

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO
7 14 20 21 47
Meganumber: 24
Jackpot: \$9 Million

FANTASY 5
5 11 16 20 27

DAILY 3
Daytime: 2 5 6
Evening: 0 8 4

DAILY DERBY
1st: 12 Lucky Charms
2nd: 09 Winning Spirit
3rd: 07 Eureka!

RACE TIME: 1.45.82
Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site: <http://www.calottery.com>

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ A billy goat reportedly attacked Zimbabwe's strong-arm President Robert Mugabe during a gas-station stop en route to the mountain resort of Nyanga in December, injuring Mugabe's scrotum and large bowel. And Fremont, Calif., police officer Paul Rush, who was escorting a teenager home from a traffic stop in January, reported to a hospital emergency room afterward because five chihuahuas had attacked him at the front door of the teen's home, biting his ankles.

■ In December, the Bush administration's Department of Justice filed a "friend of the court" brief at the U.S. Supreme Court, supporting Anna Nicole Smith in her battle with the son of her late husband, J. Howard Marshall II, over his estate. Smith and the administration believe that a federal bankruptcy court (which backed Smith) should control the case and not a Texas state court (which had sided with Marshall's son).

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 27th day of 2006.
There are 338 days left in the year.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, on Jan. 27, 1756, composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Who never doubted, never half believed. Where doubt is, there truth is — it is her shadow."

GAMALIEL BAILEY
AMERICAN ABOLITIONIST (1807-1859)

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Last Moose Lodge suspect caught

BY RYAN HYATT
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN LA — Authorities have arrested the last man believed to be responsible for the double homicide which occurred in March at the Santa Monica Moose Lodge.

Two men were placed under arrest shortly before 2 a.m. on Thursday morning by the Los

Angeles County Sheriff's Office following a three-hour standoff with police in Compton. One of the men arrested was Ector Hugo Sanchez, 21, the last of three suspects accused of murdering Jonathan Hernandez and Hector Bonilla — two Santa Monica residents shot multiple times on March 5, 2005 during a birthday party held at the Moose Lodge.

Sanchez and an accomplice surrendered to a Los Angeles County Sheriff Department SWAT team on Thursday morning, releasing four unharmed individuals who they had allegedly held hostage, according to law enforcement officials.

The incident began at approximately 11 p.m. on Wednesday when deputies tried to flag down the two men occupying a vehicle

at Aprillia Avenue and Compton Boulevard. The two men allegedly led deputies on a vehicle chase, exchanging gunfire with them during the pursuit. No one was injured in the incident.

The two men abandoned their vehicle and ran into a home in the 600 block of West Cypress Street.

See MOOSE LODGE, page 6

Artist does an about face



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Gim Chian, a clay sculptor, looks to bring out the likeness of Katherine Pepka, 17, on Thursday on the Santa Monica Pier.

Council loosens its belt

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — An emboldened tourism industry, surging real estate sales and some unexpected money courtesy of the state has pumped an additional \$5.5 million into the city coffers, leaving council members with more money to spend when they approve the mid-year budget next month.

While some of the cash is already accounted for — to cover increased costs for employee salaries — roughly \$2.5 million will be left up to the discretion of the council, which will debate the issue at a meeting scheduled for Feb. 14.

The session is expected to draw more than 100 speakers, all lobbying for increased funding for their respective programs.

Aside from the possible showdown, additional revenue brings "tremendous relief for the city," said Councilman Kevin McKeown. "The last few years we have had to enact some cost-cutting measures because of tight budgets, and we did an exemplary job of getting through that tough period without hurting services.

"Now we have a chance to revisit and extend things that excited us. It was frustrating because we

See SURPLUS, page 7

Actor's death is not believed a suicide

BY RYAN HYATT
Daily Press Staff Writer

OCEAN AVENUE — Actor Chris Penn's death doesn't appear to be an act of foul play or suicide, according to the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office.

However, the exact cause of death is still unknown.

Penn, 40, died at his condominium at 1033 Ocean Avenue on Tuesday. Santa Monica police arrived at 4:02 p.m. after receiving a call from someone within the build-

ing. When officers entered Penn's condo, they found him dead, said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega.

Capt. Ed Winter of the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office said on Thursday that Penn seems to have died from accidental or natural causes. The official cause of death is pending a toxicology report, which should be available in six to eight weeks.

Winter said toxicology reports are performed on 80 percent of individuals brought to the coroner's office, especially those who

are young when they died.

Sean Penn's publicist, Mara Buxbaum, issued a statement saying that "the Penn family would appreciate the media's respect of their privacy during this difficult time."

Don "The Dragon" Wilson, considered one of the greatest kickboxers of all time, had been a friend of Chris Penn's for 20 years. He said he first became acquainted with Penn professionally when they worked out together. From

See PENN, page 6

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HOROSCOPES

Join with pals, Scorpio

Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 ★★★ You could feel pressured by others. Remember, you always have the choice of how to respond. You could be rather overwhelmed. Make an effort to be understanding. Listen to a very generous offer, but don’t take it seriously immediately. Tonight: Out and about.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ★★★★★ You will be hard-pressed to understand what is going on with others. Investigate options, but a key door might still be closed. Be easygoing, and you will get the answers you want. Opportunities come through others’ willingness. Tonight: Opt for something different.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ★★★★★ Work with someone carefully. You have a way of making comments that could be misinterpreted easily. You have a lot of creativity. Your gentleness is demonstrated through nurturing and care. Tonight: Togetherness.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ★★★★★ Fatigue could be impairing your decisions. You could make a costly financial mistake. Stop and take your time when dealing with others. Creativity could easily be mistaken for risking. Use care and insight, please. Tonight: Be easygoing.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ★★★ You might not intend to rain on someone’s parade, but you will anyway. Opportunity stems from your positive behavior. Actions speak louder than words. You might need to say that you’re sorry through a gesture. Tonight: Take some time off from your busy social schedule.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ★★★★★ You are full of fun and liveliness. Allow your playful behavior to emerge instead of being a downer. Your attitude determines much that goes on. Be positive, and others will be happy to relate to you. Tonight: Find fun.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ★★★ Your family and home come first. Take actions to add to your present security. Express your gentle behavior. Your warmth bubbles forward and warms up others. Stop and buy a card to brighten someone’s day. Tonight: Run errands on the way home.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ★★★★★ You are all smiles. Others naturally respond to you, with the exception of a boss or a contrary person in your life. Remember that you cannot change others. Listen to feedback from someone you care about. A conversation can clear the air. Tonight: Join pals for a Friday gathering.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ★★★ You might be pushing the line without even realizing it. If you listen to what isn’t being said, you might understand more of what is ailing someone close to you. You might need to be more careful with your spending. Your sixth sense might clue you in to events prior to their happening. Tonight: Indulge friends.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ★★★★★ Someone might not have everything he or she is suggesting. Use a grain of salt in viewing those around you. Deal with others positively. Close relating draws out someone’s fears. Eye the long-term. Tonight: Where your friends are.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ★★★ Listen to news that comes from a boss, parent or someone else you respect. Deal with a problem with concern and care for everyone involved. Responsibilities call. You will meet the demands. Tonight: Time for you.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ★★★★★ Stay call-oriented and on top of a problem. If you take your time and find facts, you will understand a lot more. Investigate alternatives. Kiss rigidity goodbye. A change will revive your energy. Tonight: Where your friends are.



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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Cop takes aim against cancer

By Daily Press staff

A local police lieutenant and cancer survivor is doing his part to protect and serve the health of Los Angeles residents.

Santa Monica Police Lt. Frank Fabrega was appointed to a two-year term on the Los Angeles Regional Council of the American Cancer Society, a volunteer board representing a spectrum of professionals who oversee the society's fundraising, advocacy, education and patient services programs in L.A. County.

Fabrega is a prostate cancer survivor and has chaired the society's Santa Monica Relay For Life event for the past five years. Under his leadership the event has raised more than \$440,000 for cancer research, early detection, education, advocacy and free patient services programs. Lt. Fabrega recently represented the American Cancer Society on the hit "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" at the remodeling of an El Segundo police officer's home.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters In Atlanta, the society has local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information, call toll-free at 1-800-ACS-2345.



LT. FRANK FABREGA

Mural's return to library long overdue

By Daily Press staff

A mural originally painted in the 1930s at the Santa Monica Public Library is being checked back in following a 40-year absence.

The mural created by Stanton Macdonald-Wright is the topic of a visual presentation by Ilene Susan Fort to be held on Jan. 28.

A pioneer of Modernism, Macdonald-Wright created one of the largest murals completed during the 1930s New Deal at the Santa Monica Public Library. After 40 years, the mural series (on loan from the Smithsonian American Art Museum) has returned to the new Main Library which recently opened. Dr. Fort, mural consultant and curator of American Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, describes the mural and its significance in her talk entitled: "The history of humankind through the eyes of Stanton Macdonald-Wright: The library mural series."

Recently conserved and reinstalled, through funding provided by the California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) and the City of Santa Monica, the mural series is on view on the second floor of the Main Library. Fort's talk will be held at 2 p.m. in the Main Library's Martin Luther King Jr. auditorium, located at 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

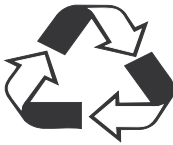
For more information on this free public program, call (310) 458-8600.

CORRECTION — The birth date of late actor Chris Penn was incorrectly reported in the Wednesday, January 25 edition. The 40-year-old Penn, who was found dead on Tuesday, was born in 1965.

