

FREE

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2004

Volume 3, Issue 64

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOOTTO

SUPER LOTTO PLUS

25, 3, 9, 38, 33
Meganumber: 18
Jackpot: \$13 million

FANTASY 5

32, 18, 21, 34, 36

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 2, 3, 2
Evening picks: 4, 1, 1

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 04, Big Ben
2nd Place: 03, Hot Shot
3rd Place: 06, Whirl Win
Race Time: 1:40.43



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Spain's Catalanian High Court ruled in November that the Barcelona construction company Perez Parellada Promotions had improperly fired a worker who admitted smoking marijuana on the job, finding that he only smoked during meal breaks and did not smoke enough to affect his work.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"All the eccentricities that I commit, I do because I wish to prove to myself that I am not the dead brother, but the living one."

— Salvador Dalí



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Sting nets 10th SM merchant

Puzzle Zoo busted for overcharging an undercover official by almost \$40

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — A Santa Monica toy store has been accused of overcharging a customer, which makes it the 10th local retailer this winter to be pursued in court for the charge. Prosecutors said there are another three stores that soon will be charged.

The Promenade-based Puzzle Zoo allegedly overcharged an undercover official last summer by \$39.97 for one item. Charges against the store were filed earlier this month, and an arraignment is scheduled for Mar. 3.

Jay Demircift, owner of the four-outlet Puzzle Zoo chain, said the overcharge was accidental.

"It was an honest mistake on my cashier's part," he said. "These are human beings, and they make mistakes sometimes."

See PUZZLE ZOO, page 4

Bayside barrier



John Wood/Daily Press

A police car is parked at the east end of the Santa Monica Pier to block vehicles from entering. The city began parking the car there only recently — much like what is done at both ends of the Farmers' Market in downtown Santa Monica. Vehicles hadn't been used as barriers until an elderly man drove through the Farmers' Market last July, killing 10 and injuring 63. At the time, wooden sawhorses blocked the market. Several victims plan to sue City Hall for the accident. They argue the city should have foreseen the dangers. City Hall maintains it isn't liable and couldn't have foreseen the danger.

David Lackman: Meet me at the Library

Alehouse, that is ...

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

The owner of the Library Alehouse on Main Street stumbled into the bar and restaurant business almost by accident.

While studying economics at UCLA, David Lackman was told to develop an entrepreneurial business plan. So Lackman, now 33, did what any college student would do — he drafted plans for a brew pub.

His work, inspired by the pubs of Berkeley, gained attention from friends and family. And before long, Lackman decided against graduate studies in urban planning and for life as a restaurateur.

Last year, the eight-year-old Library Alehouse grossed more than \$1.5 million and earned acco-

lades for being environmentally friendly. Lackman is proud of the restaurant's sustainably harvested wood, organic foods, paper to-go products and commitment to composting food scraps.

Today, Lackman, son of a UCLA engineering professor, lives in a house in Sunset Park and spends his off-time gardening, hiking and reading non-fiction. Here, the Daily Press caught up with the proud owner of a Prius and asked how he wound up on Main Street.

You're well known locally as a committed environmentalist. What's your philosophy on life?

"Philosophy on life, hmmm — drink only good beer ...

"Basically, my philosophy on life is to try to understand how my actions and what I do is going to effect things around me — and the environment

See PROFILES, page 5



Ideas sought for how to end homelessness

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monicans will weigh in tonight with their thoughts on how to end homelessness within 10 years.

The city of Santa Monica in partnership with the Los Angeles Homeless Services

Authority (LAHSA) is hosting a "Bring LA Home" community meeting and discussion at 6:30 p.m. in the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main St.

A panel recently convened to devise a plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles County within a decade. The plan is similar to those of

dozens of other cities that are taking on the daunting task, which was spurred by the Bush Administration's goal to rid the nation of its homeless population.

There are as many homeless people in all of

See HOMELESSNESS, page 4



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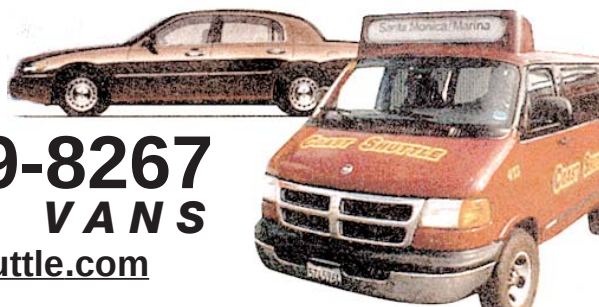
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Play as if it is Friday, Sag



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)

★★★★ Express your full personality, even if you feel a bit insecure on some level. Friends and associates spur you on in a very special way. Brainstorm away. Share your ideas, and your supporters will help you zero in on what you want. Tonight: As you like it.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ Step back and do some hard-core thinking. You might feel a bit down and out about what is going on and what someone says. Someone you respect a lot puts you on a pedestal, or vice versa. Be careful, as a fall is inevitable. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ You star in a meeting. Look with care at new possibilities. Make calls to experts. Break past regimented thinking. You see a situation in a new light as a result. You might be surprised by the response. Tonight: Join your pals.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ You might be raining on someone's parade without realizing it. Right now, be more sensitive to others in your immediate surroundings. An associate, close loved one or friend could be most inspiring. Tonight: A must appearance.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ You see way beyond the obvious right now. You will be able to solve a problem quickly and efficiently. Don't hesitate to find someone more in the know than you. Don't feel insecure in the least when dealing with those around you. Tonight: Where the music is.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Work with someone on a close basis, even though you might prefer to work as a group. You laugh and express your more positive side with a co-worker or day-to-day friend. Realize how important this person is. Tonight: Go for togetherness.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You like what you hear, with the exception of what is happening within the work arena. Think through an idea that might seem far-out but has possibilities. A romance could become more spicy if you let it bloom. Tonight: Say "yes."



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Expand your life through more positive thinking, and detaching will be possible. You understand much more than you are willing to reveal. Dig into work and stop some of the daydreaming, and you will get a lot done. Tonight: Put your feet up.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Your fiery instincts work well right now, except with a beloved partner who might just slam the door on you. You must have noticed that this person has been uptight lately. Direct your sensitivity toward him or her. Tonight: Play as if it is Friday.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Take charge at work, as you see a lot that needs to get done. Use all your people skills if you don't want to push someone away. Investigate an expenditure or financial deal that feels too good to be true. Tonight: Buy a lottery ticket on the way home.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Put your best foot forward. You have a dreamy quality that others pick up on. Recognize that you could have limited energy levels at the moment. Don't push beyond your natural limits. Use your mind more than your body. Tonight: At a favorite spot, with a favorite person.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★ Take your time with a loved one you really care about. See what needs to be done in order to handle an upset child or loved one. This person could manifest his or her feelings by pulling away. Curb your spending for now. Tonight: Pay bills.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Understanding homeless services

By Daily Press staff

Advocates want residents to learn more about what goes into providing services to the homeless.

The Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition, and Santa Monica Bay Interfaith Council are co-sponsoring a volunteer event to raise public awareness of the resources available to people who are homeless and hungry in the community.

