

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

00000

FANTASY 5

5, 6, 9, 29, 36.

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 5, 7, 8

Evening picks: 6, 8, 8

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 08, Gorgeous George.

2nd Place: 05, California Classic.

3rd Place: 07, Eureka.



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

■ The FBI charged in November that the now-resigned head of the Washington, D.C., Teachers Union may have embezzled more than \$2 million in union funds (while broken-down public schools lack books and supplies for students) to support an Imelda Marcos-like clothing, furnishings and artwork habit.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Why attack God? He may be as miserable as we are.

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State bill could stave off school district cuts

Still needs to clear Senate and Governor's office

BY ANDY FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

The state Assembly voted this week to delay cutting funds to California's public schools until next year, and the decision has Santa Monica educators breathing a sigh of relief.

Though the bill needs to clear the Senate and gain Gov. Gray Davis' approval to take effect, it would allow officials to put off a \$3.5 million reduction in funding to the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

The financial situation looked so bleak for the

school district that Superintendent John Deasy had proposed closing schools and sending all employees home for 10 days without pay to close the deficit.

But that plan, along with other drastic proposals to solve the mid-year budget crunch, would be shelved if the Assembly bill passes, officials said.

"The way it affects us is that instead of making a mid-year cut it will be made during the next fiscal year," said Ken Bailey, the district's finance director. "I would prefer it this way because it gives us time to plan."

Local Assembly members said they support delaying the funding reductions because making mid-year cuts for school

See ASSEMBLY, page 5

Merchants look to city to help revitalize Main

Plan proposed to increase parking, permit more outdoor dining

BY ANDY FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

Merchants along Main Street want to make the street more vibrant by adding more outdoor dining and allowing merchandise to be displayed along sidewalks.

They envision a bustling corridor where shoppers can park conveniently and cheaply. Then they can hop from one eclectic store to another before cooling their heels at any number of restaurants' outdoor seating areas along the street.

The idea is to bring back parts of a plan that was conceived more than 10 years ago to make Main Street more "village-like," said Gary Gordon, executive director of the Main Street Merchants Association.

"A lot of the things designed to make it village-like

See MERCHANTS, page 5



Andy Fixmer/Daily Press

Santa Monica Fire Chief Ettore A. Berardinelli speaks at the grand opening of the department's No. 2 Fire Station in Ocean Park on Friday.

Fire station in Ocean Park opens after nearly two years

By Daily Press staff

After falling victim to an earthquake and a fire, Santa Monica's fire station No. 2 is up and running again.

The station, which was deemed seismically unsafe following the Northridge earthquake in 1994, remained in service for the next few years while plans for a new station were drawn up and approved.

The station, which was deemed seismically unsafe following the Northridge earthquake in 1994, remained in service for the next few years while plans for a new station were drawn up and approved.

But then a fire broke out last April, when the station was almost completed. The fire, caused by oil-soaked rags, gutted the second floor of an unmanned fire station in Ocean Park.

The rags were left balled up on the floor and the fumes from them could not escape, which caused the rags to heat up until they burst into flames.

The two-alarm fire at Fire Station 2 on Hollister Avenue caused an estimated \$500,000 in damages to the second floor and attic of the facility.

The new fire house had been under construction for more than a year and was only weeks away from completion.

All 39 on-duty Santa Monica fire fighters were called to the scene to combat the flames that torched their new home. They were joined by six fire fighters from Los Angeles Fire Department Station 63 in Venice Beach.

Station 2 was originally built in 1952. One engine company and one paramedic squad team will be stationed at the new facility. In addition to the fire engine and ambulance assigned to those firefighters, several other pieces of equipment will be stored at Station 2, including the Urban Search and Rescue truck, a reserve fire engine, and a brand-new truck outfitted for fighting brush fires.

An open house at the station is scheduled for today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Station tours will be available.