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Santa Monica Daily Press



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SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-12"	LIFT HOURS 8:30am - 4:00pm	RUNS OPEN 15	LIFTS OPEN 10/12
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 96" - 120"	LIFT HOURS 8:00am - 4:00pm	RUNS OPEN 35	LIFTS OPEN 6/6
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CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 144" - 168"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 150	LIFTS OPEN 25/28
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-30"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 10:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 16	LIFTS OPEN 8/16
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Hard Packed

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-12"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 4:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 4	LIFTS OPEN 2/4
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-24"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 18	LIFTS OPEN 14/14
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 24"-12"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 9	LIFTS OPEN 5/11
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CONDITIONS: Machine Groomed

CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 57°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (2-4 FT)

Today is when our next NW swell is due, but this one may not be pretty. This is from a close-proximity system we've been watching in the southern portion of the Gulf of Alaska this week, and it's been a little too close to the region for quality ground swell. Its periods though are running 12-14 seconds, and it's angled from about 295-305 degrees.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

NW swell fills into SoCal Friday...
Long-period NW swell due early next week...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

SATURDAY	LOW TIDE: 8:21AM HIGH TIDE: 1:38AM	2.1FT 4.2FT	6:35PM 1:12PM	1.7FT 2.9FT
SUNDAY	LOW TIDE: 10:09AM HIGH TIDE: 2:23AM	1.7FT 4.4FT	7:24PM 3:32PM	2.1FT 2.4FT
MONDAY	LOW TIDE: 11:29AM HIGH TIDE: 3:18AM	1FT 4.6FT	8:26PM 6:24PM	2.5FT 2.5FT
TUESDAY	LOW TIDE: 12:22PM HIGH TIDE: 4:17AM	0.3FT 5.0FT	10:12PM 7:27PM	2.7FT 2.9FT
WEDNESDAY	LOW TIDE: 1:05AM HIGH TIDE: 5:13AM	-0.4FT 5.5FT	11:31PM 7:58PM	2.6FT 3.2FT
THURSDAY	LOW TIDE: 1:44PM HIGH TIDE: 6:06AM	-1.1FT 6.0FT	N/A 8:27PM	3.5FT
FRIDAY	LOW TIDE: 12:31AM HIGH TIDE: 6:55AM	2.4FT 6.5FT	2:23PM 8:57PM	-1.5FT 3.7FT

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



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The **Q**Line

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Local officials are critical of a new report, released by the National Coalition for the Homeless, that ranks Santa Monica as the ninth "meanest" U.S. city toward homeless people due to its anti-homeless laws. Pointing to the myriad homeless services offered in Santa Monica, some officials are questioning the methodology behind the report.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, **"How well do you think Santa Monica treats its homeless population relative to other cities?"**

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition. Please try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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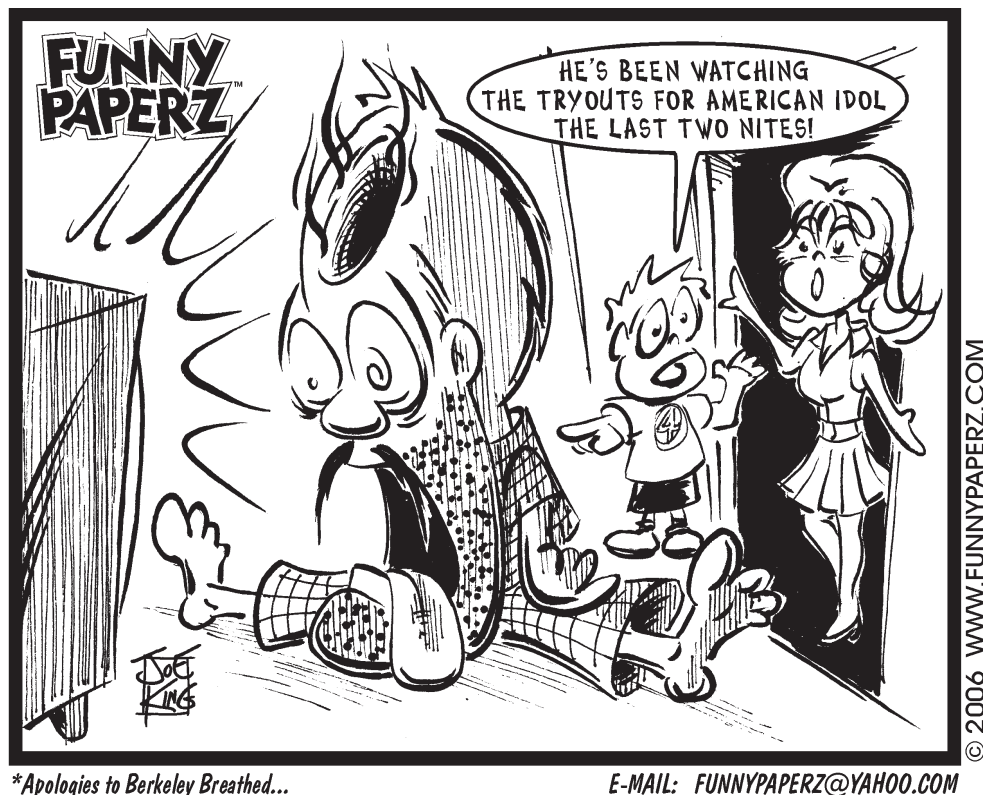
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OPINION



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Eliminating the problem, not the people

Editor:

This is in reference to Q-Line. The recent responses to your question about illegal immigration in the United States and specifically Southern California were disturbing to me. Some of the views expressed about this issue, our history and what it means to be an American citizen protected by a democratic Constitution were borderline scary. What needs to be done is to make all migration legal. We need to eliminate the black market for wages. We need to remove the double standard enforcement of our laws that currently protect businesses and employers. We need to allow these people to continue to positively contribute to our society.

From a historical perspective, do you think the American Indians thought our migration here from Europe to escape persecution in our birth homelands was legal and just?

My favorite comment from Mexican-Americans is, "We did not cross the border; the border crossed us," and history agrees with them. They were here first. The Mexican people and their ancestors were here long before any blond-haired, blue-eyed white man ever saw the Pacific Ocean, the Sierra Mountains, the vast deserts or our rich fertile valleys.

The government should actively register, educate and tax these hard working individuals acknowledging their involvement in our economy and not marginalize, punish and make illegal their migration and successful efforts to help build a stronger nation state. If you feel this solution would be too costly to implement then ask yourself these questions: Why should your government and your tax dollars support higher educated, employable native born people? If they are so damn capable of working the low-wage, backbreaking jobs that are currently being performed by "illegal aliens," why don't they do it? Doesn't it make more sense to pay these people to do the jobs that you and I do not wish to do ourselves?

John Brown III
Santa Monica

Beach club leaves reader sea sick

Editor:

I couldn't just sit still.

I've been a Santa Monica resident for 44 years and seen many changes. In the early to mid '70s, and even later, there was plenty of talk about the future of this formerly fair city. Now she's a whore willing and able to sell to the highest bidder, and when I read about the new "public" beach club I almost puked.

If you know of any group I can join to stop S.M.'s "progress" on this matter, I'd really like to help them.

Nick Kosciuk
Santa Monica

GUEST COMMENTARY BY BENNET G. KELLEY

The road not traveled
lets imagination wander

President Bush concluded his 2005 State of the Union Address by quoting Franklin Roosevelt's invocation that "[e]ach age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth." When President Bush stands before Congress next week, we should parse his lofty rhetoric and exhortations about the need for tax cuts and the Iraq war and consider the costs and results of the Bush agenda to determine which age the President has delivered to us.

President Bush has "spent" over \$1 trillion in tax cuts, primarily targeted towards the wealthiest Americans, based on the unsupported assumption that this would stimulate the economy and create jobs. The Bush tax cuts were followed by an anemic recovery which has already begun to falter. Even worse is that the administration got very little "bang for its buck," since between October 2001 and December 2005 the economy only produced 3,011,000 private sector jobs at a price of \$308,537 per job.

In his 2003 State of the Union Address, Bush criticized the Clinton administration for viewing "terrorism more as a crime," and declared that "[t]he terrorists . . . declared war on the United States and war is what they got." Yet despite the fact that the terrorists who "declared war on the United States" were based in Afghanistan, the Afghan campaign has been characterized more by timidity and neglect than "shock and awe." Even though Afghanistan is more populous and nearly 50 percent larger than Iraq, it has received less than 20 percent of the troops and one-third of the resources spent on Iraq.

By the end of fiscal 2006, we will have spent \$82 billion to topple a defanged Saddam Hussein, while Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda remain alive and well.

The tax cuts and the war in Iraq add up to a \$1.164 trillion blunder, money which over the same five year period could have been invested to make us safer and more secure at home and abroad. This includes addressing the shortfall in funds needed to rebuild Afghanistan (\$1.7 billion per year) and doubling the number of Special Operations Forces who play a critical role in fighting terrorism (\$15.5 billion). We also could have increased our defenses against future terrorist attacks by providing the funds requested to safeguard our ports, rail and transit sys-

tems (\$1.7B), equipped all domestic commercial airplanes with defense systems to deflect shoulder-fired missiles (\$2B) and added 100,000 police officers (\$1.4B). In addition, we could have struck a devastating blow against the disease and poverty which fuel terrorism by immunizing every child in the world (\$3B).

The "blunder fund" also could have invested in our future prosperity by adding one million teachers (a 33 percent increase at \$44.7B), funding 50,000 additional scholarships to state universities (\$1B) and reviving New Orleans by replacing 216,000 affordable housing units destroyed or damaged by Hurricane Katrina (\$4.8B). The fund also could have financed a program ensuring universal access to health insurance for all Americans that reduced health costs by emphasizing preventative medicine (\$54B).

The "blunder fund" could have accomplished all of these things while also balancing the budget and adding over \$200 billion towards the solvency of the Medicare and Social Security Trust funds.

The Bush "blunder fund" does not include costs which cannot be quantified. On September 12, 2001, the front page of Paris' Le Monde declared "We Are All Americans." Three years later, 27 former defense, intelligence and diplomatic officers released a statement that "[n]ever in . . . our history has the United States been so isolated among nations, so broadly feared and disgusted." The United States that once stood as a beacon of liberty is now viewed through the prism of illegal spying, indefinite detentions and torture, leaving The Economist to note that by compromising our ideals, President Bush has "blunt[ed] one of America's most powerful weapons against terrorism."

Each State of the Union address presents only one of the diverging paths that lay ahead and it is for us to decide if that is the path towards a dream being born. Time and time again, however, President Bush has blundered down the path towards a dying dream and that has made all the difference.

(Bennet Kelley (bennet@bennetkelley.com) is the former National Co-Chair of the Democratic National Committee's young professional arm, the publisher of BushLies.net and a Santa Monica attorney.)

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to editor@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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Submit news releases

Email to: editor@smdp.com or fax 310.576.9913

LOCAL



CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

Gone in Nanoseconds: iPods a hot item for thief

At 5:48 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 23, the Santa Monica police responded to the 1200 block of Third Street, the Apple store, regarding a robbery investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the victim, who said the suspect entered the store and stole four iPods valued at \$1,200. While in the store, the suspect displayed a knife and lunged at the victim then fled the location. The suspect was located at the 300 block of Santa Monica Boulevard and officer recovered the iPods and a loaded firearm in the suspect's possession. The suspect was on parole and had no bail.

At 10:50 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 17, the Santa Monica police responded to the 1600 block of Court No. 7 regarding an assault investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the victim, who said that at 4:30 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 14, he was sleeping when an unknown suspect approached and punched him for an unknown reason. The victim identified the suspect as a transient and an acquaintance who left the scene. The report was filed three days after the incident, and the suspect wasn't located.

At 8:30 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 19, the Santa Monica police responded to the 2500 block of Lincoln Boulevard regarding an assault investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the victim, who said he had been involved in a traffic dispute with the driver of another vehicle. During the verbal altercation, the suspect displayed a handgun and threatened the victim. The victim called police and indicated to officers where the suspect could be located. Police found the suspect and uncovered a loaded firearm on his person. Michael Anthony Urie, 19, was arrested for possessing a loaded firearm and assault with a deadly weapon. Bail was set at \$35,000.