The WSHC on Feb. 6 is inviting members of the faith-based community to lend a hand and learn about the work they do. Volunteers will participate in service delivery at the various agencies, assisting with day-to-day functions and a selected group of special projects. The activities include painting, cleaning, teaching a computer class, cooking and gardening. Twelve faith-based institutions have responded so far and more are expected by the kick-off date.

"I'm very excited," said Tod Lipka, chair of the WSHC public relations committee, "that so many congregations already doing so much are able to partner with us to assist the homeless in getting the services they need."

The Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition is an association of more than 25 local human service, government agencies and faith-based organizations whose mission is to provide services for homeless and hungry people in the western part of Los Angeles County.

The WSHC came together 20 years ago to address the needs of the growing homeless population and continues to coordinate services, education and advocacy.

A rock 'n' roll tribute

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Playhouse Friday night benefit series presents a St. Valentine's Day eve performance of Love Rocks! Caron Murray and friends, which is a rock and roll tribute to the holiday. It will feature old favorites and some brand new delights, all presented in the first ever reunion by the original core members of the '80s new wave group, "The Little Girls." Love Rocks!, with singer-songwriter and original little girl Caron Maso Murray, and an array of musicians, plays for one night only, Feb. 13 at 8 p.m.

The original members of "The Little Girls," Caron Maso Murray (guitar and vocals), Michele Maso Tinsley (vocals) and Kip Brown (guitar and vocals), are joined by songwriter and Caron's current musical partner John Baker (guitar, bass and vocals), along with Terry Fain (guitar, vocals and percussion), Paul Butler (vocals and percussion) and Juliana Bucher (vocals and percussion).

"The Little Girls," who disbanded in the late '80s, opened for a host of top-of-the-charts groups, including the "Boomtownt Rats," "The Pretenders," "The Plimsouls," and "The Call," as well as many other well-known groups of the era. Their song "Earthquake" was a hit on KROQ (106.7 FM) in the mid-80s and has since gone on to notoriety as a favorite novelty hit on several reviewers' "desert island picks" lists, a number of Rhino Records' compilation CDs, and was recently covered on their latest CD summer by LAWeekly Pop/Rock Band Award winners "The Excessories."

Seating is limited and reservations are required. All tickets are a \$15 donation to the Save-the-Playhouse campaign. Call the playhouse box office at (310) 394-9779, ext. 1. Santa Monica Playhouse is located at 1211 Fourth St. in Santa Monica, one block east of the Third Street Promenade and on the Web at SantaMonicaPlayhouse.com.



surf report

Look for another day of overlapping WNW swells, with one building and one fading through the day. In the morning look for many of your better exposed winter breaks to see waves in the 3-4-5' range, with some better sets at top spots.

OUTLOOK: Look for the surf to be slowly fading on Sunday — although still overhead at the good spots — and into Monday.

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	LOW ONE	LOW TWO	HIGH ONE	HIGH TWO
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SUNDAY	5:09 AM	5:51 PM	11:04 AM	N/A
MONDAY	6:09 AM	6:26 PM	12:36 AM	11:49 AM
TUESDAY	7:24 AM	7:00 PM	1:16 AM	12:48 PM
WEDNESDAY	9:04 AM	7:39 PM	2:04 AM	2:20 PM
THURSDAY	10:39 AM	8:35 PM	3:00 AM	4:49 PM
FRIDAY	11:56 AM	9:51 PM	3:54 AM	6:50 PM

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The Q Line

A Santa Monica jury last week decided that a landlord wasn't liable for tenants' injuries and pain and suffering when they were attacked in their apartment by four gunmen.

The tenants claimed that the landlord should have provided better security at their apartment, which can't be accessed without a key or a code.

It raised a legal question of how much landlords should be held responsible for their tenants' safety.

"How far should landlords go in protecting their properties and their tenants? Do you agree with the jury's decision? Why?"

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response before Thursday at 5 p.m. We'll print them in Friday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.



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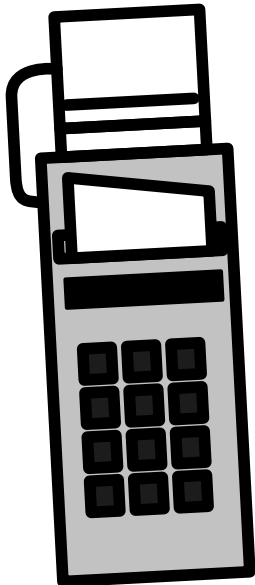
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LOCAL

Three more big-name stores to be charged

PUZZLE ZOO, from page 1

In December, nine retailers were accused of overcharging their customers, in some cases by as much as \$100. Eight of the merchants have pleaded guilty to the counts and agreed to pay a total of \$40,000 in penalties and fines.

Among the stores are fashion outlets Bebe, Diesel, Urban Outfitters and the Gap, drugstore Walgreens, bookstore giant Barnes & Noble and the Coffee Bean on Montana Avenue. The overcharges ranged from as little as \$2 up to \$100.

But although other outlets have agreed to plead guilty and put the matter behind them, Demircift said he doesn't think he should have to pay for the mistake.

"I'm going to fight this, because it was not a customer, first of all," he said, adding he also hasn't received any paperwork. "It was weights and measures, and these people make me pay taxes to have them come out and pay for my mistakes."

In December, Diesel, Bebe, Urban Outfitters, Carlton Cards, Barnes & Noble, Walgreens, Sears, and the Coffee Bean on Montana Avenue all pleaded guilty to overcharging a customer and agreed to pay a total of \$39,075.89 in fines and penalties, according to sentences handed down by Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Bernard Kamins. One other retailer, the Gap, has continued its arraignment until Feb. 13.

The stores were targeted in an undercover retail sting conducted last summer by investigators from the LA County Weights and Measures bureau, a division of the LA County Department of Agriculture. About \$400 will be paid to the bureau for each of the charges to cover the costs of the investigation, officials said.

Deputy City Attorney Adam Radinsky

**"I'm going to fight this ...
these people make me
pay taxes to have them
come out and pay for my
mistakes."**

— JAY DEMIRCIFT
Owner, Puzzle Zoo

said there are three other big-name merchants that will be charged as a result of the same sting, but said they couldn't be named until they are served with the proper paperwork from City Hall.

Jeff Humphreys, deputy director of the Weights and Measures bureau, said his team of 14 inspectors regularly patrols all 8,400 LA stores that have scanners. Since February of 2002, stores have been required to pay a sliding-scale registration fee for scanners to cover the costs of the investigations.

Radinsky said consumers should be aware.

"This is an area of consumer protection that is almost a stealth area, because most consumers don't know when they're being overcharged — especially at supermarkets, discount stores and other places where they might buy a large amount of items at one time," he said. "Consumers should know that it is a crime to charge more than the posted price and they should check their receipts very carefully."

Homelessness plan to be complete in June of 2004

HOMELESSNESS, from page 1

Los Angeles County as there are residents in Santa Monica, an analysis of the county's homeless population suggests. Of the 80,000 people who live on the streets at any given time during the year, only 2 percent of them live in Santa Monica.

And the panel of approximately 70 people — from politicians to business leaders to homeless advocates to faith-based organizations — hopes to end the problem that has plagued this city for decades. It's considered the largest effort ever by community leaders to tackle a problem that some say is the biggest one facing the country.

