics that allow it to superimpose the image of another skier racing down the mountain next to a competitor, to show how their runs compare to each other, Neal said.

Used in Salt Lake City, it caused some viewer confusion: some people called in to NBC concerned that two skiers were on the course at the same time and would crash.











NATIONAL

California home market cools in December

BY ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES — California home prices increased in December at the slowest rate in nearly three years, another sign of cooling in what has been the nation's hottest real estate market.

The median home price in the state was $458,000 last month, flat from November and up 13.1 percent from a year earlier, La Jolla-based DataQuick Information Systems said Thursday.

It was the slowest rate of increase since March 2003 in the state that has seen increases that ranged as high as 23.2 percent in June 2004. Overall, home prices have doubled in the past four years.

"We've definitely put the frenzied period of the real estate cycle behind us," said DataQuick analyst John Karevoll. "The question is how soft the landing is going to be."

The trend could benefit would-be homebuyers who have faced relentlessly climbing prices and tight supply during the boom cycle over the past five years.

The number of homes sold in December also took a tumble, falling 9.7 percent from the same period a year ago. DataQuick attributed the drop to weaker demand for higher-end and move-up homes.

A total of 52,800 new and resale houses and condominiums were sold statewide last month, up 3 percent from November but down from the 58,500 in December 2004, DataQuick said.

Homes are now staying on the market about twice as long as a year ago, the firm said.

The appreciation slide has been the most pronounced in pricier markets such as San Diego County. The median price there in December was $516,000, an increase of 5.1 percent over the year-ago period. Marin, Napa and San Francisco counties posted similar increases.

"Some markets are peaking, other markets have yet to peak," Karevoll said. "It's not as if the sky is falling here."

In the nine-county region surrounding the San Francisco Bay, sales were down 15.5 percent compared to December 2004. The median price in the region climbed to $609,000 during the month, DataQuick said.

In Southern California, home sales fell 4.5 percent over the same month a year and hit the lowest level in four years The median price of homes in the region hit $479,000, a 13 percent increase over December 2004.

Buyers trying to take advantage of the slowing prices still face mortgage rates that are higher than a year ago.

The average rate for a 30-year fixed mortgage has declined during the past three weeks to 6.10 percent, according to lender Freddie Mac. But that still exceeds the average rate for 2005 of 5.87 percent.

Median prices in December for California homes, condos

By The Associated Press

The median price of homes and condos sold in December in selected California counties:

- Marin: $771,000
- San Mateo: $739,000
- San Francisco: $727,000
- Santa Clara: $642,000
- Ventura: $630,000
- Orange: $621,000
- Alameda: $575,000
- Contra Costa: $573,000
- Napa: $572,000
- Sonoma: $558,000
- San Diego: $516,000
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- San Bernardino: $361,000

Source: DataQuick Information Systems

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NATIONAL

Radical group members stand accused in arson conspiracy

BY MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Eleven people were indicted in a series of arsons, claimed by the radical groups Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front, in five Western states, the Justice Department said Friday.

The 65-count indictment said the suspects are responsible for 17 incidents in California, Colorado, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming, including sabotaging a high-tension power line, in a conspiracy that dates back to 1996. The indictment was returned Thursday by a federal grand jury in Eugene, Ore., and unsealed Friday.

"The indictment tells a story of four-and-a-half years of arson, vandalism, violence and destruction claimed to have been executed on behalf of the Animal Liberation Front or Earth Liberation Front, extremist movements known to support acts of domestic terrorism," Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said at a news conference Friday.

Appearing with Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller declared, "Terrorism is terrorism, no matter what the motive."

"There is a clear difference between constitutionally protected advocacy ... and violent criminal activity," Mueller added.

"It is one thing to write concerned letters or to hold peaceful demonstrations," Mueller said. "It is another thing entirely to construct and use improvised explosives to harass and intimidate victims by destroying property and to cause millions of dollars in losses by acts or threats of violence."

Eight defendants have been arrested. Three people remain at large, and are believed to be outside the United States, according to a statement from the Justice Department.

In Eugene, two defendants, Jonathan Christopher Mark Paul, 39, and Suzanne Nicole "India" Savoie, 28, were both ordered held without bail, pending further hearings.

A criminal complaint filed in federal court in Eugene accused Paul, a firefighter, of setting firebombs that burned down a horse slaughterhouse in 1997. The ALF claimed responsibility for that fire, which caused an estimated $1 million in damage.

Savoie, who works in a group home for the developmentally disabled, is accused of serving as a lookout for a fire in 2001 that destroyed offices of a lumber mill. The ELF claimed responsibility for that fire.

The other defendants are Joseph Dibee, Chelsea Dawn Gerlach, Sarah Kendall Harvey, Daniel McGowan, Stanislas Meyerhoff, Josephine Overaker, Rebecca Rubin, Darren Todd Thurston and Kevin Tubbs.

Dibee, Overaker and Rubin have not been arrested. The other six were arrested in December.

Authorities have said Gerlach, 28, is connected to six cases, including the 1998 firebombing of a lodge at the Vail, Colo. ski resort, considered to be one of the costliest crimes linked to ecoterrorism in the country.

The blazes caused $12 million in damage as they charred chairlifts, a restaurant and a building. The ELF claimed responsibility for the fires, saying they were set because the resort had expanded into lynx habitat.

Using improvised incendiary devices made from milk jugs, petroleum products and homemade timers, they carried out attacks between 1996 and 2001, the indictment alleged. Targets included U.S. Forest Service ranger stations, U.S. Bureau of Land Management wild horse facilities, lumber companies, meat processing companies, a ski area and the power line, the indictment said.