At 11:25 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 26, the Santa Monica police responded to the Ocean Avenue and Pico Boulevard regarding a theft investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the victim, who said while she was sick and vomiting the suspect approached her and took her radio from her person. Arthur Beltran Tarango, 55, transient, was arrested for theft and outstanding warrants. Bail was set at \$36,250.

At 10:34 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 20, the Santa Monica police responded to Clover Park at 2600 Ocean Park Boulevard regarding a sexual battery report. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the victim, who said that while she was at the park the suspect approached her and grabbed her buttock and fled. A search of the area was conducted and Aries Giovanni Carpenter, 24, of Santa Monica, was located at 17th and Pearl streets. Bail was set at \$35,000.

This police report was prepared by Daily Press staff writer Ryan Hyatt.

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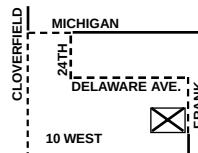
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LOCAL

Moose Lodge suspect surrenders after standoff

MOOSE LODGE, from page 1

There, they allegedly held four occupants hostage until crisis negotiators convinced them to surrender, law enforcement officials said.

Representatives from the Sheriff Department's Compton Division were unable to provide by press time information regarding Sanchez' role in the incident and what charges he may face in relation to Wednesday's crimes.

In July, the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office filed felony charges and issued arrest warrants for Jose Mojarro, 21, William Vasquez, 25, and Sanchez for the murders of Hernandez and Bonilla.

Until Thursday, Sanchez was the only remaining suspect at-large.

Natalie Preciado, Hernandez' mother, was relieved to hear that all of the men believed to be responsible for her son's murder have been captured.

"Now my son's soul can rest," Preciado said.

Preciado said she was also grateful to law enforcement officials who have worked diligently so the suspects may be brought to justice.

Vasquez was arrested in Oct. 6 on the 500 block of Westlake Street in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Police Department and FBI's Fugitive Task Force had been looking for Vasquez for allegedly murdering a 22-year-old Los Angeles man in 2002, when he was captured during a police sweep of a home suspected of harboring gang members.

Mojarro has been in custody since July 5 for a parole violation related to a battery on emergency personnel, for which he

served one and a half years of a two year-term in the Department of Corrections.

Mojarro, also known as "Peanut;" Sanchez, also known as "Enemy;" and Vasquez, also known as "Crook" and "Ugly Cuz," are all believed to be gang members from Los Angeles, according to the DA's office.

Guests at the party held on March 5 at the Moose Lodge, 1600 Ocean Park Boulevard, said more than a dozen shots were fired by the suspects after an altercation with Hernandez and Bonilla.

Bonilla, 25, was shot multiple times in his torso and head, while Hernandez, 19, suffered more extensive wounds to his torso, head and buttocks, according to the Los Angeles County Department of Coroner.

Relating to the Moose Lodge killings, each of the suspects faces two counts of murder, with special allegations of gang enhancements and use of firearms during a gang crime, and a third count of assault with a deadly weapon. If convicted, the three men each face life sentences without parole or the death penalty.

Both Mojarro and Vasquez have pleaded not guilty to the charges during an arraignment in Los Angeles Superior Court. They are scheduled to appear in court on Feb. 28 to set a date for their preliminary hearing, at which time attorneys would present evidence so a judge may determine if the case warrants a trial.

Sanchez has no other prior convictions in Los Angeles County, according to the Superior Court.

Jane Robison, a spokeswoman with the DA's Office, said Sanchez will likely be arraigned on Friday or Monday.

Actor working on getting back 'in the groove' before his death

PENN, from page 1

there, the friendship grew.

"When I heard the news Chris is dead the first person I wanted to call was Chris, because he was the person I went to when I needed to talk," Wilson said. "I loved the guy and never met anyone with a kinder heart who was more generous."

"Unfortunately, he had some of the weaknesses many people have."

Beau H. Burton, a producer, said he was helping Penn finance a film concerning Vietnam when the actor died. The stage set for the film was being constructed in Malibu.

Several of Penn's friends recalled he was excited about the upcoming project.

"Chris was a private person who let things roll off him pretty well," Burton said. "He was trying to get back in the groove and back in shape."

Penn began acting at the age of 12. In 1983, he made his feature film debut in

Francis Ford Coppola's "Rumble Fish." He also had a small role in the high school football drama "All The Right Moves" starring Tom Cruise. Penn appeared with Kevin Bacon in the hit dance musical "Footloose" in 1984 and played a villain in the Clint Eastwood western "Pale Rider" in 1985. In 1986, Penn co-starred with brother Sean in "At Close Range."

Penn had starred in a number of other films, including "Reservoir Dogs," "True Romance," "Starsky & Hutch" and "After the Sunset." Penn also was featured on the 2004 video game "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas" as the voice of officer Eddie Pulaski, according to Wikipedia.

His late father, Leo Penn, directed television shows. His mother, Ryan, is an actress whose credits include "I Am Sam," "Magnolia" and "Parenthood."

Chris Penn's latest film, "The Darwin Awards," was scheduled to premiere Wednesday at the Sundance Film Festival.

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LOCAL



Greetings from S.M. pay off in a big way

SURPLUS, from page 1

had these good ideas but not the money to implement them.”

IT'S NOT GROWING ON TREES

Most of the new revenue — around \$2 million — came in the form of property taxes, boosted by increased sales of homes and condominiums, the product of a robust market where properties in Santa Monica are now selling at an average of \$940,000.

“We have been having record-breaking sales for the last several years, which has caused a major increase in the property tax base ... generating tremendous amounts of revenue for cities,” said local realtor Jack Susser, president of ERA First Choice Realty.

The market for condos has been booming, outpacing the sale of homes last year, but forecasters predict the market may cool, showing only modest growth in 2006.

“But with Santa Monica, there will always be a good level of appreciation in home values and a relatively strong market,” said Dan Messel, a sales associate with Prudential California Realty.

MAIN ATTRACTION

Tourism is back in a big way, contributing \$1.5 million in added revenue from taxes collected on hotels, known as the Transient Occupancy Tax — currently 14 percent of the nightly cost of one hotel room.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, tourism here has steadily rebounded, generating anywhere from \$30 million to \$32 million a year in hotel room taxes, with an average room rate of \$234.91 for 2005 and an occupancy level of nearly 79 percent, according to the Conventions & Visitors Bureau.

“Santa Monica has remained a top destination in the minds of travelers, and I believe with hard work and determination, that trend will continue,” said Misti Kerns, president of the bureau. “Our work has been very focused since 9/11 and with a small budget we must be very selective where we market to get the highest return on our investment.”

The city's strongest markets continue to be the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Germany, according to Kerns. More Canadians and travelers from Latin America and Japan are emerging. Strong domestic markets like Chicago and New York are also experiencing slight growth while corporate travel is strong, with an estimated 3- to 5-percent growth overall in occupancy and room rates.

In efforts to keep the visitors coming, Kerns said the council should continue to invest in transportation, public safety and parks, as well as in advertising to promote the many amenities found here.

STATE GETS IT IN GEAR

The remaining large deposit of new cash comes via the state government, with the Legislature repaying roughly \$1.5 million in vehicle licensing fees borrowed two years ago to solve the state's budget woes. The repayment was not expected until sometime during the 2006-07 fiscal year, according to a city staff report.

The fee is charged to motorists once a

year when they register a vehicle with the Department of Motor Vehicles. The money has traditionally been divvied up to local governments to be used to pay for public services such as libraries, police and fire departments.

While not as large as the previous contributions, an increase in the number of business licenses issued accounted for a little more than \$900,000 of new revenue, followed by \$536,470 from greater than anticipated revenues from the downtown parking structures. Increases in the use of natural gas in the amount of \$54,379 has helped partially offset losses in electricity and telephone service revenue.

WHERE'S IT GOING?

Roughly \$1.8 million will go towards salary increases due to changes in position for employees of Community and Cultural Services and Human Services. City staff has also recommended the council direct \$1 million to digitize all planning records, and \$180,725 for custodial services and maintenance.

The rest is up to the council to decide and many community groups and businesses are expected to lobby strongly for funding in the next few weeks.

Council members have already received numerous e-mails as well as petitions requesting funding, the latest being from kids who use The Cove Skatepark. They would like lights added along with lower fees, according to the petition. For resident youth, the annual registration fee for the park is \$10, and a quarterly pass is \$20. A day pass is \$3.

The 18th Street Arts Center is also requesting more funding along with the Pico Youth & Family Center.

McKeown is looking to deposit some of the remaining \$2.5 million into services for youth, with a focus on child care, more parks and playgrounds and the creation of an anti-violence program. He also hopes to invest in a cultural center and community gardens, not to mention dog parks.

“I would also like to look at a community energy independence initiative, which is something that staff has developed to make us rely more on solar power and conservation,” he said. “I would like to find a banker that would be willing to finance assumable solar equity loans where new owners of a home pick up the loan for installing solar panels. That way more homeowners may want to make this upgrade without a fear of being stuck with this major investment if they decide to sell.”

Councilman Herb Katz said he is still waiting for public comment before making any final decisions, but he is thinking of ways to invest the money into transportation, such as creating a shuttle system and traffic signal synchronization. He would also like to see funding for more dog parks.

“I'm prejudiced though, (because) I have two dogs,” Katz said. “I told (the council) ‘I am now a pain in your neck. I have another constituency.’”

Katz warned that just because City Hall has some money to work with, that doesn't mean it has to be spent all at once.

“We have to be prudent,” he said. “Just because we have a windfall this year doesn't mean we'll have one next year. ... I'd like to see some kind of reserve fund. You never know what will happen mid-year.”



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VIOLET-At Violet restaurant the atmosphere is casual, comfortable, and, like its cuisine, is uncluttered. Chef Jared Simons' flavorful small plate fare has something to suit everyone, from light eaters to those with a taste for a more robust fare. The Braised Short Ribs with Shallot Potatoes (\$14.50) melt apart while the Multi-Colored Beet Salad with Eel delights with Kumquat and Ginger Vinaigrette (\$9) and the favorite among the regulars is the Baked Macaroni and Gruyere Cheese with Serrano Ham (\$7.50). Unique selection of new and old world wines by the bottle, glass or flight as well as an impressive list of domestic & imported artisan beers. Hours: Lunch: Tuesday-Friday, 11:30am-2pm. Dinner: Tuesday-Friday, 6pm-10pm & Saturday and Sunday, 5:30pm-10pm. 3221 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. www.violetrestaurant.com (310) 453-9113.

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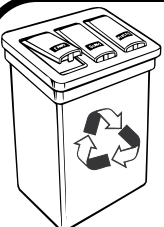
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Three activists indicted on charges of plotting against Forest Service

BY DON THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Three activists were cooking up homemade plastic explosives and planned to test their device the day they were arrested, federal prosecutors alleged Wednesday as they indicted the trio.