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HOROSCOPE

Kick up your heels, Libra

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★-Average
★★-So-so ★-Difficult

Happy Birthday for Saturday, Feb. 1, 2003

You might be more in touch with your long-term goals than you have been in a while. Others gather around you, allowing many new possibilities. Consider what is important to you ultimately. Once you attain a long-term desire, you might just decide that you don't want exactly that. Understand that you, too, are transforming, thus what you think you want might not be what you will want in the future. Learn to grow and flow. If you are single, a relationship will knock on your door. To do or not to do? That is your choice. If you're attached, your relationship will grow through greater sharing and centering on your goals. AQUARIUS is a soul mate.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Extremes mark your actions. You might want to juggle all the different forces at work. Input from someone at a distance helps. You actually might decide to meet halfway. Review a matter that is close to your heart. Tonight: Round up your friends.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Your ability to come to an understanding with others helps you juggle two opponents. Each person wants something very different. How you merge various interests proves to be unique. A partner or dear friend plays a significant role in your plans. Tonight: In the limelight.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Reach out for someone at a distance. Your sense of humor comes through with a loved one or a friend who could be having a difficult time seeing the whole picture. A new beginning becomes possible with someone at a distance. Tonight: Try something totally new.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Deal with someone directly. You might wonder what is going on with a partner or associate who is testy. Pitch in and help. Your ability to see the trees from the forest helps out a friend who might be a bit touchy. Build on a close tie. Tonight: Go along with someone's request.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Make an effort at breaking down others' resistances. You might be more instrumental than you realize in forging peace. Use your ability to detach and gain a perspective. Help others see alternatives instead of getting stuck in the same old problems. Tonight: Say "yes" to an invitation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Pace yourself. You might need some time to yourself. If you relax, you will come to a place of understanding. Work on realizing more of what you want. Your family supports you in a key project. Allow more feedback and help. Ask for more help. Tonight: Put your feet up.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Add more playfulness to your life, realizing what you want from a personal relationship. Keep communication flowing. What one person wants might not be what someone else desires. You gain by reaching out and talking. Tonight: Kick up your heels.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Lay down and think before taking action. You might not be sure what is necessary to flex with a loved one. This person can flip from one opinion to another. Adapt your spending to a new request or someone else's need. Speak your mind. Tonight: Invite others over.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ You can flex. You don't need to say "no" or "yes." In fact, everything will flow with ease. You'll find that a lot might be changing in the next few weeks. Transform a personal situation in a more positive way. Put your best foot forward. Remember, there are two of you involved. Tonight: Find a favorite spot.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Remain optimistic with others. New beginnings become possible to those who are capable of going within. You find answers that help you gain a perspective. Realize what might happen if you relax more. Let a partner run with the ball. Tonight: Your treat.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Your smile goes a long way in melting down a problem person. Laugh with a loved one and loosen up together. Your circle of friends could be changing. You cannot run interference here. People will be people. Give others the space to grow. Tonight: Whatever makes you happy.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You might want to step back some and consider your different options. Someone close to you makes a must appearance. Reach out for a parent or an older relative. Not everything is as you would like it to be. Your instincts lead you in a tough situation. Tonight: A must show.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Local scouts make it through the ranks

By Daily Press staff

Three local teenagers will receive the highest ranking one can get in the Boy Scouts this weekend.

John Dahlem, Bryan Kim and Daniel Aron Tarle — all members of Boy Scout Troop 2 of Santa Monica — will be honored with the rank of Eagle Scout on Sunday at 4 p.m. at the Santa Monica United Methodist Church, located at 1008 11th St.

The Eagle rank honors exemplary effort and leadership. Only 2 percent of Boy Scouts receive the rank. In addition to demonstrating proficiency in first aid, citizenship, camping, swimming and emergency preparedness, Eagle candidates must coordinate and complete the community service project that provides significant leadership abilities while executing the project.

All three Boy Scouts chose projects aimed at assisting people in Santa Monica. Dahlem led a team that collected warm clothing for Step Up On Second, a local service organization. The clothing was distributed to people who are homeless and mentally ill.

Kim's group assisted the Santa Monica Police Department at two bicycle rodeos, teaching local youngsters about safe biking skills and proper use of locks to prevent theft.

Tarle led a drive to collect tattered American flags throughout the community, and held a formal ceremony to retire the flags. Dahlem, Kim and Tarle are seniors at Santa Monica High School.

Troop 2 is one of the oldest and largest Boy Scout troops in the Western United States.

Music on the pier begins

By Daily Press staff

Looking for something to do this weekend? How about some music while soaking up the sun?

The Santa Monica Pier's winter concert series begins this weekend.