And although Santa Monica handles 2 percent of the county's homeless population, it's a huge impact on the community, residents say. And with the exception of Venice, there aren't many westside cities that share the burden of taking care of the homeless.

The panel, of which Santa Monica

Mayor Richard Bloom is a member, met for the first time in November. An 80-page report was presented that outlines the problem, gives an analysis of who is homeless and why, and how many services they use each year.

Tonight's meeting is one of approximately 20 community meetings held between December and February throughout LA County. The primary objective is to get residents' input on the process and give suggestions on how to end homelessness. Then, the panel will lay a foundation for addressing the issue.

When the draft plan is finished in April, it will be presented to various communities within the county. The final plan is supposed to be done in June.

What leaders of the effort don't know is how much it will cost or who will pay for it.

For further details on Bring LA Home and its Blue Ribbon Panel, visit www.bringLAhome.org.

Do you have community news?
Submit news releases
Email to: sack@smdp.com or fax 310.576.9913

LOCAL



Community Profiles

PROFILES, from page 1

around me. So my philosophy on life is to make things as good as possible for the people around me and also to make things as easy as possible on the environment ... to step as lightly on the earth as possible."

How did you land in Santa Monica?

"We had set-up criteria for a location. We wanted a neighborhood-friendly, pedestrian location ... and I knew I wanted to do it on the westside."

"Plus, my friends and I spend a lot of time in Santa Monica. Back then, Westwood wasn't much of anything, and we used to take the bus to the Third Street Promenade."

You've said you got into this business through a school project, but if you weren't running the Library, what would you be doing?

"I would probably have gone to graduate school for a degree in urban planning, so I'd be somewhere in the urban planning world."

"I really believe that through thoughtful planning you can really create a better life for people ... The built environment, whether people realize consciously or subconsciously, has a profound effect on people's dispositions."

So what do you think of Santa Monica's built environment?

"I think that the city has a lot to its benefit, from the fact that it's super old — the character that Santa Monica has is a function of that it was developed in the early 20th Century."

"The thing that's really good is there are a lot of pedestrian streets ... but that's not really a function of urban planning over the last 20 to 30 years — Montana has always been a pedestrian street, Main Street has always been a pedestrian street — so I don't really want to give the powers that be too much credit."

"The other thing is it's a really dense city. It gives you this sense of activity. There's a neighborhood feel, where you see the same people over and over again ... It has a different feel than the rest of LA. It feels like more of a real city ..."

"Also, the ocean acts as kind of a buffer to the West. So even though people complain about traffic in this city,

it's nothing like being on Wilshire and La Brea."

You mentioned not wanting to give the powers that be too much credit. What would you like to see done differently in Santa Monica?

"I don't have answers. But it seems like the problem we have is projects are considered in isolation ... and I don't think we have a clearly articulated plan that would balance the needs, the wants and the desires of residents with the fact that we're a tourist destination and will always be a tourist destination."

How might that be accomplished?

"I don't think the city's updated their general plan since 1984. So I would advocate ... town hall discussion meetings with different groups, different factions, and find out what it is that people really want to be ..."

"It seems like we're really good at saying 'no' to a particular project ... but I think we need to work more closely on how we want to craft the city ... the infrastructure."

"And the other thing is that I wish they relied more on locals ... to be hired for drafting plans for the civic center, for drafting plans for downtown ... We've relied a lot on ROMA, and they're from San Francisco."

What about the other side — what are your favorite things about Santa Monica?

"I would say access to the ocean, access to Santa Monica Mountains. So in terms of being in LA, it's as good as it gets anywhere in LA. And then, No. 2, I would say Big Blue Bus. I use it all the time ... It's definitely something that differentiates us from the rest of LA. And then this kind of dove tails — I would say the City of Santa Monica's commitment to aggressive environmental policies, the embracing of sustainable qualities ..."

"But in terms of me, personally, you could take away everything and the fact that it's close to the ocean would be — hands down — the No. 1 reason."

And your favorite restaurant, other than the Library Ale House?

"They're all on Abbot Kinney ... 'Axe (pronounced 'ashay') ... they use really fresh ingredients from the Farmers' Market, they have free-range chicken. It's just really well-prepared food that's not overly complex."

David Lackman

Born: October 16, 1970, in Hollywood.

Raised: Tarzana.

Educated: BA in economics from UCLA, 1993.

Residence: House in Sunset Park.

Restaurant: Opened in July, 1995. Last year's gross sales topped \$1.5 million. Nearly 30 beers on tap, plus a variety of bottled beer and wines. Seats 75 guests, with outdoor patio included.

Family: Two older brothers.

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...write a letter to the editor

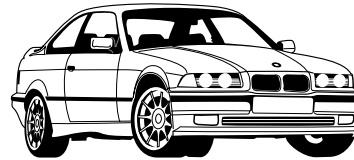
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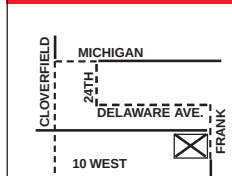


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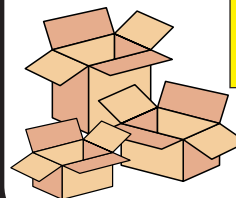


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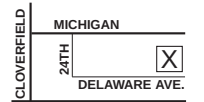


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To be eligible, applications must be received at the Environmental Programs Division office by 5:00pm Wednesday, February 4, 2004.



OPINION

LETTERS

Elected officials must be removed

Editor:

Recently, I have read in two nationally recognized urban planning/architecture magazines that “despite its image as the epitome of suburban sprawl, greater Los Angeles is the densest metropolitan area in the United States, at 5,725 people per square mile.” Those of us that spend much of our days in the dense urban sprawl of Los Angeles, know that to be true. Residents of Santa Monica however, our city by the sea, comprise 86,000 creative souls in eight —once lovely — square miles. That is 10,750 persons per square mile, nearly twice the density of next-door megalopolis Los Angeles. Unbelievable, but nearly twice as many people live in Santa Monica per square mile than in LA, yet our City Council and Planning Commission tell us, the residents, that not nearly enough people live here now, as if the current horrendous traffic conditions — designed and installed by City Hall — didn’t make matters even worse.

City Hall’s extravagant and costly devotion to ideological politics has cost us dearly in Santa Monica. We can’t get anywhere in this town. City Hall doesn’t give a damn about the school system. Many of us, with children in tow, must deal with the homeless outside our front door every day and during nearly every routine errand in town. Apparently, some City Council members do not respond in the most basic way to fairness, or the business of governing.

The “traffic-calming devices” installed throughout Santa Monica, including extending curbs to eliminate right turns, medians to slow traffic on thoroughfares, speed bumps, intentionally reducing well-traveled two-lane roadways to one lane, are all intended to re-orient traffic by modifying our behavior, causing all of us to get behind the slowest common denominator. The attraction by “Green” members of the City Council to similar thinking, ivory-tower, collegiate planning theories by highly paid, out-of-town consultants, has also brought us the new, improved Civic Center Plan and the newly proposed downtown development standards that will create even greater density and gridlock throughout downtown. (When was the last time you drove on Fourth Street?) Ivory-tower is defined as “an impractical often escapist attitude marked by aloof lack of concern with or interest in practical matters or urgent problems.” It describes the accomplishments of this City Council exactly.