The three face five to 20 years in federal prison if they are convicted of conspiring to use fire or explosives to damage property. Eric McDavid, 28, of Foresthill, Calif., Zachary Jensen, 20, of Monroe, Wash., and Lauren Weiner, 20, of Philadelphia, remain in Sacramento County Jail awaiting arraignment and bail amounts. They could enter a plea at their arraignment Thursday.

They planned a series of assaults this spring in the name of the Earth Liberation Front, a "loosey-goosey, sort of mist-of-the-fog kind of an organization" of environmental activists, U.S. Attorney McGregor Scott said. He said the potential stiff prison sentences should be a warning to other idealistic young people considering violent acts.

The three are not known to have a connection to 11 alleged ecoterrorists who were indicted in Oregon last week, but the series of recent shows that the loosely knit groups are widespread, Scott said. The FBI says such groups have claimed 1,200 criminal acts causing more than \$100 million in damage in the last 15 years, and are the bureau's No. 2 priority behind only international terrorism.

Yet the three arrested on Jan. 13 didn't know they were working with an under-

cover FBI informant or living in a cabin in Dutch Flat rented by the FBI and wired for audio and video surveillance, authorities said. Their first attempt to boil bleach into crystals ended when the glassware broke, prosecutors allege, and they were buying more when they were arrested outside a Kmart in nearby Auburn, east of Sacramento in the Sierra foothills.

"Just because they aren't necessarily career sophisticated criminals does not in any way lessen the threat that they posed," said Scott, dismissing suggestions that the trio amounted to "the gang that couldn't shoot straight." McDavid in particular threatened violence, Scott alleged.

McDavid's attorney, Mark Reichel, said the activities of the three never became dangerous. He said they were enticed by the informant who was paid \$75,000 over two years, although Scott denied any entrapment.

"It looks like some talk and a little mischief, if the indictment is true," Reichel said. Jensen's attorney declined comment and Weiner's did not immediately return telephone messages.

Three days before their arrests, the three scouted the Nimbus Dam and nearby fish hatchery on the American River near Sacramento, and toured McDavid's top target, the indictment says: the U.S. Forest Service's Institute of Forest Genetics in Placerville, in the foothills east of Sacramento. McDavid drew a map of the genetics lab that was recovered after his arrest, the FBI alleges in its affidavit.

"We'll never know how close we came to a major boom," Scott said.



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Dispute over RFK assassination endures in post-Ambassador era

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD

AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES — If all goes as planned, carefully wrapped pieces of the room where Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated will be packed in two ventilated steel containers and stored on a garbage-strewn lot within view of a strip club billboard.

What happens from there, no one knows.

Against the wishes of the Kennedy family, the deteriorated pantry from the mostly demolished Ambassador Hotel has been dismantled by hand, sheathed in plastic and spared the wrecking ball. Now local school officials, who bought the vacant hotel in 2001 to make way for new classrooms, are saddled with the question of what to do with the remnants of a tragic site in American history.

Any decision touches issues from historic significance to morbid curiosity.

The Kennedys want destroyed what's left of the pantry, including an ice machine, a closet door, ceiling lights and wainscoting — fearing remnants could end up auctioned online as morbid souvenirs. Several pieces purportedly from the landmark hotel are now for sale on the Internet.

By the late 1990s, the pantry looked like what it was — an abandoned kitchen service area in a long-closed hotel. Plaster was crumbling and rusted remains of equipment lined the walls.

A Los Angeles Unified School District advisory panel concluded the pantry had “no historical significance” to Kennedy's life or legacy and urged the school to get rid of it. But the district is legally bound to preserve the pantry items under terms of the demolition plan passed by the school board, district spokeswoman Shannon Johnson-Haber said.

This week, the salvaged pieces go into storage — perhaps indefinitely.

The result: Acrimony.

According to a Kennedy family friend who was wounded in the June 1968 assassination, Superintendent Roy Romer promised one of the senator's sons that the district would dispose of the pantry.

“The agreement was to get rid of all of it,” said Paul Schrade, who said he attended a meeting where Romer gave that assurance to Maxwell Kennedy.

If pantry parts aren't destroyed, Kennedy fears “this winds up on eBay,” Schrade added.

The former schools official who worked most closely on the Ambassador project as a special assistant to Romer said the superintendent was expressing a personal desire, not a binding guarantee.

Because of legal restrictions, “The superintendent can't just wake up one morning and say, ‘Boom, it's

gone,” said Glenn Gritzner, who also attended the meeting with Kennedy and Romer.

Neither Romer nor Kennedy could be reached for comment. Schrade said Maxwell Kennedy was unavailable for comment and calls to another son, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., weren't returned. Questions for Romer were referred to the district spokeswoman or Gritzner.

Some of the objects could become part of a memorial to Kennedy that is being considered for the school site, although Gritzner thought that unlikely.

Some items linked to famous assassinations have enduring historical value. The Smithsonian Institution has a tea cup used by President McKinley before he was assassinated in 1901, and a shirt cuff supposedly stained with President Lincoln's blood after his assassination in 1865.

The 1,000-room Ambassador, once a celebrity playground, was mostly razed after a bitter fight between the district and preservationists, who considered it a historic gem. The hotel hosted six Academy Award ceremonies and every U.S. president from Herbert Hoover to Richard Nixon.

Some sections are being retained, including the Coconut Grove nightclub where Bing Crosby crooned, which will become a school auditorium.

Kennedy was shot to death in the narrow pantry by Sirhan B. Sirhan, moments after declaring victory in the 1968 California Democratic presidential primary.

Members of the Kennedy family urged the district to clear the site for schools, calling that a fitting tribute to his legacy.

“The Ambassador Hotel has nothing to do with who my father was, or what he tried to do with his life,” Maxwell Kennedy wrote in a 2004 op-ed article in The Los Angeles Times.

There is dispute over the historic significance of what's left of the pantry, which remained in use for years after the assassination and in later years was “only marginally related to the original crime scene,” the district's advisory panel reported. An earlier district report concluded the pantry was historically significant.

Experts assigned to the painstaking work of breaking up, cataloging and storing the pantry found the floor, ceiling and walls were too fragile to be saved, although samples were taken.

An inventory of pantry pieces adds up to less than a room: There's a food-warming table, a closet frame, tile, lamps and various electrical boxes and breakers.

Workers will finish packing the items into locked steel containers this week, according to district officials.

Then, without procession, they will be trucked to a fenced yard at the edge of an interstate near downtown, where they will be placed among truck trailers and trash bins.

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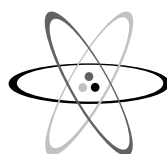
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‘Dance’ comes to Santa Monica

By Daily Press staff

A new dance concert will combine several genres into one show. Choreographer and founder, Sherman L. Steward, is proud to present the premiere of his multi-national, multi-cultural dance company Dance Theater of the World (DTW). Steward combines the classic forms of jazz, modern, ballet and tap. The success of the fledgling company’s pre-premiere in September, which was a benefit for the AVON walk for breast cancer, raised thousands of dollars and introduced Steward’s artistry. Inspired by a close friend and 10-year cancer survivor, Steward created four original works. He showcased the talented DTW dancers in addition to his pledge to walk.

In a review of the performance, Dwayne Johnson-Cochran wrote, “Steward’s choreography combined jazz, ballet, modern and African dance in seamless combinations, featuring 19th century pointe with cubist twists and turns, some gently amusing, some just gorgeous.”

Steward has studied and performed with some of the best the dance world has to offer, including Arthur Mitchell and Dance Theatre of Harlem, as well as Frank Hatchett and the Broadway Dance Center. He has danced, choreographed and instructed in all major cities around the world, earning a reputation throughout Europe, Asia and Africa for his powerfully symbolic pieces.

The show will take place on March 12 at 7:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Theater, 1501 California Ave. in Santa Monica.

‘Barnyard Madness’ invades Santa Monica

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Playhouse will be home to a herd of characters during the months of February and March. Actor’s Repertory Theatre (ART) of Santa Monica Playhouse presents the return of the all-new version of the musical comedy “Barnyard Madness with the Three Little Pigs.”

“Barnyard Madness”, one of the 15 original fairy tales that are part of the Santa Monica Playhouse family theatre musical matinee series, cuts across the imaginary generation gap by providing an experience for the entire family. The 1940s country and western show is a musical comedy that follows the romantic antics and show business aspirations of the singing McPig Sisters and their wolverine admirers, Clarence and Lou P. Wolfman, proving that true friendship does not depend on size, color, background, nationality or “species.”

The show was written and directed by Chris DeCarlo and Evelyn Rudie with ART members Rebecca Coombs, James Cooper, Serena Dolinsky, Cynde Moore and John Waroff. Set design by James Cooper, costume design by Ashley Hayes and lighting and sound design by The Attic Room.

“Barnyard Madness” will be show at the Santa Monica Playhouse main stage at 1211 Fourth Street. The show will run for five weeks, from Feb. 4 to March 5 on Saturdays and Sundays at 12:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. A holiday performance is scheduled for Feb., 20 at 2 p.m. to celebrate President’s Day. Tickets are \$10.50 for kids 12 and under, \$12.20 for adults. Reservation are necessary.

For more information call the theatre box office at (310) 394-9779 ext. 2.

February Jazz at the Vic

By Daily Press staff

Lineup for upcoming shows at The Vic jazz club and restaurant.

Feb. 2
Grant Geissman — Grant Geissman is releasing his long-awaited CD “Say That,” a collection of 13 original compositions that meld the styles of 1960s Wes Montgomery, Horace Silver and Jimmy Smith.

Late night Jazz: Dan Osterman Quartet
Feb. 6
Grammy Foundation Jazz Ensemble
The Grammy Foundation works in partnership year-round with the Recording Academy and its regional offices to bring national attention to important issues such as the value and impact of music and arts education, and the urgency of preserving our rich cultural legacy. 18 Musicians and eight vocalists chosen by the Grammy Jazz Foundation will perform at various venues during Grammy week. These talented young musicians make their return to The Vic on this Monday performance. Dinner service is from 7 p.m. and one show at 8 p.m.

Feb. 8
Rhiannon — Rhiannon is an entertainer and a collaborative artist, with a vision of music as a vehicle for healing, transformation and social change. D

Feb. 9
Bill Cunliffe Jazz Ensemble — Pianist Bill Cunliffe brings his powerful “big band” to The Vic. Cunliffe adds another entry to his resume via his Latin Jazz Big Band. Calling an eight-piece ensemble a “big band” was a stretch, yet the title was fully applicable in terms of the group’s power and vitality. Cunliffe opens up plenty of space for the ensemble’s fine soloists to making most of the opportunity.

Late night Jazz: Nick Rosen Group



Photo courtesy Track 16 gallery
Viggo Mortensen’s works play with abstract light.



Photo courtesy Track 16 Gallery
Georg Gudni captures the calm countryside.

Mortensen, Gudni works are paradox

BY JAYA GUPTA
Special to the Daily Press

BERGAMOT STATION — Along with all the other pollutants permeating the Southland, the one we most likely turn a deaf ear to is noise pollution. Icelandic artist Georg Gudni and Viggo Mortensen — yes, the actor — present an exhibition at the Track 16 gallery that works in a way to both silence and embrace the noisy tumult of living in urban sprawl.