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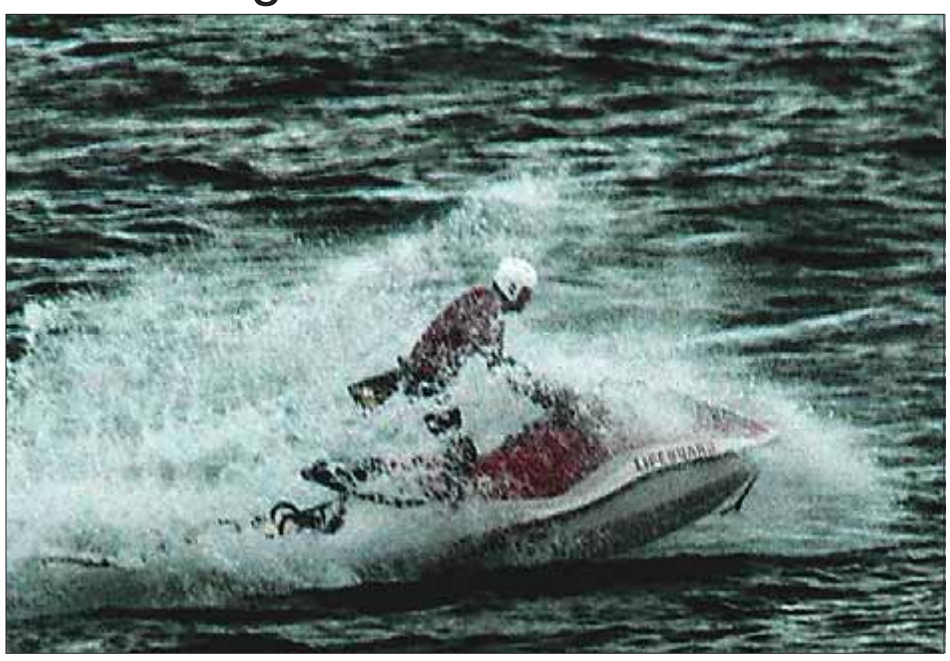
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Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Los Angeles County lifeguard John Larson trains on a personal watercraft, practicing wind and storm drills while pulling a rescue sled just south of the Santa Monica Pier.

Suspect stands trial, facing a third strike

KIDNAPPING, from page 1

in Los Angeles County within weeks of his May 2005 escape, according to Kevin Halligan, the Deputy District Attorney prosecuting the case.

Taylor's jury trial, which began on Friday, concerns the kidnapping and home robberies that occurred in the 1000 block of Bay Street in Santa Monica. Taylor faces seven felony charges related to two incidents that occurred on Oct. 18 and Nov. 4, 2004.

Last February, Taylor was charged with one count of kidnapping; two counts of first-degree burglary; two counts of first-degree residential robbery and two counts of making criminal threats.

Taylor has also faced one count of unlawful driving or taking of a vehicle; one count of receiving stolen property; one count of resisting a police officer and one count of driving as an unlicensed driver. Those charges, which he was to stand trial for last May, stem from him allegedly stealing a car in Las Vegas, according to the District Attorney's Office.

Taylor is a twice convicted felon — he served two years in state prison for a 1991 conviction for burglary and served another 12 years in state prison for a 1994 burglary conviction. Both crimes occurred in Torrance, according to the DA's Office.

Prosecutors allege that in the Fall of 2004, Taylor also kidnapped Betty Tomeo, 76, whom he stole from and threatened to kill, first with a syringe and later with a screwdriver.

Friday's proceeding included opening remarks by Halligan and testimony and cross examinations of Tomeo by attorneys.

Taylor appeared in court wearing a blue and white striped, long-sleeved dress shirt and blue jeans. He has short black hair, brown eyes and a beard. He is six feet, four inches tall, 215 pounds.

He seemed calm and attentive through the proceedings, occasionally grunting as the alleged victim testified.

Tomeo — who suffered from a heart attack the night of the first kidnapping — appeared in court in a wheelchair, wearing a pink sweater and breathing with the assistance of supplied oxygen.

Tomeo, who has white hair and blue eyes, seemed alert and well-spoken during her testimony.

At the time of the kidnappings, Tomeo was walking. However, she has been breathing with the assistance of supplied oxygen since before the alleged crimes took place, due to a lung she had removed because of lung cancer.

The trial is expected to continue next week.

TOMEO'S TESTIMONY

Tomeo testified that on the night of Oct. 18 she returned home after a meeting of the Virginia Avenue Park advisory board, on which she served, to help oversee improvements to the park.

Entering her home, she noticed an intruder in her bedroom doorway. He was dressed in a black shirt and pants, wearing black gloves, and holding a syringe.

He was also wearing Tomeo's straw UCLA hat. It had a blue banner and several pins attached to it.

Tomeo had owned it for more than 10 years.

"There was a man in the entrance to my bedroom, but what really got to me is that he was wearing my UCLA Bruin hat," Tomeo testified, which she said she has never seen again.

She said, "How did you get in here?" and she said he replied, "'That doesn't matter. I want some money.'"

The man told her the syringe he was holding could kill her in 15 seconds if she failed to provide him with the $2,000 he needed. Panic stricken, Tomeo said she searched the house and was able to obtain approximately $100 for the intruder.