The thinking a few years back was that all these so-called “traffic improvements” would keep us a little safer after successive tragic auto fatalities (three of the four caused by seniors, I recall). Not politically correct, but true nevertheless. All the physical “improvements” did not save a single life, as far as I can tell, yet the quality of our lives in Santa Monica is a whole lot worse. Whether City Hall is taking on the banking industry, mismanaging a historic beach club or harassing landlords, the fact is City Hall can’t be trusted spending money. How could they, many of its members never had a full-time job, saved for a home, or raised a family — basic American values. If it wasn’t for the city, some might not have jobs, health insurance or a cheap place to live. If these City Council members were truly thoughtful and intelligent leaders, interested in improving the quality of life for all Santa Monicans, we would have had a well-organized transit system for our seniors, rather than a 25-cent “ride the tide” transit system primarily used by transients and tourists.

The steadily increasing population densities (twice that of LA), combined with reduced infrastructure capacity (traffic-calming devices) has resulted in the daily grid-

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lock and inconvenience experienced by residents. These results are explainable and inevitable. What is inexplicable is the lack of strategic thinking and blind adherence to social goals that characterizes much of the thinking at City Hall. With the impending state budget crisis, Santa Monica needs a forward thinking, more business-oriented City Council, willing to accept responsibility for fiscal matters, and capable of challenging the old SMRR status quo. With four City Council seats up for grabs this year, I say throw the bums out.

Jeffrey Weinstein
Santa Monica

Get some guts and move on

Editor:

(This letter was originally addressed to SMDP columnist Ed Silverstein).

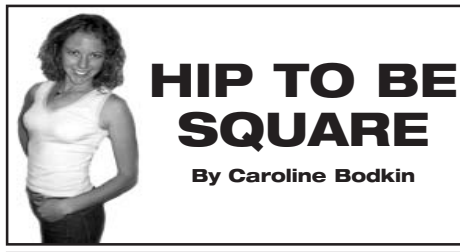
If there were a Hall of Fame for biased, slanderous and factually inaccurate articles this one would certainly be enshrined (Incites column, SMDP, Jan. 21, page 4).

Faith-based organizations “promote the spread of AIDS through opposition to birth control?”

Since when does the pill or diaphragm prevent AIDS? If you mean a condom dur-

See LETTERS, page 7

This out-of-work Hollywood worker sees elves



HIP TO BE SQUARE

By Caroline Bodkin

Last weekend I was at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City and Salt Lake City, Utah, my hometown and I saw a documentary film called “Investigation into the Invisible World,” directed by Jean Michel Roux. This film is about mysterious Iceland, and the large percentage of Icelanders who believe in and claim to have seen what they call “hidden people.” This includes ghosts, elves, fairies, sea-monsters and extra-terrestrials. The documentary suggests that because of Iceland’s location at the seam of the American and European tectonic plates, because of its sustaining and respectful relationship with nature, and/or its openness to Pagan traditions, it has developed into a nation that’s more aware of and more open to an “unseen” realm of reality. It is able to tune into “frequencies” that most can’t.

On Jan. 30 I’ll be out of a job again. This will be my third period of unemployment after graduating not even three years ago, and though it should terrify me, after having seen that film, I’m actually looking forward to a blank slate. Being out of a job is not cool ... unless it means you’ll find a better one.

The documentary features a series of interviews with a variety of people — from the former President Finnbogadottir, to children, to working mediums — all of whom speak of this “hidden” world as though it is a given. It’s like those 3-D posters that were popular in the mid ’90s — at first glance it just seems like a messy square of color, but when you change the way you focus on it, you can see the 3-D image of a dolphin, a skyline, a beach, whatever. These Icelanders are all people who can see the 3-D image, while the rest of us are saying “Why do you have that lame color print of nothing on your wall?”

Anyway, I sat there in the downtown theater, close to midnight, watching this documentary, and I was totally struck. By the time I walked out of the place, I was a believer, thinking, “I’m an ignorant moron because I can’t see the elves in the rocks! Why can’t I see the elves living in the rocks? Are there ghosts in my house?

I bet there are ghosts in my house, and I’m just so focused on my own lame frequency that I don’t realize it. My life’s too chaotic. I need to be more open. Why can’t I have an outer body experience so I can communicate with the supernatural, or travel to other universes? I want to communicate with elves. I want an elf friend.”

But I work in Hollywood. And if there’s one place where you’re not going to be receptive to the spirits of nature, the kindly elves, the souls of the collective consciousness, it’s here.

So that’s what got me thinking.

I started my job hunt about a week before going to Sundance. Dutifully, I began submitting resumes, trying to get general meetings, deciding if I want to continue to work in Hollywood or become ... something else. But now, after the movie, I’m changed.

I’m wondering about the spiritual medium in the documentary. How did she become a spiritual medium? Please understand! I mean she was standing in a field of grass and boulders, natural as could be, pointing to one of the rocks, explaining, “There’s an elf university here. They’re watching a presentation, but their technology is more advanced than ours, so they

don’t need a projector. An elf girl is telling me all this right now. But she’s not speaking it; she’s clairvoyant and doesn’t want to disturb her classmates, so she’s speaking to me silently.” An elf university. In the rocks in the field.

This is cool.

Honestly — I’m not making fun. I’m saying that I’ve been sending in my resume to job positions where I’d get to perform a new set of annoying and brainless tasks, to answer another someone else’s phone, to continue on in this industry, and it finally occurred to me that I’d rather be a medium. Or anything else. I’d rather talk to elves, see ghosts, be the first to know when the next spaceship is going to land.

So I guess I’ll work on my resume some. Don’t know whether that kind of position cares about my college GPA, or my time studying abroad, or the fact that I worked for a big action director, but we’ll see. We’ll see. We will see.

(Caroline Bodkin lives in Los Angeles and wonders daily if she’ll miss her calling. You can e-mail her at beforebotoxy-caroline@yahoo.com.)

OPINION



LETTERS

LETTERS, from page 6

ing homosexual sex ... maybe. But then, it wouldn't be birth control would it?

"More importantly these faith-based initiatives are unconstitutional." Really. Says who? Certainly no member of Congress after the State of the Union speech.

"Funneling tax dollars to religious organizations ... could make our government complicit in unfair discrimination against minorities ..."

Actually, historically it's been the faith-based organization that has been discriminated against in getting government funding. If you heard the State of the Union speech, Bush made a point of saying he wants to end this discrimination.

"Potential recipients of our taxes are churches — which preach that battered women should return to their abusive husbands — often with fatal results."

Often with fatal results? Very inaccurate, Ed. Faith-based organizations are a sanctuary that battered women and their children can go to when no one else will take

them in. These organizations are overwhelmingly a net positive to the safety of women and children that seek their help.

"Potential recipients of our taxes are churches (that) have tried to erect statues to celebrate the beating death of a gay man ..."

Ed, please you're embarrassing yourself. Name one mainstream church in the United States that has tried to erect such a statue. Trust me, if by some fluke it happened there would be 100 churches showing up to demonstrate in the name of that gay man.

Stop with the scare tactics. You don't like Bush, and you're uncomfortable with people of faith. Have the guts to say simply that and move on.

