

FREE

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School district draws line in sand

Superintendent sets strict criteria for reducing class sizes

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Special to the Daily Press

Officials plan to stop allowing non-resident children to enroll in Santa Monica Malibu Unified schools for at least one year.

Under a plan unveiled by school superintendent John Deasy at last week's school board meeting, only non-resident employees of the school district, as well as Malibu and Santa Monica residents, will be allowed to enroll their children in the district.

Otherwise, no new permits will be issued to children residing outside city limits, stemming roughly 300-400 students per year. Children with current permits and their siblings who have not yet reached school age will be allowed to stay.

Five years ago the school district was underfunded and unable to cope

with the financial weight of educating its students. So in its effort to raise money, the school board allowed many out-of-district students to enroll in Santa Monica. With the increased enrollment came extra money from the state.

Currently, out-of-district children make up 21 percent of the entire student body, bringing in more than \$12 million in state funding. If the school district trims 300 of those students in the first year, it will lose an estimated \$1.4 million.

"Unless there are substantial sums of money — and I want to emphasize substantial — to offset the money we get (from the state) this will only be a desirable policy that cannot be achieved," Deasy said. "We must use the first year to find new

funding sources to continue keeping class sizes low in future years."

School officials said about 45 percent of the non-resident student body is from city or school district employees.

School board member Jose Escarce said while the remaining 55 percent "have no obvious connection to the school district, they are reflective of years of a liberal permit policy."

"More permanent and lasting permit policies can be put in place in one year from now, but for now this moratorium would give us some breathing room to make some lasting decisions," he said.

The teacher's union president said the current overcrowding problem was a direct result of the school district's desire to have more money.

"The policy that is wrongly in place regarding permits has brought us to this situation," said Harry Keiley, president of the Santa Monica Malibu Classroom Teachers Association. "The net result

Fine tuning



Supergo's Neri Guardado fine tunes one of the bike shop's newest models so it's ready for the road.

Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

has been increased revenue for the school district but it over crowded classrooms and forced teachers to share classroom space."

Late in the discussion, some school board members

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Maran murder investigation almost complete, DA says

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

A Los Angeles district attorney confirmed Wednesday that the investigation into Santa Monica High School sophomore Deanna Maran's murder should be complete within a week.

Whether or not charges will be filed against a 15-year-old girl who allegedly had a role in Maran's Nov. 17 murder remains unclear, but will be decided upon next week.

"It's more important that we get the right information rather than moving fast," said Los Angeles District Attorney Alex Karkanen. "We want to do a full and thorough investigation."

The 15-year-old's half sister, 17-year-old Katrina Sarkissian, allegedly stabbed Deanna at a party attended by high school and college students. But Sarkissian died, possibly from a drug overdose, the day after the fatal party while being questioned by police. Autopsy

results have not been released yet.

Maran, 15, was stabbed with a knife after she confronted the 15-year-old girl who was breaking potted plants at the home where the party was held in an upscale Westwood home. Deanna was then allegedly jumped by the girl, her sister and their friends — all of whom are reportedly from upscale communities, including Santa Monica and Brentwood.

Charges also may be brought

See MARAN, page 3

Youth are asked to speak out

By Daily Press staff

In response to the violence area youth have dealt with over the past few years, most recently the murder of a high school student last November, the school district is asking students to formally speak out.

As a follow-up to the community peace vigil on Dec. 17, which was partly in response to 15-year-old Deanna Maran's murder, the Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District is sponsoring a "youth speakout" on Tuesday, Jan. 29, from 7-9 p.m. in the Santa Monica High School cafeteria. The high school is located at 601 Pico Blvd.

Adults and teachers know that youth often feel their concerns about violence are not always heard by their elders. The event is planned as an opportunity for youth to speak to the community about what they think.

The ultimate goal is to open the lines of communication and end violence, which repeatedly devastates the lives of children, families and the community.