At 2 p.m., the festivities begin with the Tom Nolan Band, a nine-member classic rhythm and blues band that has been rocking the southland for more than 30 years with original songs and favorite covers.

Lisa Haley and the Zydekats will rock the pier on Feb. 9. Known as one of the best Zydeco bands in the country, Haley and her band devote themselves to the dance-on-the-table promotion of original, contemporary and ancestral rhythms on violin, accordion, keyboards, guitar, bass, drums and percussion.

The third Sunday in the series, Feb. 16, features legendary jazz and blues singer Barbara Morrison. Morrison has been featured on more than 20 recordings in almost every genre, from traditional jazz and blues to gospel and pop.

February's final concert will be the Brasil-Brazil show featuring vocalists Ana Gazzola and Sonia Santos. Gazzola also is known to enchant audiences with her velvety voice and her compositions. Both artists are backed up by Quinn Johnson on keyboards; Fabio Soares playing lead guitar; Daniel Groisman on the bass; Sandro Feliciano, drums; Zane Musa, saxophone; and Claudinho Smile and Erock dos Santos on percussion.

The series, which is free and has been offered to the community for more than a decade, will continue into March. All concerts start at 2 p.m. and are held rain or shine. Events will be held on the parking decks. Parking is available in most beach lots and the Tide Shuttle from downtown Santa Monica to the pier for 25 cents. For more information, call (310) 458-8900 or visit www.santamoniciapier.org.

Big Blue Bus holds community meetings

By Daily Press staff

The Big Blue Bus wants to know how it's doing in Santa Monica.

There are several community meetings being held in the next month to gauge riders' opinions on what could be done better within the public bus system.



Information compiled by Jesse Haley

Today's new moon means extreme tides, with highs nearing six feet and lows dipping into negative numbers.

But conditions look good, and the northwest swell that filled in yesterday will peak today.

Combined with a wind swell coming out of the west, well-exposed spots may show some overhead surf.

Given the strength of the new swell and the angle, most spots should stay in chest- to shoulder-high waves, with occasional plus sets.

Sunday we see swell back off, starting in the morning. Surf remains decent, plenty of fun sets with only a slight decrease in size.



Today's Tides:
 Low- 2:44 a.m. 1.82'
 High- 8:45 a.m. 6.15'
 Low- 4:00 p.m. -1.13'
 High- 10:20 p.m. 4.00'

Location	Saturday	Sunday	Water Quality
County Line	3-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A
Zuma	3-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A
Surfrider	2-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	C
Topanga	3-4'/Poor	2-4'/Fair	A
Breakwater	4-5'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	B
El Porto	4-6'/Fair	4-6'/Fair	A

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Feedback from the last round of community outreach meetings served to guide the Big Blue Bus in its policy development and brought about changes in its V.A. service, the newly reconfigured Line 4. As the Big Blue Bus begins to focus on its new service improvement plan, it wants comments — either positive or negative — from passengers and neighbors.

Give your input and find out what changes are in store for 2003 by attending one of the following meetings:

Saturday, Feb. 1: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Ken Edwards Center, 1527 4th St., Santa Monica

Tuesday, Feb. 4: 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m., Tom Bradley Youth Family Center, 5213 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles

Wednesday, Feb. 5: 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m., Virginia Park (Thelma Terry Center), 2200 Virginia Ave.

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OPINION

LETTERS

Rise up for Prop. A

Editor:

Homeowners, would-be homeowners, fair-minded and reasonable persons in Santa Monica know full well what is at stake, regarding Proposition A. The issue is very simple: Who will decide the destiny of our homes? Who will manage, control and dispose of our homes? The City of Santa Monica? The bureaucrats? The politicians? Or the homeowners? This is the issue, the only issue. Homeowners, would-be homeowners, fair-minded and reasonable persons in Santa Monica understand and will rise up in support of a "YES" vote on Proposition A.

Phil Grunland
Santa Monica

U.S. is absurd

Editor:

We are witnessing on the world stage a performance of theater of the absurd. When, if ever, has the government of a nation not lied and not kept secret its weapons capabilities? How can our authorities be outraged by such behavior? It is absurd to think that this is a reason for one country to wage war on another. It is also absurd to think that a poverty-stricken country like Iraq can pose a military threat to the people of the richest, most powerful country in the world — the United States — which is nearly 10,000 miles distant from its borders.