Obviously, you won't be using the services of a faith-based organization, anyway. But minorities and the poor will. Get out of their way.

Eric Cooper
Santa Monica

A few bad apples spoil the whole homeless bunch



I recently pointed out that some homeless people give those who live on the streets a bad name because they engage in anti-social behavior.

I wanted to show that homeless people do care about the community in which we live. I say this because it is only fair to show that we, as human beings, care about the people we interact with on a daily basis and we want to help in solving the homeless problem once and for all in a humane and positive manner. Not like it is being solved in downtown Los Angeles by throwing out the baby with the bath water, so to speak.

I can not understand the thinking in the

recent bulldozing of the homeless encampment by the Staples Center. We all know criminal activity happens on the streets and are not in any position to stop it for fear of retribution. This was the reason given by the LAPD for this act of total disregard for the ones who were doing nothing but living and existing in that encampment with no ties to any of the activity that caused the bulldozing and loss of people's personal belongings. What has happened there is a blatant act of criminalization of the homeless population for the acts of a few who have no regard and respect for those around them, including themselves.

This is why I write, sometimes so vehemently, to those who would look down upon the whole homeless population as a whole for the disruptive acts of a few individuals, instead of realizing that we are as human as you are and should be given respect for being survivors of a total emotional, mental, spiritual and sometimes physical upheaval in our lives.

To those who write so caustically and with a large amount of ignorance to the

real causes of homelessness, you would do well to look beyond the stereotypes with which you have labeled us and realize we are a community. And, like your own communities, there are people who are not only lacking in self-esteem and self-worth but who prey upon the community as a whole. They are predators and look for the "easier way" of doing things, instead of making an effort to better their lives and move forward. These types of individuals will disrupt any community they live in and do not have any sense of conscience for their own actions.

These are the ones who you think represent the entire homeless community. If they were in your communities you would try to get rid of them and succeed because you can close a door and be safer than a homeless person. They are the ones who have caused the whole homeless population to be criminalized in LA and across the United States. But, like your own communities, they do not represent the whole community.

What would you say if I judged the whole affluent population as being greedy

and snobbish because of a few who act that way? What would you in the Pico neighborhood say if I would say you are all gang members and drug dealers? Would these statements be true for the whole community, or for the few who cause trouble within these two communities? I happen to know people from both communities and from what I have seen this is not the norm. Most people I have met since I became homeless here have been very helpful, friendly and compassionate to the plight of those who live on the streets.

If one of you were in trouble and needed help, I would try to assist no matter what the situation and that is what the majority of the homeless population is like. Some of us might be brash and uncultured but the intention of our hearts is what judges us — not the actions of a few.

(Charles Springer lives on the streets of Santa Monica and is an artist).

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STATE

Senator says buying Canadian drugs could save millions

BY JENNIFER COLEMAN

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — California could save as much as \$30 million by buying Canadian drugs for state hospitals and prisons, but would be in direct conflict with federal regulations, under a bill unveiled Thursday by a state senator.

The bill, by Senate President Pro Tempore John Burton, D-San Francisco, would allow the state Department of General Services to consider Canadian pharmacies when seeking the best price on prescription medicines. The department buys drugs for the California prison system and state hospitals.

If Burton's bill becomes law, it would make California's the first state legislature to approve a plan to buy drugs from Canada, experts said, and possibly create more pressure on the federal government to allow the practice on a wider scale or push for lower drug prices.

So far, seven state legislatures have debated various plans to buy drugs from

Canada, but none has passed. Governors of several states have also proposed programs, but no state has started importing the cheaper drugs.

Shopping in Canada for the five prescription drugs — Seroquel, Zyprexa, Risperdal, Depakote and Neurontin — most often purchased for those state facilities could save the state more than \$23 million a year, Burton said.

"Canada is infinitely cheaper than buying drugs in this country," Burton said. "Sooner or later, the federal government is going to have to stand up to the drug companies" and have them account for that discrepancy.

In no other industry, he said, are consumers and government agencies required to buy only U.S.-manufactured goods, which Burton blamed on lobbying by pharmaceutical companies that want to keep prices, and profits, high.

Joe Hammang, a scientist with Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, said it's not fair to compare the drug industry to other industries because bringing a medicine to market is

"far more risky and time consuming."

It can take millions of dollars and many years to produce a successful drug, which drives up the price to U.S. consumers, Hammang said.

Because Canada has a national health system, the government negotiates the maximum price for prescription drugs with the manufacturers — often much less than in the United States. The discrepancy has led many people to drive across the border or order online at Canadian pharmacies to save money.

Assemblyman Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles, has also eyed Canada for prescription drug buys, but would expand on Burton's proposal by including Medi-Cal prescriptions, which he said could save the state even more.

Either plan would require federal regulators to grant California a waiver to import the drugs.

Federal law lets pharmacists and wholesalers import drugs from Canada — but only with the approval of the secretary of Health and Human Services. So far, Secretary Tommy Thompson and the Food and Drug Administration have deemed importing Canadian drugs too risky.

Despite that, the cities of Springfield, Mass., and Montgomery, Ala., are buying lower-cost prescription drugs from Canada and others are considering similar plans.

Seven state legislatures took up the issue last year, said Richard Cauchi, with the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Only one of those states, New Jersey, tried to ban the importation of the cheaper pharmaceuticals; the others considered how to save money by buying drugs from the north. They include Maine, Vermont,

Rhode Island, Illinois, Massachusetts and Florida.

None of the legislation was approved, Cauchi said.

Governors in several states have also proposed similar purchasing plans, including New Hampshire, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and West Virginia.

Burton said he doubted there would be any health risk to consumers because Canada's testing standards are similar to the U.S. standards.

Of the drugs sold in Canada, some are manufactured there and some are imported from other facilities in countries, Cauchi said.

"Quite a number of the drugs are manufactured in the U.S. and then shipped to Canada," Cauchi said.

Importing price-controlled drugs from Canada could hurt California's world-leading biotech industry, said David Gollaher, president of California Healthcare Institute, which represents universities and biotech companies. Fewer research dollars would result a drop in biotech jobs and fewer new drugs, he said.

"There's a lot more at stake here than any other state," Gollaher said. "How do you balance reasonable and adequate incentives for the medical advances we all want?"

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger hasn't taken a position on the bill, said his spokeswoman Ashley Snee.

The administration is concerned about quality control of imports, but also about "the growing cost of prescription drugs," she said. Schwarzenegger's staff would work with lawmakers to "reduce the costs in accordance with the law and in ways that don't sacrifice quality."