The December peace rally and candle light procession from St. Anne's Catholic Church on Colorado to Douglas Park on Wilshire Boulevard was designed to bring awareness to the multiple tragic teen deaths the city has

See SPEAK OUT, page 3

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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Add more emotion to your communication. Others need to hear the meaning of your words in your voice. When you express yourself in this manner, others listen. A meeting allows everyone to dream about what could be. Join in. Why be the voice of sanity? Tonight: A gathering goes late.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ When you actually look at the facts and figures, you cannot deny what is true for you. You need to cut back once more. Brainstorm with a boss, but don't volunteer more time without compensation. Allow your creativity to speak. Tonight: Pay bills.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ The moon in your sign helps you christen key projects. Your ability to understand others could be less reliable than usual. Be more imaginative. Ask more questions. Ask people how they really feel. Your popularity soars because of your efforts. Tonight: Make an important call.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★ Stand back from emotional issues. Quite possibly you see situations through a dingy haze right now. Listen to a partner or friend who often inspires you. Finding a middle ground could be difficult. Don't take on any new projects. Tonight: Do for yourself.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Speak your mind. Be direct with a friend who often makes many demands. Your personality draws many toward you. New possibilities happen as a result. Brainstorm with others. Let them know how valuable of an asset you consider them to be. Tonight: Start the weekend early, if you can.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ You're in the limelight. Others look to you for answers. The good news is that you achieve the results you want, though you might have a problem with others. You might need to be abnormally stern with an associate or someone you're usually playful with. Tonight: Work late.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You're able to read between the lines with someone who doesn't see eye to eye with you. Perhaps what this person doesn't say is far more important. Use your imagination to fill in the gaps. Open up a discussion with this person, until you get the whole story. Tonight: Plan your weekend.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Your attitude helps loosen up a situation considerably. You might not be able to turn a key person's decision around, but success naturally follows you. Talk to those close to you, and solutions follow in your path. Lighten up about what could be happening. Tonight: Find a quiet corner.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You don't even have to make the first move! Others seek you out, and you enjoy yourself wherever you are. Let go of demands; opt for being receptive. Someone makes true confessions. You have a lot to think about. Discuss your feelings, too. Tonight: Where the action is.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You might feel a lot differently about an associate. Discuss how you feel about a work-related matter. Carefully consider options that revolve around a friendship or an important relationship. Don't play games with money. Avoid manipulation. Tonight: Put up your feet.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Let go if you want. Sometimes you squeeze yourself into a tight corset to get along with the conservatives around you. For now, allow more spontaneity. Your creativity helps solve a loved one's problem. Listen to someone as he or she whispers. This person is shy! Tonight: Smile on.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ Your family often demands a lot from you. Lighten up about the possibilities that surround your emotional life. Don't automatically jump in and say "no." Carefully listen to someone who often proves to have more insight about yourself than you do! Tonight: Curl up with a favorite TV show.



WEATHER

Today ...	Sunny	High—63°F	Low—42°F
Tomorrow ...	Mostly sunny	High—65°F	Low—44°F
Saturday ...	Partly cloudy	High—59°F	Low—45°F



QUOTE of the DAY

**"If you look like your passport photo,
you're too ill to travel."**

— Willkommen

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LOCAL



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Comedian Paula Poundstone hugs one of her supporters outside of the Santa Monica Courthouse in December when she was released from Promises treatment facility in Malibu.

Paula Poundstone: 'I'm not a child molester'

By The Associated Press

Comedian and Santa Monica resident Paula Poundstone, having returned to the stage after her no contest plea to a child-endangerment charge, appeared on television Tuesday night to declare, "I'm not a child molester."

"I wasn't convicted of child molest-

"They didn't convict me of child molesting because they couldn't, because it's not true and if it were, they would have gone for it."

— PAULA POUNDSTONE

ing," she told Maria Shriver of "Dateline NBC." "They didn't convict me of child molesting because they couldn't, because it's not true and if it were, they would have gone for it."

Poundstone, 42, pleaded no contest to one felony count of child endangerment for driving while drunk with children in her car and one misdemeanor count of inflicting injury to a 12-year-old on

three occasions. She was sentenced in October to 180 days at Promises, a Malibu drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, and five years probation.

After winning praise from the judge who sentenced her for good work in rehabilitation, Poundstone returned to work Dec. 14 with an appearance at the 700-seat Rio Theater in Santa Cruz. She also has performances next month in Anaheim and San Francisco.

Poundstone is still angry that she was originally charged with lewd conduct on a child, charges that were late dropped.

"I didn't do anything sexual. I didn't hit anybody. What happened is so colossally stupid that it's probably more embarrassing than anything else, but I don't want to say anything or do anything that will make the judge mad," she said.