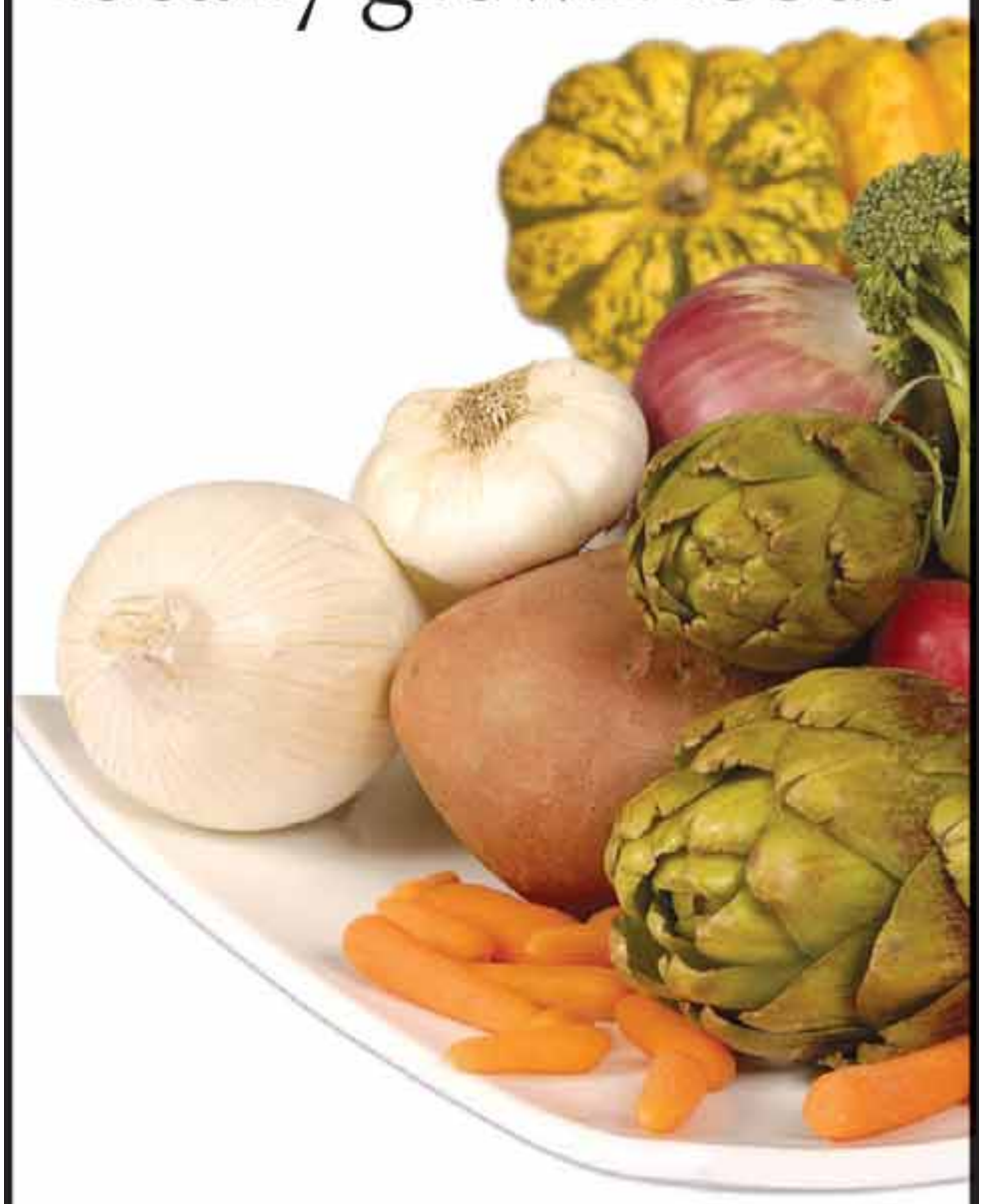
The intruder demanded she take him to an ATM machine to get him more money. He didn't have a car and instructed Tomeo they would drive hers.

She entered the driver's side of her 1966 Ford Mustang. Then the man pushed

See KIDNAPPING, page 15

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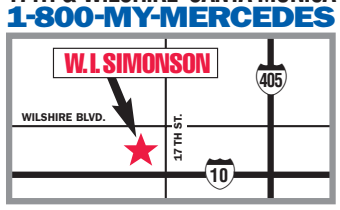
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NATIONAL

School board aims to set record straight

SECOND THOUGHT, from page 1

board regarding issues related to the district.

The move follows a strong demand from committee members, many of whom are parents, to clarify their roles in light of the omission. Many believe the sentence's removal diminishes their influence in the district.

"Discussion is exactly what we need," said Trisha Crane, chair of the Special Education Community Advisory Committee. "This is a public school system and the questioning and probing of parents and community members is both healthy to our district and vital to public trust.

"Please don't reduce us to unpaid workers simply reporting to staff."

The line removed from the district's policies about the role DACs play was: "The functions of the DAC is to assist in the overall planning of the educational program and of budget resources."

Schools superintendent John Deasy said the change was necessary to clarify the functions of DACs and the district. The sentence was removed because the DACs are about budget suggestions and not allocations. The committees have no decision-making powers and can only advise.

"There has been no change whatsoever to how DACs work," Deasy said. "The role of DACs has not been diminished, but enhanced, and the staff is very grateful for the vital and valuable role of the DACs. We do not devalue their work."

Deasy pointed out that instead of reporting once a year to the board and making suggestions, DACs will report and make suggestions to the board twice per year.

Deasy said he was baffled by a recent article published in the Jan. 11-17 issue of the Santa Monica Mirror which said that "Henceforth, the DACs will have no role in the overall planning of the education budget and of budget resources."

Deasy said that statement was most likely a misprint, which has led to a misunderstanding amongst DAC members.

Peggy Clifford, the Mirror's editor, said she wasn't sure any clarification of the article was needed and stood by the quality of the reporting.

School board Vice President Kathy Wisnicki apologized for the confusion and insisted the advisory committees are crucial to the district and its students.

"We are sorry for the misrepresentation of the facts and that we did not respond quickly enough to your concerns," she said.

School board member Oscar de la Torre, who helped move the motion to revisit the issue, said the board made the right decision in publicly debating the new language.

"It's about restoring trust in the community," he said. "We heard the concerns of the community that an earlier board decision was curtailing their role, and we still don't believe that was the case. But we will clarify it at the next board meeting. The main thing is we want to be loud and clear that we value parental involvement and the volunteer hours people give to the district."

The board is set to discuss DACs on Feb. 2.

Back to the grind



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

PICK ME UP: Patrons pay a visit to a local Starbucks recently at Santa Monica College.

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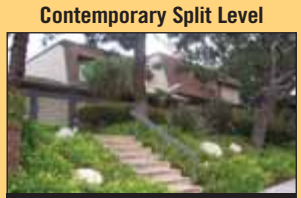
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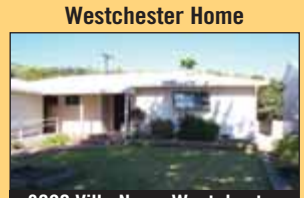
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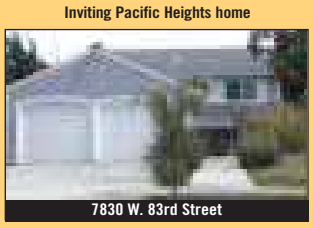
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Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Jacqueline Jones (center), who worked as the jailer at the Santa Monica Police Department for 31 years, is flanked by current SMPD Chief James T. Butts Jr. (left) and former police chief James Keane after receiving several awards on Thursday at her retirement party at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel. About 200 of her collegues attended. Jones received a standing ovation during the retirement party. "I know it's time to retire when ... an inmate says 'my grandfather said to say hi to you,'" she remarked.