“The Nature of Landscape and Independent Perception” is an exhibition operating off different levels of paradox. Juxtaposing Gudni’s works of calm countryside with Mortensen’s images of chaos is the most severe level of visual contradiction. Using nature as fodder for a quintessentially artificial medium is as seemingly ironic as abstracting something as concrete and tangible as the earth. However, that is exactly what Gudni does with his oil paintings and charcoal drawings depicting Iceland’s flat landscape.

By stripping each scene of any and all identifying features while also using a subject matter that is so bereft of uniqueness, the most common complaints levied against Gudni’s works is that they are too primitive, too boring, or too “able to be done by my five-year-old.” The colors of the artist’s paints are muted and dull. He is successful in portraying the flat Icelandic landscape, but in technical terms that is nothing extraordinary. Perhaps that is the point.

For the most part, Gudni partakes in a classical genre of Icelandic painting —

portraying landscape. His offering focuses on texture, subtle nuance and the concept of universality in anonymity. The lack of identity is even hinted at in the names of the works as they are all titled “Untitled”. These landscapes can be of any flat pieces of earth and in fact are the representations of an Agoraphobic’s worst nightmares. With little effort, they are eerie as a resounding silence emanates from them. But perhaps the most perplexing thing to take note of is that Gudni’s artworks are probably what we think of when we imagine uncluttered, verdant landscape; for many, he has materialized something that exists in our collective imagination and for some reason it is oddly unsettling.

Of Gudni’s works, Mortensen said, “His work takes time and a certain amount of quiet meditation to fully appreciate.”

Mortensen’s pictures of abstracted nature and light cut the static and straightforwardness of the exhibition. The images of light writhe and contort as if caught in a whirlwind. For some, it appears as if Mortensen has captured the bright lights of drug-induced hallucination. For others, a true season of autumn seen blurry through a peephole lens. As Gudni’s paintings confer a sense of calm, Mortensen’s photos offer a sinuous feel of velocity.

“The Nature of Landscape and Independent Perception” continues through February 18 at the Track 16 Gallery in Bergamot Station, located at C1 2525 Michigan Ave in Santa Monica. For more information, call (310) 264-4678.

A stylized, high-contrast black and white graphic of a car crashing or exploding, with a large button on the hood.

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SANTA MONICA ART PALETTE

MAKING ARTS AND CULTURE COME ALIVE IN SANTA MONICA

Welcome to the Santa Monica Art Palette for the weekend of **January 26, 2006**. The Art Palette's goal is to showcase the many eclectic arts and cultural opportunities available in Santa Monica every week, highlighting one or more of the many happenings within our borders.



It's a big weekend for Santa Monica art lovers with two major art sales taking place right here. The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium will be hosting the second annual artLA, L.A.'s only contemporary art fair. And at Santa Monica Airport's Barker Hanger, the Los Angeles Art Show will showcase over 3,000 works of art from the last five centuries. Between the two art fairs, visitors will have the opportunity to see (and purchase) works from many of the world's best artists.



Beatrice Monteavaro
From the Earth to the Planet of the Apes

January 26 – 29
Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
1855 Main Street
12 – 7 p.m.

artLA will feature works of mixed media, video and digital art by both established artists and cutting-edge newcomers, promising to offer the best of contemporary art in the avant-garde tradition from around the globe. More than 70 galleries to participate in artLA.



Dana Holst
Pink Toes, 2005

The exhibition will also feature a lecture series hosted by prominent members of the contemporary art world and two seminars on collecting art. To purchase tickets or for additional information on artLA, visit their web site at www.art-fairsinc.com or call 323.937.4659.

LOS ANGELES ART SHOW

Over 50 galleries will showcase fine art from the 17th Century to the present at the 11th Annual Los Angeles Art Show. Visitors to the exhibition will also be able to attend presentations on topics such as the art of picture framing, photographic naturalism, and collecting modern and contemporary art.

January 25-29
Barker Hanger
Santa Monica Airport
<http://www.laartshow.com>

SANTA MONICA PUBLIC LIBRARY



On Saturday, visit the Santa Monica Main Library and learn a bit of our city's history — the magnificent Stanton McDonald-Wright murals now on display in the Library.

McDonald-Wright created his mural during his tenure as the director of Los Angeles' WPA program in the 1930's. This large scale mural depicts the history of men and women through the classical era to present-day (1934) Santa Monica featuring many international and local historic icons. After 40 years at the Smithsonian, these murals have been restored and returned to their home in Santa Monica. Dr. Ilene Fort, Curator of American Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, oversaw the restoration process for the City. On Saturday, she describes the mural and its significance in her talk entitled, "The History of Humankind through the Eyes of Stanton Macdonald-Wright: The Library Mural Series."

2:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 28
Martin Luther King Auditorium
Santa Monica Main Library
601 Santa Monica Boulevard

And while you're learning about the mural, the kids can have a terrific time during the day-long storytelling event also taking place on Saturday at the Main Library.

WAVE OF TALES



Beginning at 10:30 am, the Santa Monica Main Library will present a line up of storytellers that will capture the imagination of every kid on the block. Henry Winkler (at right) and Ellaraino are just two of the featured performers at this free event. For a full schedule and additional information, check the library's web site at http://www.smpkids.org/prime_space/wave_of_tales.htm



And last, but hardly least of the great adventures is Dance! Santa Monica, presented by the Santa Monica Cultural Affairs Division at the Miles Playhouse. Dance! Santa Monica features the work of local choreographer Suchi Branfman along with that of the Blackbird Dance Company and Dynamic Dance Theory.

This colorful and exciting evening offers Santa Monicans a rare opportunity to see contemporary dancers performing live on stage. The low ticket prices also make it a perfect choice for family outings and a terrific introduction to dance for children and adults.

Show times are Saturday night January 28th at 8:00 and Sunday January 29th at 3:00. Tickets are just \$10 for adults / \$5 for Kids 14 and under and Seniors.

Experimental films aren't the hottest Sundance ticket, but can still inspire

BY DEBBIE HUMMEL
Associated Press Writer

PARK CITY, Utah — Beneath the glitz and star-studded premieres at the Sundance Film Festival, listed deep in the film guide, are the handful of movies and shorts that make up the Frontier program.

They are among the most avant-garde and experimental works screening at the festival, considered the nation's premier exhibition of independent film. More like works of art than vehicles for entertainment, these films provide the patient movie lover with a unique perspective and inspire mainstream filmmakers with their innovation.

"We have this long history of avant-garde work or at least nontraditional works," said Mike Plante, an associate programmer at the festival, who along with programmer Shari Frilot concentrates on finding films for the Frontier section.

"Reservoir Dogs" and "Sex, Lies, and Videotape" didn't win the festival's grand jury prize their respective years, Plante is quick to point out. Both are films considered Sundance success stories and the among the brightest festival alumni — "Sex, Lies, and Videotape" is commonly credited with bringing Hollywood's attention to Sundance.

But films that would easily fit into a Frontier lineup, like "Chameleon Street" and "Poison" did win grand jury prizes.

"Where is ("Poison") in the section of the video store now? Not in the blockbuster section," Plante said.

Many often forget that film is an art form, he said. "The director is an artist. Cinematography is photography."

"The question is always, are you worried about it not being popular?" Plante said. "I'll show you people storming out of (more mainstream films at the festival). That's the case with all art. What we look for is an accomplishment in filmmaking."

Five feature-length films and eight short films make up the Frontier program at the festival.

Among those is director Kevin Jerome Everson's film "Cinnamon," which blends documentary-like footage of Virginia drag racing and the plot of a woman who is weekday banker and weekend racer, played by Erin Stewart.

"I asked Kevin, is this narrative or non-fiction? He said 'Yes,'" Plante said. "This is what interested him and this is totally, like, an experience."

"Cinnamon" is Everson's second feature-length film. The University of Virginia assistant art professor has made numerous short films, four of which have screened at Sundance in the past.

Everson describes his work as an artist would. He likes to use reality as a device and have actors engage in it. He likes to portray daily work as art and, in the case of "Cinnamon," drag racing as a performance.

"I always wanted to have the mechanic be the composer, the car be the instrument and the driver be the musician," he said.

The film was shot over two days, and the interaction between actress Stewart and real-life mechanic John Bowles, who runs a junior drag racing program his daughter and grandsons race in, is so convincing it's hard to separate the documentary from the drama.

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Grants to rebuild Gulf Coast fall short

BY LARA JAKES JORDAN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — One state's funding windfall is another's frustration in the Gulf Coast, where the Bush administration is distributing billions of dollars in grants to rebuild hurricane-ravaged housing.

Among the unhappy states is Texas, whose Republican governor joined a chorus of the state's lawmakers in complaining Thursday that it was being short-changed by the \$74 million it will receive.

"Thousands of Texas families and senior citizens whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged in Hurricane Rita will lack the funds to rebuild their homes as a result of this decision," Gov. Rick Perry said in a statement.

In Mississippi, lawmakers are pleased with \$5 billion that can help up to an estimated 50,000 households walloped by storm-related flooding last year.

At issue is previously announced \$11.5 billion in community grants that the Bush administration said Wednesday would be divided among five states. In doing so, the White House rejected a \$30 billion redevelopment plan for Louisiana that state officials considered the cornerstone of their hopes for rebuilding.

"My dad used to tell me, 'Cheer up, things could be worse,'" said Rep. Richard Baker, R-La., the architect of the \$30 billion plan to jump-start his state. "So I cheered up and things got worse."

By rejecting his plan, Baker said the White House "is basically saying to Louisiana, 'If you want to rebuild, you have to find resources of your own.'"

The White House action "demonstrates a continued lack of understanding for the magnitude of the devastation and the immense rebuilding task our state faces," said Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La.

Louisiana would get \$6.2 billion, the bulk of the \$11.5 billion. That still falls short of what state officials said

was necessary to help an estimated 200,000 homeowners return and rebuild their communities.

The grants also divided Gulf Coast lawmakers who have been working together to win more assistance.

In Mississippi, lawmakers hailed the grants. "It's huge," said Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss., who has worked closely with Louisiana lawmakers over the last four months to ensure that Congress continues sending assistance to the region.

Under the grant program, Florida is eligible for \$83 million, Alabama \$75 million and Texas \$74 million.

Federal Gulf Coast redevelopment officer Donald Powell said the money is intended for uninsured homeowners who lived outside flood plains but saw their property destroyed by the triple-whammy of hurricanes that began with Katrina on Aug. 29, followed by Rita on Sept. 24 and Wilma on Oct. 24.

When asked about Louisiana's concerns that the grants would not help tens of thousands of people Powell said states can use the money to satisfy their most urgent hurricane relief priorities.

Once the grants are depleted, Powell said, "We are very open to going back and asking for more money."