She must return to court on Feb. 20 in Santa Monica for a review of how she is doing on probation.

Poundstone, who was a foster mother with three adopted children, is banned from fostering or adopting more children. She is allowed monitored daytime visits with her adopted children, but they cannot spend the night.

"I think, you know, Jesus, there's kids in orphanages in the Balkans that the state of California believe are better off there than with me. It's not a very good feeling," Poundstone said.

Classrooms overcrowded at SAMOHI, middle and elementary schools

DISTRICT, from page 1

were leaning toward weakening the proposal to allow more permits, but Deasy stood firm saying the financial and academic health of the school district depended on lowering class sizes.

"It feels very difficult to talk about some of these (permit cuts). On the other hand, I have to say we do not have the money to continue running the system as it is."

— JOHN DEASY
SMMUSD superintendent

"It feels very difficult to talk about some of these (permit cuts). On the other hand, I have to say we do not have the money to continue running the system as it is," he said. "So I want to be very clear on that issue. We have systematically increased permits to bring in revenue into a system that can't support it."

Schools feeling the greatest impact from increased enrollment are Santa Monica High School, John Adams and Lincoln

middle schools, and Franklin and Juan Cabrillo elementary schools.

Parents of permit students warned against eliminating their children from the school district entirely, and pressed Deasy for assurances that the proposed permit policy would not be made any stricter.

"I am a permit parent. My children are permit students. We are a permit family," said Jeff Condon, a Westwood resident with a Santa Monica law practice. "Your proposed policy is disturbing to me because my children have been invited to the dance — so to speak — by you, but now you feel that you wish to change your mind based on some vague measurement system."

Condon said he understands the need to lower class sizes and his children would be eligible to remain in Santa Monica schools.

"But I still feel compelled to make the point that it would be patently unfair to break up a family in the school arena," he said. "I know life is generally unfair, but we have an expectation that people will act rationally" and allow our children to remain together in Santa Monica.

Administrators will write up the proposed classroom reduction plan into a policy. It will be presented to the school board for ratification in late February. Deasy said there was some urgency to enact the plan before the district began working on next year's budget.

Police investigation complete

MARAN, from page 1

against others who may have had a role in Maran's death. Dozens of onlookers watched as Deanna was pinned down, continuously punched and kicked, then fatally stabbed with a knife. According to several eyewitness accounts, a Santa Monica High School student helped pin Maran down while she was being beat up. She has reportedly dropped out of SAMOHI.

Los Angeles Police Detective Ron Phillips said his investigation is complete and

"After it became public, a lot of kids came forward and they cooperated great."

— RON PHILLIPS
LAPD detective

was handed over to Karkanen's office last week. Dozens of people who attended the party have been interviewed.

"Until the DA's office comes out with a decision I can't discuss the case," he said. "After it became public, a lot of kids came forward and they cooperated great."

Karkanen said he's working with the 15-year-old's defense attorney. He wants to be careful that any charges brought against the teenager are supported by enough evidence.

"It certainly was a lot of work for the detectives," he added.

School district deals with loss

SPEAK OUT, from page 1

experienced in recent years.

Maran was stabbed to death at a party in West Los Angeles. At the beginning of the school year, a recent Olympic High School graduate was shot in Venice. And last year three Santa Monica-Malibu Unified high school students died tragically, one from suicide.

"Will we not let our children die violent deaths," said Santa Monica-Malibu Unified Superintendent John Deasy said to residents at the peace rally. "This is a beginning to show our children that we believe in them and that we are listening."

For more information on the "youth speakout," call Kathy McTaggart at (310) 450-8338.



NATIONAL

Biggest spending push in 2 decades spent on military

BY SONYA ROSS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Wednesday proposed the biggest increase in military spending in 20 years, nearly \$50 billion more next year, and said America “will not cut corners” in the war against terrorism.

He pledged he would not seek political advantage from that war.

The president outlined the military part of his fiscal 2003 budget proposal in a luncheon speech before the Reserve Officers Association. He said his highest budget priority is twofold — the military abroad and safety at home — even though that will create financial strain for the federal government.

“I have a responsibility to prepare the nation for all that lies ahead,” Bush said. “There will be no room for misunderstanding. The most basic commitment of our government will be the security of our country.”