It is absurd for the United States to maintain a stockpile of tens of thousands of nuclear bombs, and threaten to use nuclear warheads wherever and whenever it wishes, if it is genuinely concerned with the danger of nuclear war. Such threats provoke other nations and terrorist groups to follow suit.

Worldwide international agreements are needed to provide for inspection and control of nuclear weapons technology. This was the conclusion of the 1945 Franck Report, unheeded then and very relevant now, written by the scientists and engineers of the Manhattan Project in 1945 before the atomic bombs were dropped. It was their view then, and it is mine today, that prevention of use of weapons of mass destruction requires some sacrifice of national sovereignty. This is what Albert Einstein meant when he said, after witnessing the bombing of Hiroshima, "Everything has changed, but the way we think."

There are many in the world today who agree with those bumper stickers that say, "War Is Not the Answer."

Nina Byers
Santa Monica

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Count me out for the 2004 Presidential race



MODERN TIMES

By Lloyd Garver

I find myself a member of a distinct minority right now. I'm one of the few people in this country who is not running for President.

I've made this decision as I make all of my decisions — based not just on what is best for me, but on what is best for the country.

I have so little in common with the other candidates that I don't know if I could compete with them. I'm not someone who went to Yale and Harvard, whose dad was the head of the CIA and then President, and whose family made a fortune in oil, but can say with a perfectly straight face that I'm "just folks," and "I'm an outsider" when it comes to Washington D.C. I've never been

involved in a scandal, on or off a boat. I don't blame Hollywood for everything. I've never exploited racial tensions. I've never signed more death warrants than any previous governor of my state.

I was not part of a defeated ticket that ran the worst Presidential campaign in history. I haven't written a self-serving autobiography. I didn't marry a ketchup heiress. And finally, I might as well admit it because it's going to come out eventually: I have no heart problems and I'm in excellent health.

Some of you will think it's sour grapes, but even if by some miracle of Floridian proportions, I could win the election, I'm not sure I'd be happy in the job.

First of all, I don't think I'd want to live in the White House. I've lived in older homes my entire adult life. They may be charming, but they all have problems. That big, old house is bound to have a leaky roof or a toilet that — like many of its residents — just keep running.

Also, I don't mind a house guest now and then, but it seems like somebody is always sleeping over at the White House.

When I'm going to the kitchen in my underwear in the middle of the night, I don't want to bump into some ambassador from some country I never heard of or a tobacco lobbyist with a bad cough.

Then there's the Secret Service. I don't want those people following me into the men's room. I'd be standing there for hours, doing nothing, with those guys looking over my shoulder and clearing their throats.

You have to give a big speech every year or so and be prepared to pause every few seconds so everyone can clap. And then there are those press conferences where reporters ask how you feel about the world's major issues. What's it their business how I feel? Presidents don't always care what the people think, so why should the people care what the President thinks?

On the positive side, the pay is good. President Bush makes \$400,000 a year. That's twice as much as President Clinton was paid, but Bush probably needs it. He's shown us that he's a pretty big spender.

And then there's the big perk, the one

that politicians don't like to talk about, but all last after — free postage.

Sure, it's tempting to run, but I'm very comfortable with my decision. However, I am leaving the door open for the possibility of running in 2008 — if that's what the people want. That gives me five years to become more qualified. That's plenty of time to work on my two-facedness and my obfuscation skills. I should be able to learn things like why nuclear weapons are evil except for the ones we have, how to root for both teams in the World Series, and where the President gets all those pens he gives away. Who knows? By then, maybe the White House will have a new roof.

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

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 sack@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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LOCAL



School board approves tax question for special election

ASSEMBLY, from page 1

districts is difficult.

"Schools aren't necessarily off the hook," said Assemblywoman Fran Pavley (D-Woodland Hills). "The message from Sacramento is that they will have to be part of the solution but we recognize it would be difficult in the current budget year.

"But they are facing decreased funding next year, but this way at least they have eight months to take that into consideration," she added.

The school district would have to borrow the money from a short-term lender to cover its financial obligations until next year, Bailey said.

Santa Monica's public school system is facing a nearly \$14.5 million annual loss of state funding. That figure accounts for more than 20 percent of the district's \$65 million budget.