Congress has so far appropriated \$67 billion to help the region get back on its feet. The White House has estimated the federal government has provided at least \$18 billion more in flood insurance and other assistance.

Baker proposed creating a federally supported Louisiana Recovery Corporation to buy large tracts of storm-damaged homes in Louisiana by borrowing up to \$30 billion in U.S. Treasury bonds. The corporation

would repair the homes and resell them.

The White House said no. Instead, the administration for now will focus on uninsured homeowners who lived outside designated flood plains, many of whom now face mortgage foreclosures that would almost certainly prevent them from rebuilding.

"This is an investment in long-term recovery and rebuilding lives," Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson said. "Working with these states and their citizens, it is our hope that the families who once had a home can return to their home."

Baker estimated the federal grants won't help 180,000 families.

"They gave us a ladder to reach our housing needs, but the top rungs are missing," Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco said in Baton Rouge. "Louisiana's housing needs are not complete without Rep. Baker's bill."

Louisiana redevelopment officials said they would consider creating the corporation on a state level, though they made clear it would probably depend on a federal loan guarantee.

The grants were announced as officials agreed at a Senate hearing that the federal flood insurance program, currently broke because of Gulf Coast hurricane-related claims, must be restructured to make its rate structure more rational and trim unreasonable government subsidies.

The program "has only encouraged people to place themselves in harm's way and continue to build and rebuild in flood-prone areas," said Senate Banking Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala.

Nevada gambles on wooing Californians

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD

AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger calls California the land of opportunity. So does Nevada — but for a different reason.

Silver State officials this week launched an advertising campaign in several California cities, their latest attempt to hijack California companies weary of the state's high insurance, utility and tax costs.

Nevada's latest ads — running in newspapers with links to similarly themed Web sites — play off the wink-and-a-nod notion that even the bear on California's state flag has skedaddled across the border to Nevada. Oversized outdoor ads will be draped on downtown buildings in Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco and San Diego.

"We still think there is a real need there for companies that want a way out. There is an alternative — you can run for the border," said A. Somer Hollingsworth, president of the Nevada Development Authority.

The \$560,000 marketing blitz represents the most recent skirmish in an often-playful border war in which the neighboring states have tried to pilfer jobs from each other. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger once drove a truck down the Las Vegas Strip, offering to move any company to California.

Nevada's latest promotion may get some laughs, but it won't be a significant danger to the California economy, one economist said.

Any loss of jobs "is going to be marginal. The bigger threat is firms going offshore or to other states, jumping over Nevada," said Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.

Dozens of California companies have decamped for Nevada in recent years, but the hundreds of jobs lost rep-

resent only a tiny fraction of California's huge economy. Nevada officials say 28 companies relocated to their state from California in the year that ended in June.

"Nevada's built-in incentives for business — no corporate income tax, no personal income tax and no inventory tax — are just a few examples of the benefits to doing business in Nevada," Lt. Gov. Lorraine Hunt, chair of the Nevada Commission on Economic Development, said in a statement.

California was more vulnerable to job raids when the energy crisis and a shaky economy exacerbated the political turmoil of the 2003 recall election. States from Texas to Oregon made pitches to snatch jobs from the state, with promises of lower taxes and a welcoming business climate.

Today, Schwarzenegger argues that the economy has rebounded, with nearly 500,000 new jobs added to private-sector payrolls in the state since he took office in November 2003.

"We know where the bear is," said Mark Mosher of the California Commission for Jobs and Economic Growth, referring to the Nevada ads. "He's visiting California's innovative companies, its world-class universities, its Nobel Prize winners, its research and development labs."

Worker compensation insurance and utilities remain costly in California, and companies frequently complain about heavy state regulation and taxes. Nissan Motor Co. announced in November it would move its North American headquarters — and nearly 1,300 jobs — from California to Tennessee to take advantage of the lower cost of doing business in the South.

The California economy is "doing surprisingly well, even with what they throw at the business community in Sacramento," Kyser said, alluding to state regulation. Nevada officials are "just trolling for whatever they can get."

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Bono unveils 'Red' brand to fight AIDS

BY DAN PERRY
Associated Press Writer

DAVOS, Switzerland — Rock star and activist Bono launched a new push Thursday in the battle against HIV and AIDS in Africa, unveiling a partnership with American Express and other companies. Proceeds from products sold by the team's new brand, Red, will be funneled to that cause.

"So, here we are, fat cats in the snow, and I say that as one," said the denim-jacketed U2 frontman, who was flanked by Italian fashion tycoon Giorgio Armani and corporate executives who joined him for the announcement at the World Economic Forum in this Swiss ski resort.

Red will market red-themed products from Converse, The Gap and Giorgio Armani, as well as a red American Express card to be offered initially only in Britain, starting next month.

Products branded Red will include sports shoes, T-shirts and sunglasses — some produced in Africa, some with African materials. A slice of the revenue — numbers vary by company and product — will go to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

"We sought out iconic companies who make iconic products," said Bobby Shriver, who runs an organization called DATA — or Debt, AIDS and Trade in Africa — and has been working with Bono for several years.

Bono — sporting his trademark wrap-around sunglasses — seemed a trifle bemused beside his suited, polished partners.

But he quickly turned serious, his voice cracking slightly as he recounted the story of an HIV-positive young African who chose to take his single dosage of anti-retrovirals himself, denying the critical drug to his girlfriend and possibly condemning her to death.

Each day, Bono said, brings 6,500 HIV-related deaths in Africa — and 9,000 new infections.

"We're losing in the battle... Maybe it's an Irish macho thing, but I really don't like losing," the Irish native said.

"I'm calling it conscious commerce for people who are awake, people who think about their spending power and say: 'I've got two jeans I can buy. One I know is made in Africa and is going to make a difference and the other isn't. What am I going to buy?'"

American Express marketing chief John Hayes said the new American Express card — the back of which proclaims the goal of "eliminating" HIV in Africa — will transfer one percent of all purchases made with it to the project.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Bono alluded to the potential discomfort with his new alliances.

"Some people will be very upset," he said. "We're working with big business, we're working with big companies... (But) the problem just has to be sorted and we can't do it just with governments alone."

Richard Feachem, executive director of the Global Fund, said that to date, "a very small proportion" of the fund's current \$4.7 billion comes from corporations or individuals.

The Global Fund was created to finance

a dramatic turnaround in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. To date, the fund has committed \$4.4 billion in 128 countries to fight the three diseases.

"We've announced today a launch with four companies (but) we need 400," he said, adding that success would also depend on whether American Express extends the Red card line to the United States as well.

He said he hoped Red would generate "tens of millions of dollars soon, hundreds of millions of dollars a little further downstream. Significant money."

"If we succeed," Bono interjected. "But we could fail. If people are jaded or cynical ... or genuinely not interested, then we fail. But we've tried. I think we've come up with a sexy, smart, savvy idea that will save people's lives."

Tons of fun? Massive amounts of marijuana found in tunnel?

BY ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press Writer

SAN DIEGO — More than 2 tons of marijuana were found inside one of the longest and most sophisticated cross-border tunnels ever discovered, officials said Thursday.

The size and scale of the tunnel — the 21st discovered in more than four years — stunned authorities, who said that the passageway revealed the lengths smugglers will go to evade detection.

The tunnel began near the airport in Tijuana, Mexico, and ended 2,400 feet away in a San Diego warehouse, said Michael Unzueta, special agent in charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in San Diego. It was unclear how long the tunnel had been in operation, Unzueta said.

At least 60 feet below U.S. soil, authorities found a tunnel floor lined with cement, lights that ran down one of the hard soil walls and air piped down from the surface, he said. An adult could stand in the 5-foot-high shaft.

"It was like being in a cavern or a cave," Unzueta said in an interview. "It's just huge, absolutely incredible."

John Fernandes, special agent in charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration's San Diego office, said he suspected the tunnel was the work Tijuana's Arellano-Felix drug smuggling syndicate or another well-known drug cartels. Fernandes said tougher enforcement above ground had forced smugglers to dig below.

Mexican investigators found the tunnel entrance Tuesday inside a warehouse near the airport, about 150 yards south of the border. A 6-by-10-foot cement shaft equipped with a pulley dropped about 75 feet to the tunnel.

U.S. authorities located the exit to the tunnel Wednesday, launching a criminal investigation by the U.S. attorney's

office in San Diego, said Lauren Mack, a spokeswoman for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The tunnel exited into a large, two-story white cinderblock warehouse in an industrial San Diego neighborhood near the border, which was wrapped in yellow tape Thursday.

A green sign over the door read V&F Distributors LLC. County records showed the building's owner is Helen Park of Long Beach. The phone rang unanswered Thursday at her home.

More than 2 tons of marijuana were found on the tunnel's Mexican side and about 200 pounds of pot on the U.S. side, he said.

Mexican authorities allowed reporters and photographers in the tunnel late Wednesday night. Near the entrance, authorities were seen weighing bales of what appeared to be marijuana. Several hundred packages wrapped with brown packing tape were stacked about 5 feet high.

It's unclear whether it was used to sneak people or drugs other than marijuana into the United States, Unzueta said.

Four tunnels have been discovered this month in the Tijuana-San Diego area.

Also Wednesday, U.S. and Mexican authorities found an unfinished tunnel when a U.S. Border Patrol vehicle struck a sinkhole early Wednesday near the San Ysidro border crossing, which links Tijuana and San Diego. It was about 2 feet underground and extended about 30 feet into the United States, near a storm drain.

"It was very, very small and extremely primitive," Mack said.

The unfinished tunnel began just south of the border in Tijuana in a vacant lot, said Jose Marquez Padilla, a Mexican Customs director. It was about 3 feet wide.



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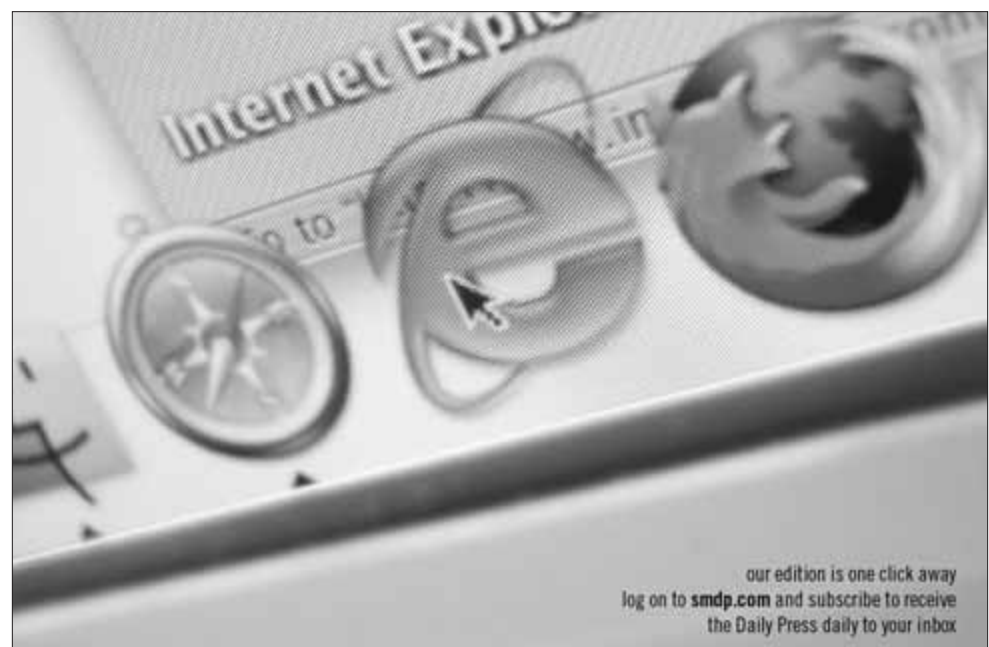
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Hamas wins landslide victory in parliament

BY SARAH EL DEEB

Associated Press Writer

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Hamas won a landslide victory in parliamentary elections as Palestinian voters rejected the longtime rule of the corruption-ridden Fatah Party, according to nearly complete official returns Thursday. The triumph by the Islamic militant group plunged the future of Mideast peacemaking into turmoil.