Bush spoke a few hours after a closed-door session with House and Senate leaders at the White House, in which he gave an update on the anti-terrorism effort and told the lawmakers, “I have no ambition whatsoever to use this as a political issue. There is no daylight between the executive and the legislative branches.”

According to congressional and White House sources who related the scene to The Associated Press, Bush’s pledge drew no response. Among those present was Bush’s political adviser Karl Rove, who

incensed Democrats last week when he told a GOP conference that the Republican Party is better suited for carrying out the war on terrorism.

A senior White House official said Wednesday that Rove was reflecting on the viewpoint of partisan and independent pollsters — that Republicans are considered stronger on national security than Democrats. The Democrats turned the speech into a political issue by accusing him of politicizing the war, the official said.

If approved by the House and Senate, the \$48 billion would be the largest increase in military spending since President Reagan held office two decades ago. Bush said the extra money would go toward missile defense, pay increases for service personnel and acquisition of precision weaponry, unmanned vehicles and high-tech equipment.

On Capitol Hill, some Democrats greeted Bush’s plan with skepticism. Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, defense chairman for the Senate Appropriations Committee, said lawmakers would be reluctant to sign onto the plan “unless the president can justify it.”

Sen. John Warner, R-Va., ranking member of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, said he believes Congress ultimately will support Bush. “Clearly the people of the United States understand the terrorist threat poised at this nation, and will accept and indeed applaud the president’s initiative,” Warner said.

Bush said the \$2 trillion budget he will



Ron Edmonds/Associated Press

Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., left, Speaker of the House of Representatives Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., left center, and House Majority Whip Tom Delay, R-Texas, right, watch as Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., right center, talks with reporters after meeting with President Bush in the Cabinet Room of the White House, Wednesday, in Washington. Standing in the background behind Hastert is House Majority Leader Dick Armey, R-Texas.

submit to Congress next month will devote \$380 billion to the Pentagon, an increase of \$48 billion. That includes a \$10 billion “war reserve” for active military operations overseas, said White House budget chief Mitchell Daniels.

Bush’s budget will project deficits of \$106 billion for this year and \$80 billion

for the 2003 fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, Daniels said. He said Bush anticipates a return to surpluses in 2005, with \$61 billion in black ink.

Bush said that acquiring more modern weaponry may strain the budget, but “we will not cut corners when it comes to the defense of our great land.”

Enron debacle prompts debates over auditor independence

BY GARY GENTILE

AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES — Given new urgency by Enron’s collapse, the debate over auditor independence is shifting to corporate shareholder meetings.

Union pension funds representing about \$220 billion in assets have launched a nationwide campaign to put the issue on shareholder agendas.

A study by the Investor Responsibility Research Center revealed that as much as 75 percent of fees paid to accounting firms in 2000 were related to non-audit consulting services.

“People were shocked at the high proportion of non-audit fees,” said Carol Bowie, director of governance research services for the center.

Last year was the first time companies were required by the Securities and Exchange Commission to itemize amounts paid to accounting firms for different services.

Under former chairman Arthur Levitt, who stepped down last year, the SEC adopted several rules restricting the activities of corporate auditors because of concerns that some accountants had become too cozy with the companies they audited.

The relationships threatened the integrity of financial reports and undermined investor confidence, Levitt and others warned.

At Motorola Inc., for instance, the company paid \$3.9 million to KPMG for the audit of its 2000 financial statements, according to documents Motorola filed with the SEC. It paid the accounting firm another \$62.3 million for consulting services — a ratio of 16 to 1.

Apple Computer Inc. spent \$2.26 million for its 2000 audit, also performed by KPMG. Apple paid the firm \$28.5 million for other services — a ratio of more than 12 to 1.

Funds controlled by unions for carpenters, plumbers and other building trade workers have filed proposals at 29 companies. Six of them, including Apple and Motorola, have asked the SEC to intervene and reject the proposals on various grounds.

Most shareholder proposals usually garner little support the first year they appear on proxy statements. It generally takes several years to gain enough steam to

either pass or force companies to negotiate with the people making the proposals.

But Enron may have changed all that.

“I think there’s steam from day one,” said Ed Durkin, director of special programs for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, which is sponsoring the bulk of the proposals. “I think we’ll see votes that will send pretty good messages.”