To make up for part of the lost funds, the school board Thursday night approved putting a \$225 parcel tax before voters in a June 3 special election that would reap \$6.5 million a year for the district.

The remaining funding gap will likely be made up through a combination of service and program cuts, and an increase in fees on everything from busing to cafeteria lunches.

About 1,000 concerned parents, students and district employees marched during a City Council meeting last month to convince its members to set aside more money for its public schools.

They are asking the city to increase its voluntary \$3.5 million annual donation to \$7 million to avert steep cuts to academic pro-

grams — including art, music and sports.

Bailey said the school district also is seeking approval from the state Legislature to bend requirements that force it to reserve much of its budget.

The district wants the state to relax requirements to set aside 3 percent of its budget for maintenance costs and another 3 percent for an emergency reserve. And the district would like the state to defer increased payments into the California Public Employees Retirement System until the budget crisis has passed.

Deasy has asked the state to relax class size ratios of 23 students for every Kindergarten to third grade classroom.

"What we are asking for is that the class size ... be an average of all classes in the district, with no class having more than 22 students," Bailey said. "As long as we stay within that district wide ... I think we could deliver the program with the same efficiency and not have to suffer the consequences."

Pavley agreed the state should give educators as many options as they can until the budget crisis is over.

"I would prefer putting out wide latitudes of flexibility and allowing individual school districts to pick through the options and decide what makes sense for them," she said. "Each school district, if the state softens the cap, would need to decide for themselves if they need to implement it. And if they do I hope it would be under relatively temporary terms."

Businesses ask city to lower rates at beach lots

MERCHANTS, from page 1

were never adopted," Gordon said. "A couple were, but many weren't. It's been very uneven."

Now the association has put forward a plan that the City Council may address at its Feb. 11 meeting. It calls for a \$200 fee that would be added to a business' annual license if the owner wanted to have outdoor seating, sidewalk signs, or put planters and merchandise on display in front of their shops.

Under the plan, business owners would simply check off a box on their business license application that would allow the exemption and tack on the \$200 fee, which works out to about 55 cents a day.

Currently, businesses seeking the same exemptions have to pay \$1,300 to apply for the permit. But even then, it's not guaranteed the city will grant their request. Then if it's approved, there's a fee for that as well, Gordon said.

"Some outdoor dining has been allowed, but the ordinances are so tangled even those at City Hall agree that it's confusing," he said. "This would be an ordinance that would over-rule the previous ordinance."

But while city officials agree there is a problem with the ordinance, they said they are unsure if rewriting the whole thing is necessary.

"There are all sorts of different issues we need to look into," said Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown. "I think within the constraints of parking and pedestrian flow, it benefits all of us to assure a

vibrant indoor/outdoor mix."

Others say the plan is a lot of spin. While some Main Street merchants have said there has been an increased crack-down on non-permitted outdoor displays, city officials say those merchants who have been fined were thoroughly warned before a ticket was ever issued.

"What I find disturbing is that the organizers have put out the message that restrictions are coming and the city is issuing all these citations," said Councilman Ken Genser. "That's just not the issue at all. That doesn't represent the city's actions at all."

The merchants' plan also asks the city to lower all-day parking at the beach lots to \$5. They want parking to be most expensive and restrictive near the pier and the residential neighborhoods, and less expensive at the beach lots and the public parking lots along Main Street, Gordon said. That way shoppers will be funneled into where parking is most abundant, he said.

City staff members have agreed to allow free parking at the beach lots on Sundays between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. for shoppers heading to the farmer's market near the California Heritage Museum.

That plan, which would require validation from the farmer's market, should be in place by the summer, Gordon said.

"The perception that those lots are far away isn't entirely accurate," he said. "The northern end of the beach lot (at 2600 Barnard Way) is just as close as the two parking lots on Main Street."

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For more information:
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(310) 348-0356 option 3/ext. 246
tracey.mayer@cancer.org



STATE

Alaska Airlines crash victims remembered

By The Associated Press

PORT HUENEME — Mourners gathered on a beach Friday to mark the third anniversary of the crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261 into the sea 10 miles offshore, killing all 88 people aboard.

A giant bronze sundial sculpture with leaping dolphins at its base and 88 plaques bearing the victims' names was dedicated on the shoreline.