Palestinian leaders, stunned by the militant group's sweeping victory, huddled to determine the shape of a new government as world leaders, including President Bush, insisted Hamas renounce violence and recognize Israel's right to exist.

Supporters of the two main parties briefly scuffled in Ramallah after Hamas supporters raised their party's green flag over the parliament. The two sides threw stones at each other, breaking windows in the building, as a small group of Fatah supporters tried to lower the banner. The crowd of about 3,000 Hamas backers cheered and whistled as activists on the roof raised the flag again.

Hamas won 76 seats in the 132-member parliament, while Fatah, which controlled Palestinian politics for four decades, won 43 seats, said Hanna Nasser, head of the Central Election commission. The 13 remaining seats went to several smaller parties and independents.

The result was based on a count of 95 percent of the vote and still could change slightly, Nasser said.

Israeli politicians from across the political spectrum said there could be no relations with a group that has been responsible for scores of deadly attacks against Israelis and is listed as a terror organization by the United States and the European Union.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia and his Cabinet resigned even before the official results were announced, and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas was to ask Hamas to form the next government.

Hamas' exiled supreme leader, Khaled Mashaal, called Abbas from Syria to discuss the results. "He stressed Hamas insists on a partnership with all the Palestinian factions, especially our brothers in Fatah," Hamas said on its Web site.

In a first sign of pragmatism, Mahmoud Zahar, a top Hamas official, said the group would extend its year-old truce if Israel reciprocates. "If not, then I think we will have no option but to protect our people and our land," he told Associated Press Television News.

Bush said the United States will not deal with Palestinian leaders who dispute Israel's right to exist.

"If your platform is the destruction of Israel, it means you're not a partner in peace, and we're interested in peace," Bush said.

Israel's acting foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, asked the EU not to deal with a "terror government."

Fatah legislator Saeb Erekat, who led Palestinians in negotiations with Israel, said the party does not want to join a Hamas government. "We will be a loyal opposition and rebuild the party," Erekat said, after meeting with Abbas. But Nabil Shaath, another senior Fatah lawmaker, said the party's leadership would make a decision later Thursday.

Abbas was elected separately a year ago and remains president. However, the Palestinian leader has said he would resign if he could no longer pursue his peace agenda. The Cabinet and legislature must approve any major initiative by Abbas, giving Hamas tremendous influence over peace moves.

Hamas supporters streamed into the streets to celebrate. In the southern Gaza town of Rafah, supporters shot in the air and handed out candy. Others honked

horns and waved Hamas flags from car windows.

Leaders around the world were shocked by Hamas' victory, with Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi reportedly calling it a "very, very, very bad result," and others insisting Hamas give up violence and recognize Israel's right to exist.

"You cannot have one foot in politics and another in terror," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said.

Hamas capitalized on widespread discontent with years of Fatah corruption and ineffectiveness. Much of its campaign focused on internal Palestinian issues, while playing down the conflict with Israel.

Before the election, Hamas had suggested it would be content as a junior partner in the next government, thus avoiding a decision on its relationship with Israel.

Throughout the campaign, leaders sent mixed signals, hinting they could be open to some sort of accommodation with Israel. Its apparent victory will now force it to take a clearer position on key issues, including whether to abandon its violent ideology.

Mushir al-Masri, a Hamas candidate who won election in the northern Gaza Strip, said peace talks and recognition of Israel are "not on our agenda" but the group is ready for a partnership _ presumably with Abbas.

Senior Israeli security officials gathered Thursday to discuss the results and acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert scheduled talks with senior officials but made no public comment.

Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the opposition Likud Party, condemned the vote. "Today Hamastan was formed," he said. Labor Party politician Ami Ayalon said Israel might have to change the route of its West Bank security barrier to take Hamas' victory into account.

Hamas officials tried to reassure the world of its intentions.

"Don't be afraid," Ismail Haniyeh, a Hamas leader, told the BBC. "Hamas is a Palestinian movement, it is an aware and mature movement, one which is politically open in the Palestinian arena, and to its Arab and Islamic hinterland, and similarly open to the international arena."

Palestinian election officials confirmed early Thursday that Hamas had won a large majority of the seats up for grabs in electoral districts in the West Bank and Gaza. It was the first time Hamas has contested a parliamentary vote.

Half the seats in Wednesday's parliament vote were chosen on a national list and the other half by districts. While the national voting appeared to be close, election officials said Hamas had won a large majority in the district races. Hamas apparently took advantage of divisions in Fatah; the long-ruling party fielded multiple candidates in many districts, splitting the Fatah vote.

Initial exit polls had given Fatah a slight edge. Palestinian pollsters were at a loss to explain the discrepancy between the exit polls and the result. It may have been partly due to a reluctance by some voters to admit to pollsters that they were abandoning the ruling party.

The errors appeared especially glaring in the district races, where smaller numbers of voters were polled.

Palestinian legislator Hanan Ashrawi, who was re-elected on a moderate platform, said the Hamas victory was a dramatic turning point. She said she is concerned the militants will now impose their fundamentalist social agenda and lead the Palestinians into international isolation.

She said Fatah's corruption, Israel's tough measures and international indifference to the plight of the Palestinians were to blame for Hamas' strong showing.

International observers, led by former President Carter, said the elections were "well-administered."

Unpretentious style has Merkel riding high in German polls

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM

Associated Press Writer

BERLIN — Angela Merkel barely scraped together enough votes to become Germany's first female chancellor. But two months after taking office, she's soaring in the polls with her down-to-earth style and pragmatic approach.

Merkel has found her feet quickly at home and abroad with a recipe of blunt realism and careful consensus-building. She swiftly dropped pre-election calls for radical steps like tackling Germany's powerful labor unions, which could have irked her coalition partners and unsettled voters.

Foreign policy has helped her too. Fellow European leaders have credited Merkel with helping secure a deal on the EU's future budget, and she made well-received visits to Moscow and Washington, where she stressed a desire to set aside differences over the Iraq war.

Former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder was an outspoken opponent of the war.

Merkel appears to have succeeded in thawing the diplomatic chill between Berlin and Washington without giving up Germany's refusal to send troops to Iraq and underlining her opposition to the U.S. prison camp for terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

In the latest rating of the country's top 20 politicians by Infratest Dimpast, 85 percent of those surveyed said they wanted Merkel to "play an important role" in the future, responding to the long-running poll's stock question.

That was a 22 percent jump since October, when the conservative leader began coalition talks with Schroeder's Social Democrats. It was also a higher rating than Schroeder or Merkel's political mentor, Helmut Kohl, ever enjoyed.

Among members of her own conservative Christian Democratic Union, her approval was at 99 percent. The poll, published in Spiegel newsweekly, surveyed 1,000 people Jan. 17-18 and claimed a 3 percent margin of error.

The numbers mark a notable surge from when Merkel's party barely beat Schroeder's in parliamentary elections in September.

So far, Merkel's left-right coalition has not fallen victim to bickering as some predicted. And the opposition, made up of conservative Free Democrats, the Greens and the neo-communist Left Party, remains weak and divided.

The governing coalition quickly passed legislation aimed at taming Germany's large budget deficit by cutting subsidies to homeowners and spurring the economy with targeted spending. It has meanwhile dodged more painful measures to cut labor costs and put off a hike in value-added tax until next year.

The mammoth task of reforming Germany's expensive welfare state will eventually test Merkel's popularity and likely curtail the laudatory newspaper coverage she has enjoyed since taking office Nov. 22, said prominent pollster Manfred Guellner.

Differences with the Social Democrats, criticism from rivals in her own Christian Democratic Union and negative news coverage will likely emerge when pensions or health provisions face cuts, he said.

"At the moment she has no real opponents and has had no big problems to solve," said Guellner, head of the Forsa polling agency. "This is no secure basis of trust for the chancellor."

Some commentators credit style as much as policy for Merkel's success.

Before her election, Merkel was subjected to constant sniping from within her male-dominated party. Newspapers picked unflattering photos and portrayed her as a power-hungry loner with few allies within the party.

Yet public opinion has warmed up to the former scientist, who can appear a bit embarrassed at official ceremonies and rarely sets pulses racing with speeches. She has also brushed up her image with a change of hairstyle and a newly discovered readiness to smile.

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Nicole Kidman steps into role with U.N.

By The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — Nicole Kidman has a new role — working to advance women's rights around the globe as a goodwill ambassador for the U.N.

The Oscar-winning actress will work with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on "critical gender concerns such as ending violence against women," according to a U.N. statement Thursday.

"I am honored that UNIFEM has asked me to serve as goodwill ambassador and I look forward to a close, long-term relationship," Kidman said at a news conference at the U.N.

She joins Princess Basma of Jordan, who focuses her attention on the Middle East, and Phoebe Asiyo, a member of the Kenyan Parliament, as a UNIFEM ambassador.

Since the 1950s, U.N. agencies have enlisted the help of prominent personalities from the arts and sports worlds to highlight key issues, including Angelina Jolie, who has traveled widely as a goodwill ambassador for the U.N.'s refugee agency.

Kidman's screen credits include "The Interpreter," a 2005 thriller in which she played a U.N. interpreter caught up in a cloak-and-dagger assassination attempt.

The 38-year-old actress won an Oscar for her role in 2002's "The Hours." She also has starred in the films "Moulin Rouge!" and "The Peacemaker."

Also on Thursday, Kidman was given Australia's highest civilian honor for her contribution to the performing arts and her charitable work.

She was named a companion in the general division of the Order of Australia, one of more than 200 people honored to mark the Australia Day national holiday that cel-

brates the arrival of the first European settlers in 1788 in what is now Sydney Harbour.

NEW YORK — Meg Ryan has adopted a baby girl from China.