The independence of Enron’s auditing firm, Arthur Andersen, has been questioned after it was revealed that Andersen was paid millions to consult for the energy company while Enron was reporting questionable financial results.

The first vote will come at the annual meeting of The Walt Disney Co., scheduled for Feb. 19 in Hartford, Conn.

In 2001, Disney paid PriceWaterhouse Coopers \$8.6 million for its audit and \$32 million for other services — a ratio of 3.7 to 1.

Disney management recommends that shareholders vote against the proposal, using arguments some believe will be repeated by other companies during the year.

Disney argues that its audit committee already has strict guidelines to govern the hiring of accounting firms as consultants, and that the disclosure required by the SEC gives shareholders adequate information when considering the choice of an independent auditor.

Shareholder activists say even if the proposals do pass, other safeguards are needed to prevent potential conflicts.

Lawmakers supporting more restraints hope that the Enron collapse and the attention generated at shareholder meetings will aid legislative efforts to address the problem.

“It’s a no-brainer,” said U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who this week introduced a bill to restrict the work done by accounting firms. “But there are special interests, the very large accounting firms, opposing this.”

Mob boss indicted on extortion

BY TOM HAYS

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Imprisoned mob boss Vincent “The Chin” Gigante, who dodged prosecution for nearly seven years by claiming mental illness, was indicted Wednesday on new charges alleging he runs the powerful Genovese family from behind bars.

Gigante, 74, and Genovese members allegedly infiltrated the International Longshoremen’s Association and ran extortion rackets against companies operating at piers in New York, New Jersey and Miami, the indictment said.

“Vincent ‘The Chin’ Gigante is truly the boss of the Genovese crime family,” said Barry Mawn, head of the FBI’s New York office. “He is a ‘hands on’ leader who remains actively involved in the running of the organization.”

Gigante’s attorney, Michael Marinaccio, said he could not comment because he had not yet read the indictment.

His client remains in a federal lockup in Fort Worth, Texas.

Gigante was dubbed “The Oddfather” for his habit of wandering New York City in a bathrobe and mumbling to himself. Authorities have long alleged that his behavior was a dodge to avoid prosecution.

Also indicted were Gigante’s son, 45-year-old Andrew Gigante, and six other alleged Genovese members. The indictment said the younger Gigante relayed orders from his father.

Andrew Gigante pleaded innocent at an arraignment in federal court in Brooklyn. He was ordered held without bail until a hearing next week.

The indictment’s top counts of racketeering, extortion and money-laundering carry a maximum sentence of 20 years.

Vincent Gigante is already serving 12 years on a 1997 conviction on charges of racketeering and murder conspiracy. He faces a charge of obstruction of justice for repeatedly delaying his trial with claims of mental illness.

NATIONAL



New Storey County brothel plans July opening

By The Associated Press

VIRGINIA CITY, Nev. — Owners of a planned brothel in Storey County say construction will begin next week with grading work for the 24,000 square-foot bordello.

Developer Lance Gilman and general manager Susan Austin also have decided on a new name: the "Wild Horse Canyon Ranch and Spa."

Austin says the brothel is scheduled to open July 1.

"Storey County really needs the additional revenue and that is why it is important to open on July 1," Austin told the

Reno Gazette-Journal.

The brothel was originally named the "Crazy Horse Resort and Spa." But that upset many Native Americans who argued it was disrespectful to the warrior chief of the Sioux nation, Crazy Horse.

Crazy Horse led the defeat of Lt. Col. George Custer at the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876.

Austin and Gilman quickly said they would change the name after hearing of the opposition.

The brothel off Interstate 80 east of Reno will open with 40 rooms and will employ up to 300 women, with many

working just once or twice a month, Austin said.

"We'll also have a swimming pool and Jacuzzis," Austin said. "We plan to build private bungalows in the back later."

Although Storey County has four licenses for brothels, the county only has one in operation, the Old Bridge Ranch.

Gilman, the developer of the South Reno Business Park and the Reno-Tahoe Industrial Park in Storey County, applied for two brothel licenses last year. He was going to call those brothels, "The Cookie Jar, Inc."

But he backed off those plans after

receiving complaints from clients of the Reno-Tahoe Industrial Park, who didn't want the brothels near their business.

The newest site is a little east of the infamous Mustang Ranch brothel, which has been padlocked since 1999 guilty verdicts against the brothel's parent companies and manager in a federal fraud and racketeering trial.