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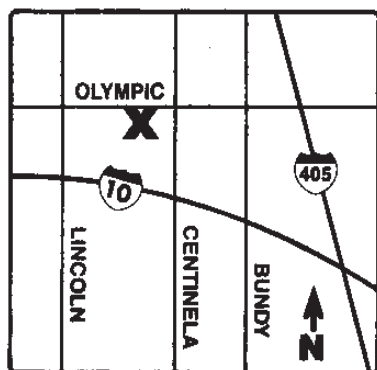
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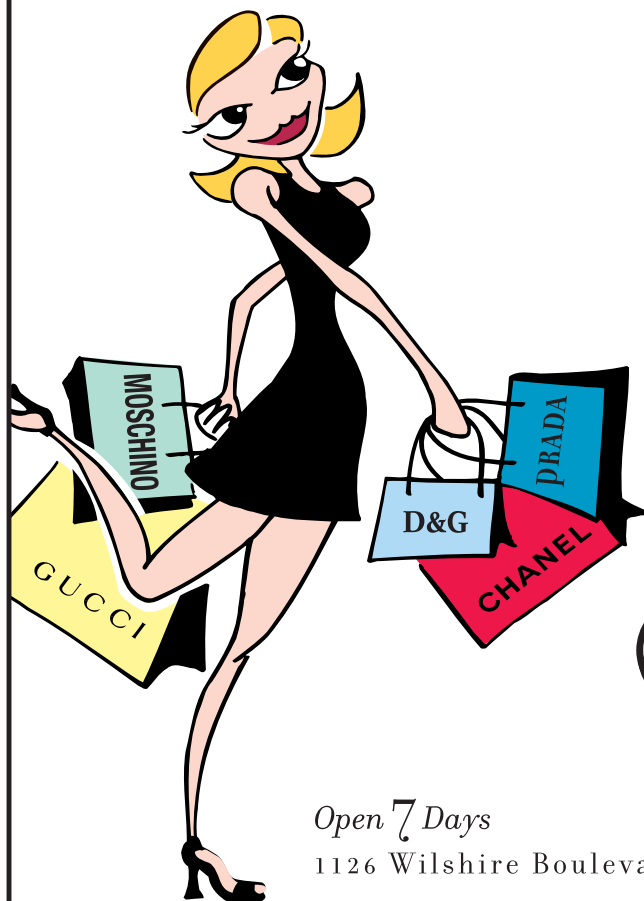
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NATIONAL



President Bush's speech silent on some subjects

BY TERENCE HUNT

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON — There were 5,200 words about dozens of subjects in President Bush's State of the Union address. Some people are intrigued not by what he said — but what he didn't say.

About the environment, for example. In his 54-minute speech, Bush never mentioned it.

He spoke with pride about the capture of Saddam Hussein but did not refer to Osama bin Laden, accused mastermind of the deadliest terrorist attack on America and the target of a more than two-year-old U.S. manhunt.

He talked about creating jobs but not about the loss of 2.3 million jobs since he became president.

There was no mention of the costly space initiative Bush had announced earlier this month.

And he did not talk about Iraq's alleged cache of still-missing weapons of mass destruction that the administration had cited as justification for going to war. The closest he came was to say that investigators have identified "dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities."

The White House said Bush did not intend to address every subject.

"The State of the Union is not a laundry list of every priority," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said Friday. "There are a number of other priorities, as well, not all of which received the attention in the State of the Union they are receiving through the actions of this administration."

He said Bush's upcoming budget would reflect the administration's priorities, while the State of the Union "reflects the big goals we're uniting the country around."

Still, Norm Ornstein, political analyst at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, was struck by Bush's omissions. "There were things I was waiting to hear and I didn't hear any of them, and it was certainly striking. That checklist is a long one."

The absence of any reference to Bush's

goal of establishing a manned presence on the moon as a way station to Mars "cheapens the whole notion to begin with and it shows that it was just a political ploy," Ornstein said. Various polls show that Americans are lukewarm or opposed to Bush's space proposal.

Ornstein said it was noticeable that Bush did not mention his concept of an "ownership society" that promotes the idea of Americans owning and managing their own health care plans, retirement plans, small businesses and the like.

"They decided to shift to a much more political, campaign speech ... to bolster those conservatives, throwing some red meat at them with things like gay marriage and abstinence."

He said the White House had decided against "raising red flags of big spending programs that they don't like, like space exploration."

More than two months in the making, the speech went through more than a dozen drafts before a final weekend of retooling at Camp David by Bush and top advisers.

The White House is deluged with requests from advocates inside and outside the government for a mention of their projects in the speech.

"I don't know how many times I've heard, 'I just need one line, that's all it takes,'" said a senior administration official. "It's pretty prized real estate, the State of the Union."

Environmental groups were unhappy that their issues were ignored.

"The fact that President Bush avoided mentioning his administration's environmental policies could be seen as a tacit admission that his record is deplorable and the issue is a vulnerable one for him," said the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental group. "Polls show that the majority of Americans believe he is more interested in protecting his corporate campaign contributors than public health and the environment."

Chatwin said he tried to comply with the order but was eventually told he would have to leave. On Friday, he said he wasn't budging.

Jeffs — considered by the faith's followers to be its "prophet" — could have assigned Chatwin's wife, Lori, 32, and their children to another man in town, but she stood by her husband. "I'm not going to leave him," she said Friday.

More than three dozen news reporters and law enforcement officers descended on the town, which along with nearby Hildale, Utah, forms what many believe to be the center of the American polygamist movement.

Friday's news conference came about two weeks after word first leaked about Jeffs' move to kick the men out of the sect. More men were kicked out by Jeffs after the initial purge, Chatwin among them. The church owns most of the buildings in town, including the homes.

Ross Chatwin compared Jeffs to Adolf Hitler, and said under his rule the towns could be compared to concentration camps "with comforts."

Colorado man compares sect leader to Hitler

BY MARK THIESSEN

Associated Press Writer

COLORADO CITY, Ariz. — A man kicked out of the polygamist Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in a split in the sect's hierarchy told reporters Friday that leader Warren Jeffs "has to be stopped before he ruins all of us."

Ross Chatwin, 35, held a news conference at his home in Colorado City. He said he was excommunicated from the FLDS church Jan. 14, capping a nine-month struggle with Jeffs, who recently kicked out 20 men in an apparent move to solidify his control. The men were ordered to leave the area, but without their wives, children and personal property.

Before he was booted, Chatwin — who advocates polygamy but has just one wife along with six children — was ordered by Jeffs to write down a list of his sins. That list would be matched with a list of Chatwin's sins compiled by Jeffs and based on what Jeffs called a vision from God, Chatwin said.

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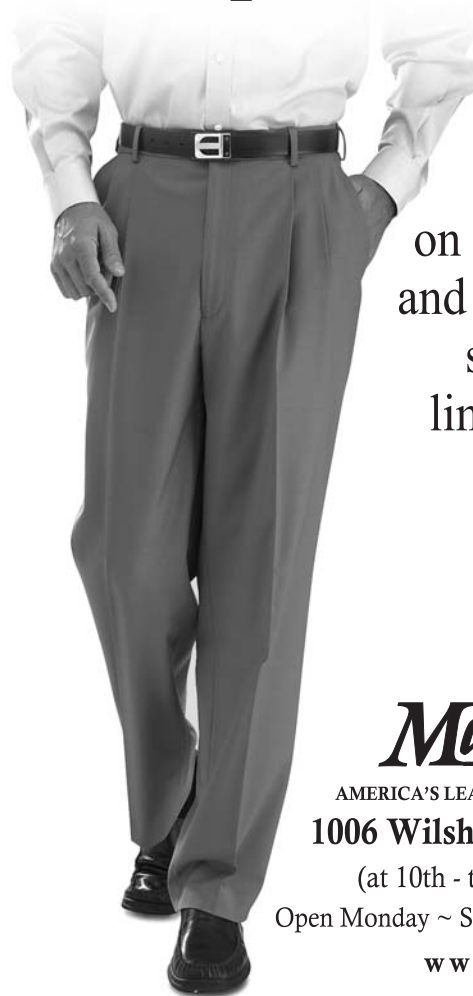
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NATIONAL

New Hampshire polls reflect erosion in Dean's support

BY WILL LESTER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Numbers have been Howard Dean's friend. Numbers of campaign dollars raised. Numbers of supporters drawn to his candidacy through the Internet. Numbers of backers crammed into schools and auditoriums.