The 44-year-old actress recently traveled to China for the adoption. She and her daughter are now home in California together, Ryan's publicist, Stephen Huvane, confirmed Thursday. No further details were available.

The "Sleepless in Seattle" star also has a 13-year-old son with her ex-husband, actor Dennis Quaid. She and Quaid divorced in 2001.

Ryan's most recent films include "Against the Ropes" in 2004 and "In the Cut" in 2003. Later this year, she'll return to the big screen in "In the Land of Women," a comedy starring Adam Brody from Fox's "The O.C."

Ryan's other movies include "When Harry Met Sally," "Courage Under Fire" and "Prelude to a Kiss."

LOS ANGELES — It was girls, girls, girls when Motley Crue, the bad boys of '80s heavy-metal music, received the 2,301st star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"We're across the street from the Erotica Museum and Frederick's of Hollywood. This is a perfect place for us to be," bassist Nikki Sixx told an estimated 600 screaming fans Wednesday.

Sixx joined drummer Tommy Lee, guitarist Mick Mars and singer Vince Neil at the ceremony in front of the Musician's Institute on Hollywood Boulevard.

Lee pretended to cry. "I think there's something in my eye," he said.

Motley Crue formed in Los Angeles in 1981, enduring a breakup, death and drugs to become one of the world's

top touring groups, with 40 million albums sold.

Singles such as "Girls Girls Girls," "Smokin' in the Boys Room" and "Dr. Feelgood" about sex, booze and highjinks propelled the band to rock star status during the 1980s.

But tragedy followed, from singer Vince Neil's 1984 involvement in a car accident that killed Hanoi Rocks drummer Nicholas "Razzle" Dingley to bassist Sixx's near-death from a heroin overdose in 1987.

Guitarist Mars suffers from a degenerative rheumatoid disease in his back.

In 1999, Motley Crue disbanded only to re-emerge last year with their double platinum hits collection, "Red, White & Crue," and circus-themed Carnival of Sins tour.

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — Victor Willis, the original policeman in '70s disco band the Village People, skipped a court hearing where he was due to be sentenced on drug and gun charges and now faces more than three years in prison, prosecutors said. Willis, 54, had been scheduled to surrender Tuesday after four months on the run but he failed to show up for the hearing in San Mateo County Superior Court, prosecutors said. It was his second no-show.

He was facing a maximum of 16 months in state prison after pleading no contest to charges he had cocaine and a loaded handgun when he was arrested in Daly City in July. Prosecutors said he was on probation for another cocaine conviction at the time.

Willis was freed in lieu of \$100,000 bail, but failed to show up for his sentencing hearing in October. His case was featured on the television crime show "America's Most Wanted" in December. The segment is scheduled to re-air in February.

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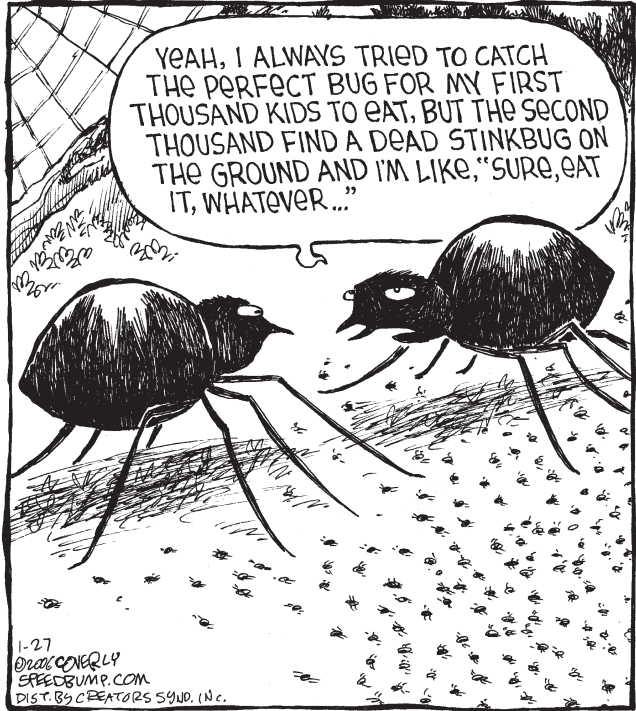
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Name Changes

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR

CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. SS014023

Superior Court of California, County of Los

Angeles

Petition of GEORGE COSMA for Change of

Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner or Attorney: GEORGE COSMA filed

a petition with this court for a decree of

changing names as follows: GEORGE

COSMA to GEORGE COSMAS

The court orders that all persons interested

in this matter shall appear before this court

at the hearing indicated below to show

cause, if any, why the petition for change of

name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing:

Date: FEBRUARY 9, 2006 Time: 9:00, Dept.

A., Room 104

The address of the court is 1725 Main St.,

Santa Monica, CA 90401.

A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be

published at least once each week for four

successive weeks prior to the date set for

hearing on the petition in the following

newspaper of general circulation, printed in

this county: Santa Monica Daily Press.

Date: DECEMBER 16, 2005

LINDA K. LEFKOWITZ

Judge of the Superior Court

01/27/06, 02/03/06, 02/10/06, 02/17/06

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Notices

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SELL

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Date of Filing Application: JANUARY 4,

2006

To Whom it may concern:

The Name(s) of the Applicant(s) is/are:

PARK OKYOUNG PARK SE HOON.

The applicants listed above are applying to

the Department of Alcoholic Beverage

Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 201

ARIZONA AVE SANTA MONICA, CA

90401.

Type of License(s) Applied for: 41 - ON-

SALE BEER AND WINE-EATING PLACE.

Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control

INGLEWOOD.

LA114511 SANTA MONICA DAILY

PRESS 1/20,27, 2/3/2006

NOTICE OF PETITION TO

ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:

CAROL MINUCK AKA CAROL

ELAINE MINUCK AKA CAROL

E. MINUCK

CASE NO. BP096343

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of CAROL MINUCK AKA CAROL ELAINE MINUCK AKA CAROL E. MINUCK.

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by BANK OF THE WEST in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that BANK OF THE WEST be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's WILL and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The WILL and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act . (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held on 02/27/06 at 8:30AM in Dept. 5 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code Section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner
TOOCH, MELINDA J.
11766 WILSHIRE BLVD., #460
LOS ANGELES, CA 90025

1/27, 1/30, 2/3/06
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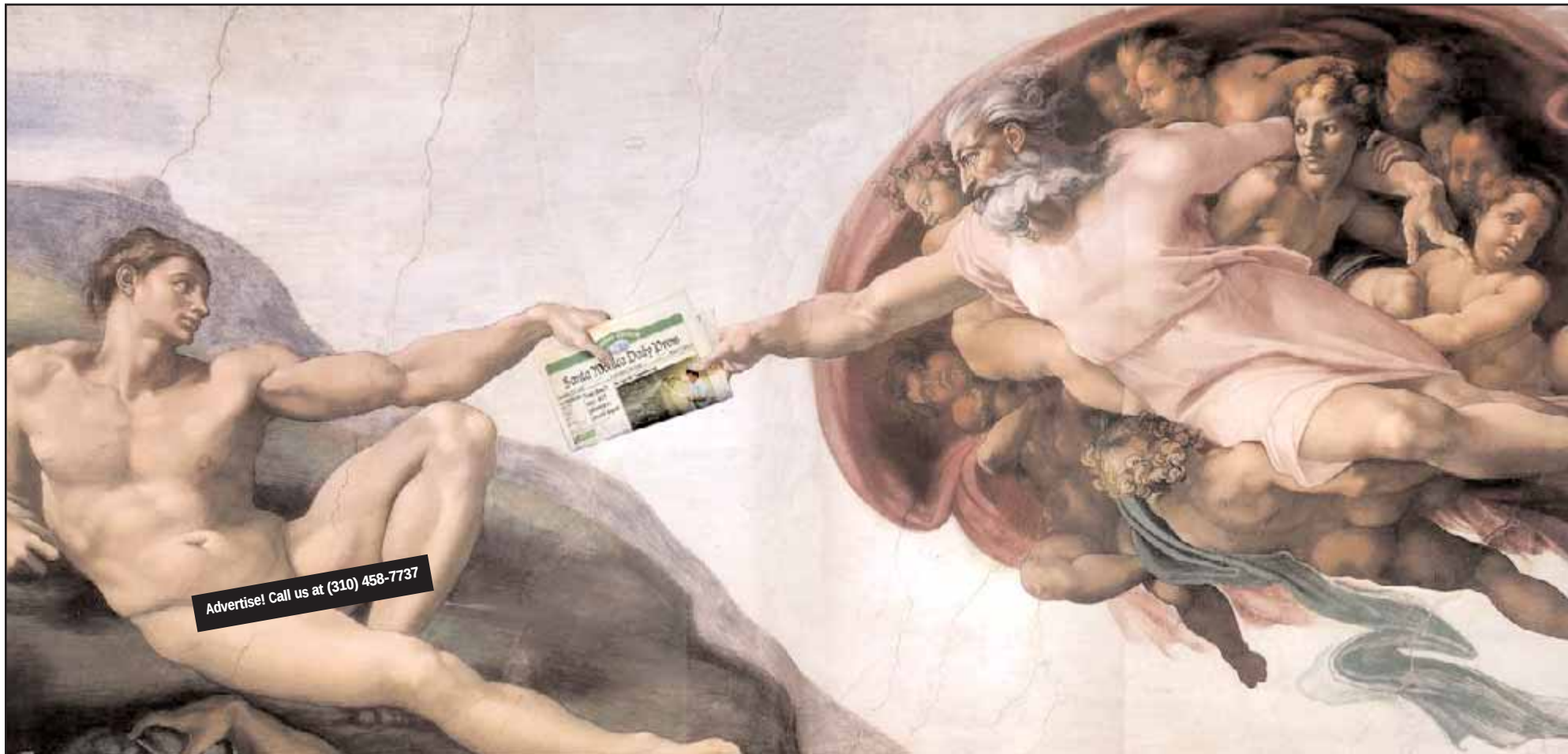
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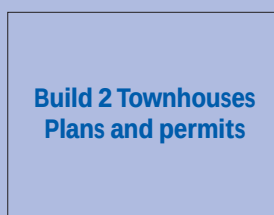
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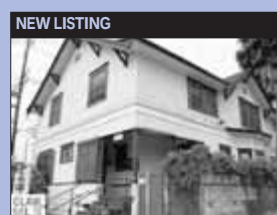
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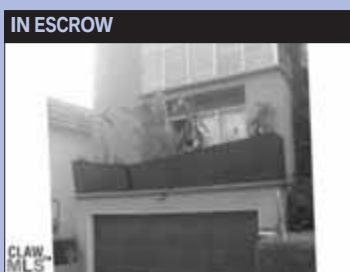
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1 mo./1 mo. arm 1.0%***

* Rates subject to change

* As of January 11, 2006

** Denotes an interest only loan

*** Denotes Neg Am

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