Beach overhaul should be completed by 2007

WILL ROGERS, from page 1

Wong, division chief asset management and the county's planning bureau, explaining that the nearly expired facilities don't meet building codes and new ones topped with red-tile roofs and finished in stucco will rise in their places.

The lifeguard headquarters building from the World War II era will remain on the beach, but will be expanded to accommodate more people.

All of the buildings will be wheel chair-friendly when construction is complete, according to Crane.

The County Board of Supervisors gave the OK to pump $4.7 million more dollars into the project last year. The board had previously approved the budget at $6.9 million, which would be paid by Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. A loan will take care of $1.2 million of the added $4.7 million the county has added to the project.

Construction may be underway for more than a year, but beachgoers don't have to worry about it keeping them from the popular hot spot.

The beach which remain open throughout, along with the bike trails, officials said, though there may be some re-routing of the bike trails amid the construction.

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Former Olympian was original suspect

KIDNAPPING, from page 11

her to the passenger's seat, she said. The car was a stick shift and he had difficulty driving it. He placed it in reverse and backed into a gate that blocked the driveway.

The car stalled, the man exited the vehicle and Tomeo said, "I was furious, screaming ... 'you're ruining my car.'"

The man disappeared toward the front of the house for several minutes. Tomeo testified she was fearful that she couldn't outrun him and so didn't try to escape.

Eventually, the man drove them to the Vons market located on Lincoln Boulevard and Colorado Avenue. He waited inside the car, but told Tomeo if she failed to obtain the money two of his friends, who he said were at the house, would burn it down.

Tomeo, however, said she tried and failed to withdraw money from an ATM machine inside the store.

Tomeo said she asked an attendant for assistance. However, she didn't attempt to notify anyone about the man who had kidnapped her.

She was unable to obtain the money, and when she returned to her car, the man was gone. So were her keys.

Police arrived at Vons, took a statement, then notified Tomeo they would need to speak more to her the following day. She laid down to get some rest, but said she felt strange. She called emergency services and was taken to Saint John's, where doctors notified her she suffered from a heart attack.

The next major incident occurred on the night of Nov. 4. Tomeo testified she was watching TV in her living room, when she looked over her shoulder and noticed the same man who had previously broken into her home, she said.

He was dressed in black and wore a black knit ski cap.

He was holding a screwdriver, approximately two inches in length, she said.

"You tricked me," the man told her, thrusting the screwdriver through the air in a threatening manner, she said.

She remembered she had some money that she had failed to give him during the first incident and went to retrieve it in her office. When she exited her office, he was no longer in the living room.

Tomeo said she was unsure of the man's whereabouts, and didn't care.

"I opened the front door and ran out of there faster than you can talk," she told the court.

Tomeo contacted a neighbor two houses down the block. The neighbor returned to her home with a gun to try and stop the intruder(s) while another one called the police.

THE CROSS-EXAM

Originally, former Olympic Silver Medalist Danny Harris was charged with the kidnappings in November of 2004. Police arrested Harris after trained bloodhounds following the scent of the black hat left by the kidnapper led authorities to Harris' room at the Clare Foundation, a rehabilitation facility located off Lincoln Boulevard south of Interstate 10.

Harris tested positive for drugs in 1996 and was barred from competition. He has struggled for years with cocaine addiction. Harris, who captured a silver medal in track in the 1984 Olympics, spent nearly two months in jail before he was cleared of the charges.

Subsequent laboratory tests showed the kidnapper's hat contained Taylor's DNA. Taylor was already in custody on the stolen car charges. The two men, who share similar physical characteristics, claimed not to know one another.

Prosecutors initially refused to drop the charges against Harris, claiming the two men may have been working together. Although Tomeo only saw one kidnapper, at one point she said the kidnapper threatened to kill her and burn down her house, and referenced that he had two accomplices.

Prosecutors at the time pointed to three eyewitnesses who picked Harris out of a photo lineup. The three witnesses were a next-door neighbor who chased off the kidnapper with a gun, a nearby resident who saw the kidnapper strip off his shirt while fleeing the scene and the victim, who picked Harris along with two other people in the photo lineup as possibly the person who assaulted her.

Halligan said on Friday the shirt the kidnapper left as he fled the scene also contained Taylor's DNA.

Two live police lineups were conducted in January of 2005 to see if the eyewitnesses would tie Taylor to the kidnappings. In the first lineup, Taylor stood in a line with five inmates. In the second lineup, Harris stood with five different inmates. None of the witnesses picked Harris. Tomeo identified Taylor, while the other witnesses picked different prisoners, Halligan said. Tomeo also indicated Harris could possibly have been the intruder, but she was more confident it was Taylor.

"I recognized him the second I saw him in the lineup, but I wanted to see everyone to be sure," Tomeo testified.

However, Charles Elliot, Taylor's attorney, seemed to feel there was too much uncertainty in the prosecution's ability to properly identify the real suspect to conclude Taylor was, in fact, the perpetrator.



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Mad cow worries cloud sales hopes

BY LIBBY QUAID
AP Food and Farm Writer

WASHINGTON — Japan halted all imports of U.S. beef because of mad cow fears Friday, threatening millions of dollars in American trade and sending officials scrambling to repair delicate business relations.

Japan's sudden order came just six weeks after the country had lifted a two-year ban on American beef. The problem this time: discovery of bone — a mad cow disease risk, Asian countries say — in a shipment of veal from a plant in New York.

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns called the problem "an unacceptable failure" to meet Japan's requirements. He dispatched inspectors to Japan and ordered unannounced inspections at U.S. plants.

"We are taking this matter very seriously, recognizing the importance of our beef export markets," Johanns said.

At the White House, presidential spokesman Scott McClellan said, "USDA is taking steps to address this matter."