But the latest poll numbers in New Hampshire could only create a sense of foreboding in the Dean camp just days ahead of Tuesday's New Hampshire primary. The overall totals show rival John Kerry, winner of the Iowa caucuses, erasing Dean's once commanding lead and surging to the front of the Democratic presidential pack.

And these signs of distress for the former Vermont governor go beyond the top line.

One-time front-runner Dean has been losing support among several demographic groups, especially middle-age and older women, pollsters say. His supporters have been dwindling, leaving largely his original core of younger, liberal adults who helped launch his campaign last spring.

Dean has even lost support in the rural counties in western New Hampshire bordering Vermont that have been his stronghold. Whereas seven in 10 New Hampshire voters saw Dean favorably late last year, a third now see him favorably, a third unfavorably and a third remain undecided, according to the ARG poll.

Earlier this year, Dean seemed a sure bet to win New Hampshire. His lead of 25 percentage points or more started to fade after Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was captured Dec. 14 and Democratic voters focused on other issues, such as electability, pollsters say.

"Dean's slide started before Iowa, Iowa compounded it, and the (concession) speech in Iowa raised serious questions, even in the minds of people who were with him," said pollster Gerry Chervinsky of KRC Communications and Research in Newton, Mass.

Dean finished a disappointing third Monday in Iowa behind Kerry and North Carolina Sen. John Edwards. Then Dean tried to cheer his supporters with a bellowing concession speech that is fast becoming a cult classic on the Internet and late-night comedy shows.

Aware of the need to stop Dean's slide, the candidate adopted a more subdued approach, tried to explain his outburst as his no-holds-barred style and tried to soften his image with an interview with his wife with ABC News' Diane Sawyer and an all-in-fun appearance on the "Late Show With David Letterman."

Dean aides, meanwhile, dismissed the pollsters' gloomy take on his prospects.

"People in New Hampshire will have their say in five days and that's what important," said Dean campaign spokesman Jay Carson. "I think everyone has seen how much can change in five days."

And Carson was quick to remind that the Dean campaign has a financial and organizational advantage built through a very successful 2003 when Dean raised roughly \$40 million and amassed a formidable grass-roots network with the help of the Internet.

"We're the only campaign that's built a 50-state operation to compete with and beat President Bush," Carson said. "That kind of operation can certainly handle the competition from these guys."

The intense level of public and private polling in New Hampshire suggests that's not the direction things are going in the days leading to Tuesday's primary.

The results in Iowa changed the dynamic of the New Hampshire campaign where Dean was already facing a close race.

Judge restricts use of pesticides

BY GENE JOHNSON

Associated Press Writer

SEATTLE — A federal judge has restricted the use of 38 pesticides near salmon streams in Washington, Oregon and California, a ruling environmentalists hailed as an important step toward the recovery of salmon and steelhead in the West.

Expanding upon two previous rulings, U.S. District Judge John C. Coughenour last week barred the use of the pesticides — ranging from agricultural sprays to some household weed-killers — within 20 yards of the waters until the Environmental Protection Agency determines whether they are likely to harm protected fish. He also banned aerial spraying of the pesticides, except for public health reasons such as controlling mosquitoes, within 100 yards.

"This ruling gives salmon a much-needed break from the toxic soup of pesticides they've been facing," said Erika Schreder, staff scientist with the Washington Toxics Coalition.

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WORLD BRIEFLY

U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq

By The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraqi insurgents struck Saturday in the volatile Sunni Triangle west of Baghdad, killing five U.S. soldiers in separate bombings and narrowly missing an American convoy with a blast that killed four Iraqis and wounded about 40 others north of the capital.

The bloody attacks occurred as U.N. security experts began to study the possible return of U.N. international staff to play a key role in Iraq's transformation to democracy. The thud of distant explosions rumbled across the capital late Saturday, heightening the sense of insecurity that still prevails nine months after the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime.

In Khaldiyyah, some 70 miles west of Baghdad, three U.S. soldiers were killed and six more were wounded when a vehicle, possibly driven by a suicide bomber, exploded at a U.S. checkpoint near a bridge across the Euphrates river, the U.S. command said.

Iraqi witnesses said a four-wheel-drive vehicle drove up to the checkpoint and exploded in front of a U.S. Army Humvee trying to block it. At least eight Iraqis — six of them women — were injured, according to Dr. Ahmed Nasrat Jabouri of the provincial hospital in nearby Ramadi.

Israelis kill militant spies

By The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Israeli soldiers on Saturday shot and killed two Palestinian militants staking out an army position with binoculars along the fortified fence between Gaza and Israel.

Members of the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, a violent

extremist offshoot of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, said the two men were on an "exploratory mission" to gather intelligence for a future attack.

Meanwhile, Israel announced it will release more than 400 Arab prisoners in exchange for an Israeli businessman and the bodies of three Israeli soldiers held by the Lebanese guerrilla group Hezbollah. The deal marks Israel's most significant release of Palestinian prisoners since Ariel Sharon became prime minister three years ago.

The prisoner release, which is expected within days, could give a popularity boost to Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia, even though he was not involved in the negotiations. Qureia has been weakened by his unsuccessful attempts to win concessions from Israel.

Dean questions Kerry's Iraq stance

By The Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. — Howard Dean sharply questioned John Kerry's judgment on Iraq on Saturday as Democratic presidential rivals raced through a final, frozen weekend of campaigning before New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation primary.

"I would be deeply concerned about that kind of judgment in the White House," said Dean, the one-time front-runner struggling to overcome a reversal that has vaulted Kerry into first place in the New Hampshire polls.

Dean said Kerry opposed the first Persian Gulf War in Iraq in 1991, and supported the 2003 invasion, views contrary to his own. "I think my position has proven to be right twice," Dean added.

In rebuttal, a spokeswoman for Kerry predicted the remarks would backfire. "When is Howard Dean going to realize that voters are tired of these same old angry attacks," said Stephanie Cutter. "Voters are looking for a steady hand, not a clenched fist."

Powell avoids WMD question

By The Associated Press

TBLISI, Georgia — Secretary of State Colin Powell held out the possibility Saturday that prewar Iraq may not have possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Powell was asked about comments last week by David Kay, the outgoing leader of a U.S. weapons search team in Iraq, that he did not believe Iraq had large quantities of chemical or biological weapons.

"The answer to that question is, we don't know yet," Powell told reporters as he traveling to this former Soviet republic to attend the inauguration Sunday of President-elect Mikhail Saakashvili.

Powell acknowledged that the United States thought deposed leader Saddam Hussein had banned weapons, but added, "We had questions that needed to be answered."

"What was it?" he asked. "One hundred tons, 500 tons or zero tons? Was it so many liters of anthrax, 10 times that amount or nothing?"