Gilman was granted his latest brothel license after a background check by the county. Storey County officials said Austin's background would also be investigated before she is allowed to run the brothel after it is built.

Henley, Crow, King announce support for labor code bill

BY STEFANIE FRITH

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Don Henley, Sheryl Crow, Carole King and other recording artists announced their support Wednesday for a bill before the state Legislature that would repeal a part of the labor code tying singers to long recording contracts.

The 1987 amendment exempts the \$41 billion-record industry from the state's labor laws. The recording industry says, however, that the exception is necessary in a business that takes big risks to entertain the world.

Currently, all workers in California except recording artists have the right to terminate their contracts after seven years. Recording artists say the time it takes to turn out the industry-standard of seven albums means they frequently spend 14 years or more with the same label.

"It's almost impossible to hand it seven or even five albums in seven years," said Crow, who was there as part of the Recording Artist's Coalition, which represents the

interests of recording artists. "(In seven years) I have only made two albums. At that rate it would take me 21 years to complete the contract. All we are asking for is fairness."

"(In seven years) I have only made two albums. At that rate it would take me 21 years to complete the contract."

— SHERYL CROW
Musician

But that's what the record industry says it's asking for. Bob Dusky, president of the San Francisco-based Six Degrees Records said that, if passed, the bill would seriously endanger record labels.

"We put up a substantial amount of money to break that artist," said Dusky, whose company handles eclectic and rock and pop singers, putting out about 24 albums a year. "That money is coming out of the pockets of smaller businesses. To survive, we need a partnership with the artists."

The bill stems from a September hearing called by Sen. Kevin Murray, a Culver City Democrat and former music agent, manager and attorney for recording artists. Murray, who formerly worked for the William Morris Agency, said then that he wants a state friendly to artists and companies.

During Wednesday's announcement at the state Capitol, the room filled with artists and supporters such as Beck, the Deftones, Stevie Nicks, Dexter Holland of the Offspring and members of the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists and the American Federation of Musicians. Murray said that the turnout "gives a good indication" of the support for the bill.

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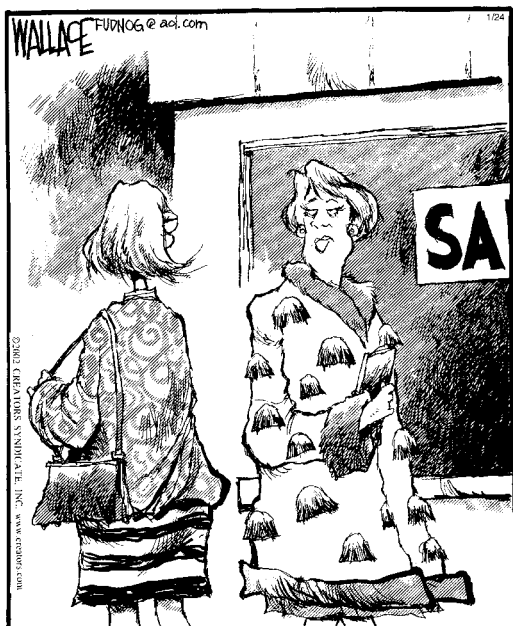
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edge city

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CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Aquarium fish
 - 6 "Love Story" writer
 - 11 Earthy shade
 - 12 Radiate
 - 13 Donut-shaped
 - 14 Fang output
 - 15 Without a contract
 - 17 Sunday seat
 - 19 McKellen of "X-Men"
 - 20 Folder feature
 - 23 Plymouth family
 - 25 Cry of dismay
 - 26 Short distance
 - 28 Pulls along
 - 29 Pass through a membrane
 - 30 — Arbor
 - 31 Actor's signal
 - 32 Unite
 - 33 Drink with scones
 - 35 Pie nut
 - 38 Make lumber out of
 - 41 Flabbergast
 - 42 Make blank
 - 43 Swindles
 - 44 More cunning
- DOWN**
- 1 Nursery dweller
 - 2 Writer Umberto
 - 3 Toss to the floor
 - 4 Horse halter
 - 5 Trig function
 - 6 Common dice roll
 - 7 Company suit
 - 8 Colt, e.g.
 - 9 Com-motion
 - 10 Writer Stanislaw
 - 16 Faint
 - 17 Trattoria order
 - 18 Singer John