Japan's discovery was a jarring setback for the U.S. meat industry and the Bush administration, both of which had been optimistic about the prospects of selling more beef in Asia despite lingering restrictions on U.S. products.

Once the world's biggest customer for U.S. beef, Japan ended an earlier ban last month. It agreed to allow shipments of boneless beef from animals younger than 21 months, a stricter requirement than international guidelines call for.

There was much celebrating at the time. One U.S. group flew in a beef shipment for a banquet in Tokyo with the Japanese food service industry. Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore quickly followed Japan's lead.

Of the $3.9 billion in global sales of American beef in 2003, Japan accounted for $1.4 billion. The other three made up about $911 million; they did not weigh in Friday on Japan's action.

For now, American beef is being held at Japanese ports until the United States completes a report on what happened, which Johanns said would be delivered "immediately." Japan will decide later whether to impose a ban on further imports, department officials said.

An industry group pointed out that the product Japan found, bone-in veal, is eaten in the United States and considered safe under international guidelines. The veal was from calves less than 6 months old, and mad cow disease hasn't been found in animals that young.

"Despite this shipment, sent in error, the facts are indisputable: U.S. beef and veal remain among the safest in the world," said J. Patrick Boyle, president and CEO of the American Meat Institute.

Restrictions against bone-in beef have remained in Asia because officials fear that marrow and other bone tissue might be dangerous.

The government on Friday barred the plant that sent the shipment, Brooklyn-based Atlantic Veal & Lamb, from selling meat to Japan. Johanns said he also would take action against the department inspector who cleared the shipment. The inspector should have noticed on plant documents that the vertebral column, or the backbone, needed to be removed, Johanns said.

Japanese inspectors found material from cattle backbone in three of 41 boxes in a 858-pound shipment of beef from Atlantic Veal & Lamb. All the beef in the shipment was destroyed. Company officials called it an "honest mistake" and said they misinterpreted the export rules.

Japan's prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, said the situation was "a pity given that imports had just resumed." He told reporters, "I received the agriculture minister's report with his recommendation that the imports be halted and I think it is a good idea."

He was referring to Agriculture Minister Shoichi Nakagawa, who had visited Johanns in Washington on Dec. 13.

U.S. beef had begun a limited return to Japanese supermarkets and restaurants. However, according to a Kyodo News survey last month, 75 percent of Japanese were unwilling to eat U.S. beef because of mad cow fears.

Mad cow disease is the common term for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE. It is a degenerative nerve disease in cattle linked to a rare but fatal human disease, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. People have gotten it by eating meat or cattle products contaminated with mad cow disease.

There have been two cases of BSE in the United States and 21 cases in Japan.

Brooklyn company head says meat was shipshape

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The president of a Brooklyn company that sent a shipment of meat to Japan containing bone the Asian country considers at risk for mad cow disease said Friday that it regrets the move, but that the product is safe.

"Were this product shipped to San Francisco, there would be no question about its safety," Philip Peerless, president of Atlantic Veal and Lamb, said in a statement released after the government barred the company from selling meat to Japan.

Peerless said concern over the shipment was based on a misinterpretation of export requirements and "an honest mistake involving a very small amount of product."

Japan halted American beef imports on Friday after finding spinal column from veal in a shipment from the company. The tissue is allowed in the American food supply because it comes from animals younger than 30 months, but is barred in an agreement with Japan.

Six weeks ago the country ended a ban on American beef imposed after the discovery of mad cow disease in the United States in 2003.

Peerless said Atlantic Veal would cooperate with the U.S. Agriculture Department to ensure the company was in compliance with inspection regulations.

See MAD COW, page 17

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NATIONAL

Mad Cow fears persist three years after initial case

MAD COW, from page 16

He said the company estimates the veal it shipped came from animals younger than 4 1/2 months.

WHAT IS MAD COW DISEASE?

Japan has halted imports of American beef because it discovered a shipment containing bone that Asian countries consider at risk for mad cow disease.

What is mad cow disease, and why is it a concern?

■ Mad cow disease is the common term for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE. It's a degenerative nerve disease in cattle. It's been found in more than two dozen countries, including the United States and Japan.

■ BSE is linked to a rare but fatal human disease, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. People get it by eating meat or cattle products contaminated with mad cow disease.

■ No one is known to have contracted the vCJD in the United States. It's turned up in two people who lived in the U.S., but they are believed to have been infected in the United Kingdom during an outbreak in the 1980s and 1990s.

■ To protect the human food supply, the government requires that brains, spinal cords, vertebral columns and other tissues that can carry mad cow disease be removed when older cows are slaughtered. At-risk tissues are removed from slaughtered cows older than 30 months because infection levels are believed to rise with age.

A TIMELINE OF MAJOR EVENTS RELATED TO MAD COW DISEASE

Major events related to mad cow disease in North America:

2003

■ May 20: Canada discovers its first case of mad cow disease. U.S. officials ban Canadian imports of cattle, beef, animal feed.

■ Dec. 23: U.S. announces suspected case of mad cow disease in Washington state. Dozens of countries, including Japan and South Korea, halt American beef imports.

2004

■ Jan. 6: DNA tests show Washington state cow was born in Canada.

■ June 1: USDA expands testing for mad cow disease, planning to test more than 221,000 animals, 10 times the number tested in 2003.

■ June 25: Two U.S. cows test "inconclusive" for mad cow disease.

■ June 30: Follow-up tests show no sign of mad cow disease in the two animals.

■ Nov. 18: Second case of mad cow disease is suspected in the United States.

■ Nov. 23: Suspect cow is declared free of mad cow disease.

■ Dec. 29: U.S. decides to resume imports of Canadian cattle, beginning in March.

2005

■ Jan. 2: Canada confirms a second case of mad cow disease.

■ Jan. 10: Cattlemen's group sues to stop cattle shipments from Canada.

■ Jan. 11: Canada confirms a third case of mad cow disease.

■ March 2: Federal judge blocks Canadian cattle from entering the U.S., agreeing with cattlemen. Government appeals ruling.

■ June 10: Possible case of mad cow disease is announced in animal that was cleared of infection in November.

■ June 24: Cow that was cleared is now confirmed to have been infected with mad cow disease. It's the second case in the U.S.