Almost a year has passed since Powell's speech before the U.N. Security Council in which he accused Iraq of violating a U.N. weapons ban.

Nashville halts posting of honor roll

By The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The school honor roll, a time-honored system for rewarding A-students, has become an apparent source of embarrassment for some underachievers.

As a result, all Nashville schools have stopped posting honor rolls, and some are also considering a ban on hanging good work in the hallways — all at the advice of school lawyers.

After a few parents complained their children might be ridiculed for not making the list, Nashville school system lawyers warned that state privacy laws forbid releasing any academic information, good or bad, without permission.

Some schools have since put a stop to academic pep rallies. Others think they may have to cancel spelling bees. And now schools across the state may follow Nashville's lead.



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The Dinette Set by Julie Larson

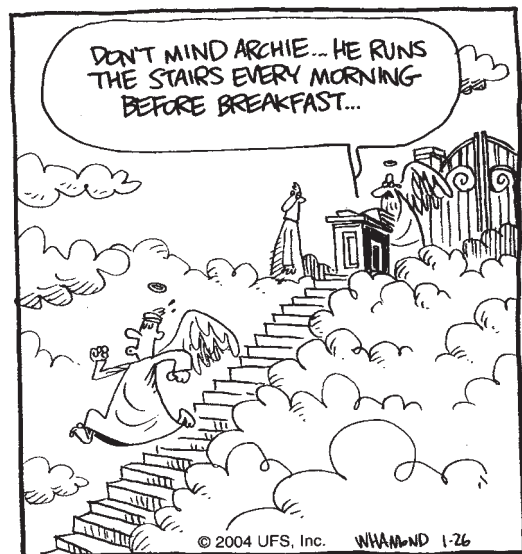


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5 Conform
10 Saga
11 Happens again
13 Related
14 Prepare
15 Gathers one's strength
17 Rx payer
18 Fancy homes
19 Career campaigner
20 Stove fuel
21 Floor piece
22 Spock's portrayer
25 Talked and talked
26 Mideast nation
27 Stir-fry vessel
28 Relaxing resort
29 Become serious
33 Sandy color
34 "What's up?" in Spain
35 Evasive maneuver
37 Call it —

DOWN

- 38 Settled a debt
39 Fury
40 Cheryl and Alan
41 Forest item

DOWN

- 1 Fixed look
2 Trout homes
3 Top celebs
4 Defense headquarters
5 Debates
6 Ocean areas
7 Do something
8 Bulletin board item
9 Vocal vibrato
12 Hot
16 Don't budge
21 Join in
22 Pater — jury
23 Join a business owners
24 Small business owners
25 Bath attire
27 Bandaged places
29 Octopus's cousin
30 Air traffic aid
31 Custom recipient
32 Check recipient
36 "Far out!"

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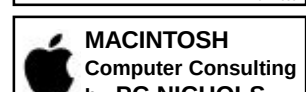
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Madonna, Britney remain chaste at French awards show

By The Associated Press

CANNES, France — Madonna accepted a career award from Britney Spears at a French music awards show this weekend — but this time, no controversy.

Madonna, wearing a demure green polka-dot dress, gave Spears a chaste peck on the cheek as she received the award at NRJ radio station's ceremony Saturday and got a standing ovation.

"My ambition may be American, and I may have married a Brit, but my heart belongs to France," Madonna told the crowd.

The pop divas' failure to exchange an openmouthed kiss, unlike at the MTV Video Music Awards in August, prompted inevitable cracks from French presenters later in the show.

Smooching partner Christina Aguilera was also at the ceremony, where performers included Seal, Dido, Kylie Minogue and Beyonce Knowles. France's rock quartet Kyo won the most prizes, including best French-language group.

PASADENA — Stone Temple Pilots lead singer Scott Weiland was ordered to return to a live-in drug detoxification center after leaving early, officials said.

Weiland, 36 was ordered to report to the facility last October after pleading no contest to possession of heroin. A Superior Court judge learned Friday that he had walked out or was discharged after only a month and ordered him to return, said Jane Robison, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles County district attorney's office.

Weiland reported back to the facility Friday afternoon. He is eligible for release in July but must participate in a six-month follow-up program.

If he leaves the center again or tests positive for drugs, prosecutors will seek a warrant for his arrest, Robison said.

Weiland was jailed in 1999 for violating probation on a previous drug arrest and failing to complete a rehabilitation program.

In a separate case, attorneys for Weiland entered an innocent plea for the singer's misdemeanor count of driving under the influence, stemming from his arrest last October in Hollywood.

He is due back in court on that case on Feb. 5.

NEW YORK — A revival of "Jumpers," Tom Stoppard's metaphysical murder mystery with laughs, is bouncing back to Broadway.

The production, imported from England's National Theatre, stars Simon Russell Beale and Essie Davis and opens April 25 at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre. Preview performances begin April 6.

Beale, one of the London's most acclaimed stage actors in such classics as "Hamlet," "Uncle Vanya" and "Twelfth Night," and Davis, who has appeared in the film "Girl With a Pearl Earring," are making their Broadway debuts.

First seen in London in 1972 and then in New York in 1974, "Jumpers" concerns a debate about the existence of God, the mysterious death of a Chinese acrobat and a fading musical-comedy star's extramarital affair.

The director is David Leveaux, who last season directed Antonio Banderas in "Nine" and next month opens a revival of "Fiddler on the Roof," starring Alfred Molina, on Broadway.

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. — Kimberly Mathers, the ex-wife of rapper Eminem, has been sentenced to two years' probation after pleading guilty to a drug charge and a driving offense, prosecutors said.

Mathers, 28, pleaded guilty last month to a charge of possessing 25 grams or less of cocaine and failing to give adequate space to an emergency vehicle.

In exchange for the guilty pleas, Circuit Judge Edward A. Servitto dismissed a third charge of driving with a suspended license and a charge of maintaining a drug house, said David Portuesi, chief of the drug crimes unit for the prosecutor's office.

She was sentenced Wednesday and, as conditions of her probation, she may not use alcohol or nonprescription drugs and must undergo random drug testing and substance abuse evaluation and treatment, Portuesi said.

The charges will be dismissed if Mathers successfully completes probation. Servitto told Mathers he would send her to jail if she violated any of the terms.

Defense attorney Michael Sinutko did not return a call seeking comment.

LOS ANGELES — An ex-boyfriend of Anna Nicole Smith was sentenced to nearly seven years in prison for making criminal threats against the former Playboy Playmate and attacking her neighbor, officials said.

Superior Court Judge Kathryne Stoltz rejected Mark Hatten's motion for a new trial on Friday.

"I'm not a bad person. I basically walked away from this fight," Hatten said. "You'll never hear about me bothering Anna Nicole again."

Hatten was convicted last November of making criminal threats against Smith, who testified she had a brief sexual relationship with him in 2000 that ended when he approached her with a knife in her home. Hatten claimed they had an on-again, off-again relationship.

Hatten was also convicted of assault for a fight involving a neighbor who went to Smith's house to persuade Hatten to leave.

Jurors acquitted Hatten of two other counts involving stalking and threats against Smith, 36, who became a reality TV star when "The Anna Nicole Show" began airing on E! Entertainment Television.

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