S	P	U	M	E		T	A	P	A
H	I	T	I	T		M	O	L	E
A	R	E	N	A		A	G	O	N
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		W	H	I	T	E	L	I	E
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B	O	W	E	D		R	E	N	E
O	M	E	G	A		U	T	T	E
T	A	R	S			B	E	E	R

Yesterday's answer

- 20 Discard
- 21 Winning margin, perhaps
- 22 Bent downward
- 24 Print measures
- 25 Resistance unit
- 27 Deadly flies
- 31 Traffic markers
- 33 Visibility lessener
- 34 Member of the nobility
- 35 Knee protector
- 36 Earth-bound bird
- 37 Pinnacle
- 39 Exploit
- 40 A pop

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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41						42			
43						44			

1-24

STUMPED?

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Taking 'GI Joe' stereotype a bit too far

The Wilmington (N.C.) Morning Star reported in November that a state inspector, using new guidelines from North Carolina's Early Childhood Environmental Rating System, had downgraded the Kids Gym Schoolhouse day-care center in Wilmington only because she had found nine 2-inch-high toy soldiers in a play area and thus concluded that the center was engaged in "stereotyp(ing) violent individuals and promot(ing) violence."

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FINISH CARPENTERS Experience in fine custom residential required, 3yrs minimum. Must have references & tools. Call(310)822-0685, fax ref. to (310) 822-0785

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BACK PAGE

Nuts about numbers? Census Bureau has your fix

BY GENARO C. ARMAS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Nuts about numbers? The Census Bureau is about to satisfy your craving.

On sale starting Thursday is the latest edition of the Statistical Abstract of the United States — a 1,000-page book light on words but chock full of numbers on who we are, and how we live.

For starters:

—Americans consumed 76 billion pounds of red meat and poultry in 2000, up 21 percent from 1990.

—Deaths in alcohol-related crashes are down from about half of all accidents in 1990 to 2-out-of-5 a decade later.

—Nearly 110 million people use cellular phones, up from 5 million.

“One-hundred-ten million cell phone users? I’m not surprised,” medical student Smitha Philip said as she clutched a cell phone in her hand while waiting for a friend. “I’m not too dependent on mine, but I know a lot of friends that cannot live without it.”

The 121st edition of the abstract features more than 1,400 tables and charts, including updated population counts from the 2000 census.

Also new this year are more arcane topics like the percentage of soybean acreage planted with genetically modified seed (68 percent as of last year), and the number of public drinking water systems that serve 100,000 or more people (359).

Call it the federal government’s version of the World Almanac, said Glenn King, chief of the Census Bureau’s Statistical Compendia branch.

The 121st edition of the abstract features more than 1,400 tables and charts, including updated population counts from the 2000 census.

“It’s sort of like our official record-keeper,” King said. Not only does the book compile government figures, but it takes data from trade associations and other groups as well on topics that the bureau does not track, such as religion.

The bureau sells about 40,000 copies a year, mostly to researchers, marketers and journalists. It is also available via CD-rom, and can be accessed through the Census Bureau’s web site.

Don’t expect to find any analysis, though — it is strictly statistics.

Other tidbits:

—Birth rates for teens age 15 to 19 fell to an all-time low in 1999, at about 50 births per 1,000. That was 20 percent lower than the peak reported in 1991.

—Per capita consumption of sweeteners like sugar, syrups and honey increased from 137 pounds in 1990 to 158 pounds in 1999.

—The average monthly cell phone bill declined over the decade from \$81 to \$45.

—42 percent of U.S. households had Internet access in 2000, up from 26 percent just two years earlier.

But the numbers themselves can only say so much about whether quality of life of Americans has improved, medical researcher Mike Hammett said as he took a break from work.

The Sept. 11 attacks, the anthrax scare and the flailing economy weigh on people’s minds, Hammett said as he smoked a cigarette. “I don’t think the quality of life is as good as it was 10 years ago, considering all the problems we’ve had lately.”

The 2001 Statistical Abstract is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, (\$38 for the soft-bound edition and \$48 hardbound) by calling 202-512-1800.

It is also available from the National Technical Information Service (\$37 softbound and \$45 hardbound) by calling 1-800-553-6847.

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