■ June 29: Details emerge on second case; 12-year-old cow was born and raised in Texas and wound up at a pet food plant.

■ July 14: Federal appeals court allows Canadian cattle to enter the U.S., overturning judge's earlier decision to block Canadian shipments.

■ July 27: Possible case of mad cow disease is announced.

■ Aug. 3: Suspect cow tests negative for mad cow disease.

■ Aug. 30: Government closes investigation into Texas cow, saying it could not pin down how cow was infected.

■ Oct. 4: FDA announces change in feed regulations to remove cow brains and spinal cords, already banned from cattle feed, from food for all animals. Regulations are less strict than FDA had promised.

■ Dec. 11: Japan ends its ban on imports of U.S. and Canadian beef.

■ Dec. 29: Hong Kong ends ban on American beef.

■ Jan. 13: South Korea ends ban on American beef.

■ Jan. 17: Singapore agrees to end ban on American beef.

■ Jan. 20: Japan halts shipments of American beef because a recent shipment contained spinal material prohibited under agreement with the U.S.





PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Rocker faces rap on drug charges

By The Associated Press

LONDON — Pete Doherty, the ex-boyfriend of supermodel Kate Moss, pleaded guilty Friday to possession of heroin, crack cocaine, morphine and marijuana.

Doherty, 26, admitted the offenses during a hearing at Thames Magistrates' Court in London. He was freed on bail until sentencing on Feb. 8.

Police said the charges stemmed from Doherty's arrest in east London on Dec. 4, one of a string of drug busts for the lead singer of the band Babyshambles.

Doherty also was arrested on Nov. 30 and charged with possession of cocaine and heroin. He pleaded guilty last week and was released on bail. He was stopped by police last Saturday while driving through east London and again arrested on suspicion of possessing drugs. He was released on bail and ordered to return to a police station for questioning on Feb. 2.

Moss, 31, lost valuable modeling contracts with H&M, Burberry and Chanel after the Daily Mirror tabloid published pictures in September of her allegedly using cocaine in a west London music studio where Doherty was recording.

Former Clash rocker Mick Jones, 50, went to a London police station Thursday to speak to officers investigating the allegations against Moss, a Metropolitan police officer said in a statement.

Doherty's album was being produced by Jones, officials said.

Earlier this month, Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur asked Moss to return home to England and answer questions over the alleged drug use.

After the photos appeared, Moss went into a rehabilitation clinic in Arizona and has since resumed her modeling career.

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MOVIEGUIDE

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1441 3rd Street
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King Kong
1PM 4:45PM 8:30PM
Tristan & Isolde
1:15PM 4:00PM 7:00PM 9:45PM
Walk the Line
11:00AM 1:45PM 4:30PM 7:30PM 10:30PM
Looking For Comedy in the Muslim World
11:45AM 2:15PM 5:00PM 7:45PM 10:15PM

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 3rd Street
(310) 395-1599

Hoodwinked
12:30PM 2:30PM 4:40PM 6:50PM 9PM
Last Holiday
11:10AM 1:50PM 4:30PM 7:30PM 10:30PM
Munich
11:20AM 2:50PM 6:30PM 10PM
Rumor Has It
2:20PM 7:10PM
Hostel
12:10PM 2:40PM 5PM 7:40PM 10:10P
Memoirs of a Geisha
12:30PM 3:40PM 7PM 10:20PM
The Ringer
12PM 4:50PM 9:30PM

AMC7 Santa Monica
1310 3rd Street
(310) 289-4262

Cheaper by the Dozen 2
12PM 2:30PM 5:10PM
Chronicles of Narnia
12:45PM 4PM 7:20PM 10:30PM
The Family Stone
7:40PM 10:15PM
Fun With Dick & Jane
11:40AM 2:10PM 4:40PM 7:10PM 9:30PM
Glory Road
1:30PM 4:30PM 7:15PM 10PM
The New World
1PM 4:10PM 7:30PM 10:40PM
Syriana
2PM 4:55PM 7:50PM 10:45PM
Underworld: Evolution
11:30PM 1:40PM 4:20PM 7PM 9:40PM 11:45PM

Nuwilshire Theatre
1314 Wilshire Blvd
(310) 281-8228

Brokeback Mountain
12:15PM 3:45PM 7PM 10PM
Casanova
1PM 4:10PM 7:20PM 9:55PM

Laemmle 4-Plex Theatre
1332 2nd Street
(310) 394-9741

Matchpoint
1:10PM 4:05PM 7PM 9:55PM
Mrs. Henderson Presents
1:45PM 4:30PM 7:10PM 9:45PM
Why We Fight
1:55PM 4:40PM 7:20PM 9:50PM
Good Night, and Good Luck
1:15PM 3:30PM 5:45PM 8PM 10:15PM

Questions or comments? Email calendar@smdp.com

MORE TODAY IN HISTORY

In 1861, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi and four other Southerners resigned from the U.S. Senate.

In 1924, Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Lenin died at age 54.

In 1942, Count Basie and His Orchestra recorded "One O'clock Jump" in New York for Okeh Records.

In 1950, former State Department official Alger Hiss, accused of being part of a Communist spy ring, was found guilty in New York of lying to a grand jury. (Hiss, who always maintained his innocence, served less than four years in prison.)

In 1950, George Orwell, author of "1984," died in London.

In 1954, the first atomic submarine, the USS Nautilus, was launched at Groton, Conn., (however, the Nautilus did not make its first nuclear-powered run until nearly a year later).

In 1976, the supersonic Concorde jet was put into service by Britain and France.

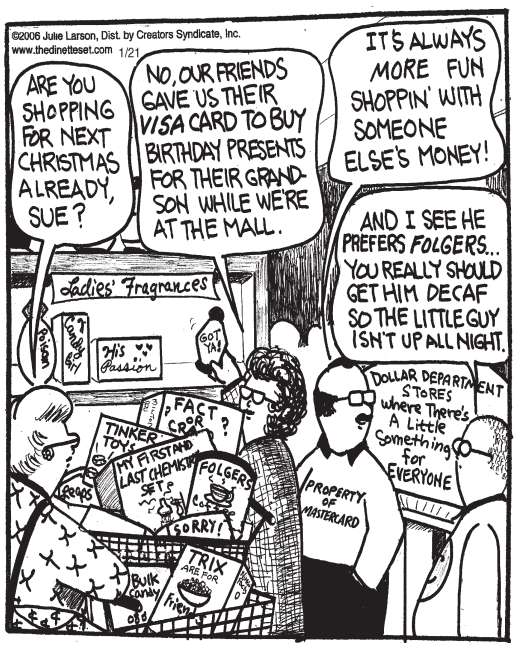
In 1977, President Carter pardoned almost all Vietnam War draft evaders.

In 1997, Speaker Newt Gingrich was reprimanded and fined as the House voted for first time in history to discipline its leader for ethical misconduct.

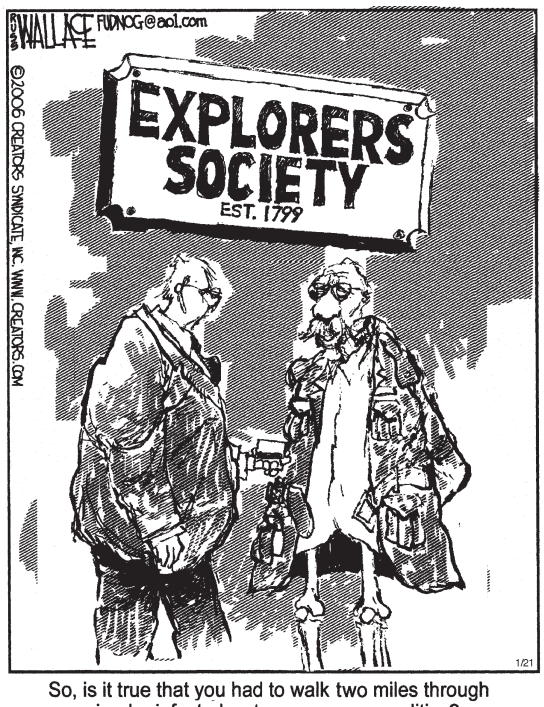
Ten years ago: At the 53rd annual Golden Globes, "Sense and Sensibility" won best dramatic picture; "Babe" won best comedy.

COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson

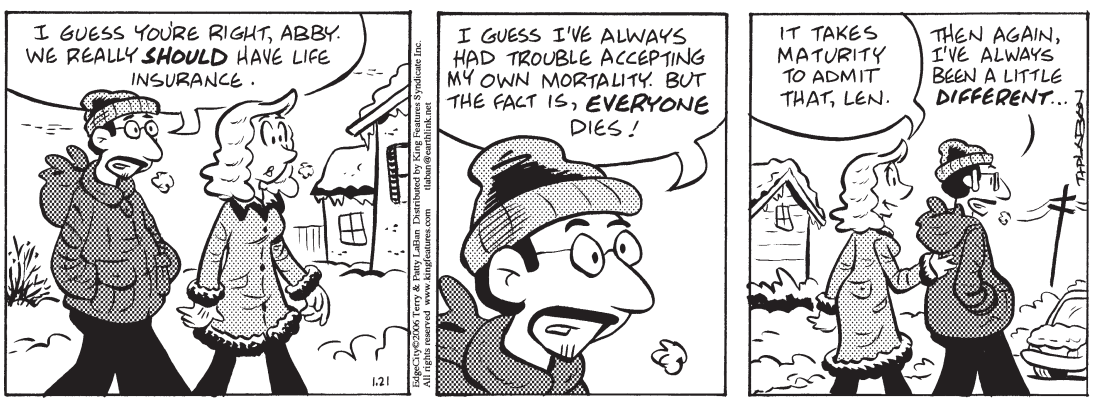


Natural Selection® By Russ Wallace

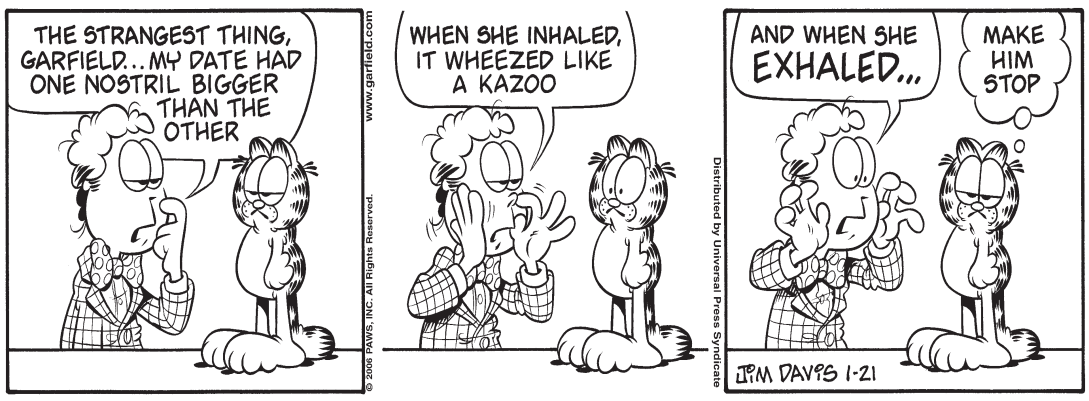


So, is it true that you had to walk two miles through piranha infested waters on your expedition?

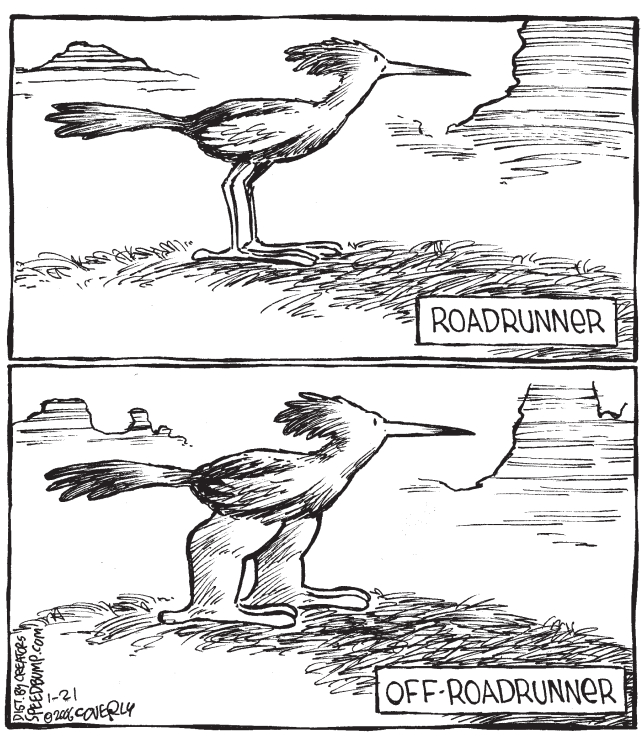
edge City by Terry & Patty LaBan



Garfield® By Jim Davis



Speed Bump® By Dave Coverly



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Cone units
7 Soup need
11 Is unable to
12 Workout byproduct
13 Bee abode
14 Pace
15 Humming sound
16 Mint output
17 Beach stuff
18 Pepper-oni's cousin
19 Elevator man
21 Football's Marino
22 Redcoat opponent
25 Outlaw
26 Give a new look
27 Squirrel's stash
29 Enter
33 Is bold
34 1914 battle site
35 Wanes
36 Like cows and hens
37 Determination
38 Strolled
39 Understands
40 Perches

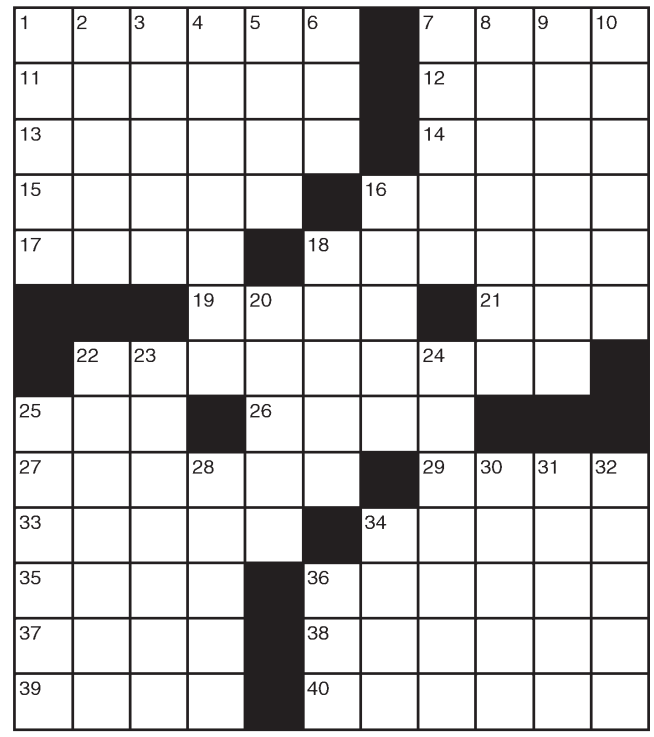
DOWN

1 A lot
2 "Meet John Doe" director
3 Burger add-on
4 Eternally
5 Tiny hole
6 Pig's digs
7 Bread ring
8 Ottawa anthem
9 "Leaves of Grass" poet
10 Admits
16 Packed up
18 Places
20 Veers
22 Like the Addams family
23 Like satellites
24 Gardner/Gable movie
25 Scoundrel
28 Takes five
30 Some exams
31 Harbor
32 Must have
34 Exec's note
36 Way off

A	N	I	T	A	■	S	A	Y	E	R
F	I	T	I	N	■	O	P	E	R	A
R	A	Z	E	D	■	L	E	H	A	R
I	C	H	■	O	N	O	■	U	S	E
C	I	A	■	V	O	N	■	D	E	S
A	N	K	L	E	T	■	L	I	S	T
■	■	P	E	R	D	I	E	M	■	■
S	H	E	D	■	O	N	S	E	T	S
C	A	R	■	O	N	A	■	N	U	T
O	W	L	■	G	E	M	■	U	N	O
L	A	M	E	R	■	E	T	H	I	C
D	I	A	N	E	■	S	K	I	N	K
S	I	N	E	S	■	S	O	N	G	S

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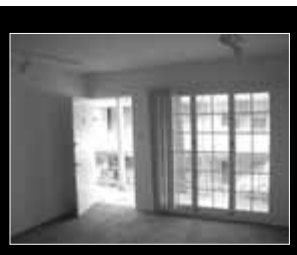
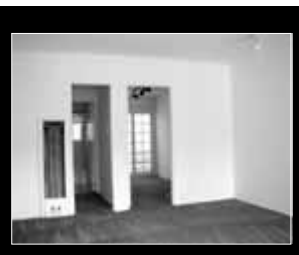
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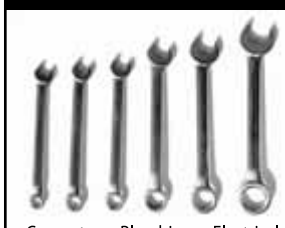
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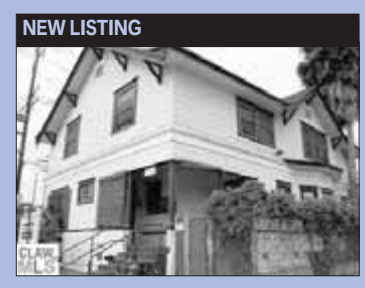


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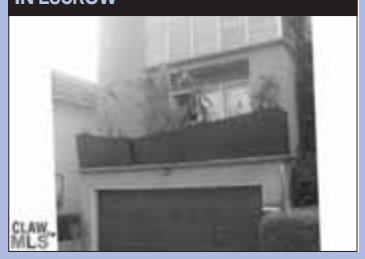
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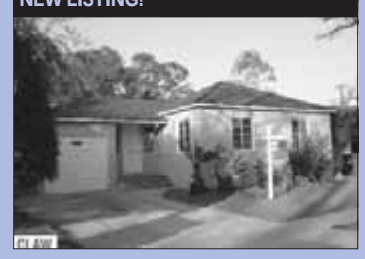
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