The MD-80 went down near the Channel Islands northwest of Los Angeles on Jan. 31, 2000, while en route from Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, to San Francisco and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

The National Transportation Safety Board determined that the crash was caused by the failure of a jackscrew in the plane's horizontal stabilizer trim system, a part of the plane's tail section that helps control pitch.

"The thread failure was caused by excessive wear resulting from Alaska Airlines' insufficient lubrication of the jackscrew assembly," the NTSB said in the executive summary of its final report on the crash.

The sundial monument cost \$350,000, which was raised through donations from the community, family members and Alaska Airlines.

Arnold Schwarzenegger recovering after surgery

By The Associated Press

The Terminator is on the road to recovery. Actor Arnold Schwarzenegger was happy and upbeat Friday after undergoing surgery to repair a shoulder injury suffered while performing a motorcycle stunt for his upcoming movie "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines."

The 55-year-old star tore the rotator cuff in his left shoulder last fall but opted against surgery at the time to avoid holding up production on his film. He was admitted to St. John's Health Center in

Santa Monica on Wednesday and released Thursday.

"Apparently he's doing well," said his publicist Jill Eisenstadt. "He's looking forward to just getting back to work and being able to work out."

Schwarzenegger will have to wear a sling to immobilize his shoulder for three to four weeks, she said. However, he is expected to make all of his scheduled appearances, including a multistate tour for his Inner-City Games Foundation next week, she said.

Selling opium seeds on eBay leads to man's arrest

BY RON HARRIS
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Federal drug agents have arrested a Sacramento man for allegedly selling opium poppy pods on eBay, where he described the morphine-laden pods and seeds as a decoration.

Krsna Lev-Twombly, 30, was arrested at his home Thursday by Drug Enforcement Administration agents, who say they bought hundreds of the illegal pods from him last year.

Lev-Twombly appeared in a federal court in Sacramento and was released on a \$50,000 property bond, the U.S. Attorney's office announced Friday. Lev-Twombly is scheduled to appear in a San Jose federal courtroom Feb. 6.

Lev-Twombly declined to comment on the case when reached at his home by The Associated Press.

Prosecutors allege that Lev-Twombly advertised and sold the dried Papaver Somniferum poppy pods on eBay last year.

Undercover DEA agents bought pods from Lev-Twombly twice, each time receiving a package of poppies, complete with a receipt, the U.S. Attorney's Office said. Each pod is about the size of a golf ball, and is attached to a two-foot-high stalk.

Richard Meyer, a spokesman for the

DEA, said only three of 300 species of poppy are illegal, but Lev-Twombly was selling one of the prohibited kinds.

A San Francisco forensic scientist later confirmed that the pods contained opium poppy seeds, which in turn contained Morphine, prosecutors said.

The chemist indicated that the pods were shipped ready to be "steeped and ingested as a controlled substance with a psychoactive effect," according to the criminal complaint.

Kevin Pursglove, a spokesman for eBay, said the auction Web site remains vigilant in working with authorities to prevent the sales of such items online.

"We check the site frequently for any illegal or illicit items and we remove them as fast as we find them," Pursglove said.

In the early days of eBay, some people tried to sell marijuana on the service before they were quickly shut down, Pursglove said.

Trying to deal drugs online through eBay "might be one of the dumbest things you can do," Pursglove added. "Everything is traceable."

A search for opium poppy seeds on eBay's site Friday revealed sellers hawking "spectacular amazing giant opium poppy seed" and 150 "opium poppy seeds."

DID YOU KNOW?: The U.S. Post Office handles 43% of the world's mail. Its nearest competitor is Japan with 6%

STATE



'Guru of Ganja' convicted of marijuana cultivation

BY DAVID KRAVETS

AP Legal Affairs Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Ed Rosenthal, the author of books on how to grow marijuana and avoid the law, was found guilty Friday of federal marijuana cultivation and conspiracy charges.

Deliberating for a day, the 12-member jury concluded that Rosenthal, the self-described "Guru of Ganja," was growing more than 1,000 plants, conspiring to cultivate marijuana and maintaining a warehouse for a growing operation. He faces 10 years to life when sentenced June 4.

Several people in the courtroom, including Rosenthal's wife and daughter, wept as the verdicts were read by a court clerk.

The verdicts were a victory in the federal government's battle against California's 1996 voter-approved medical marijuana law. Rosenthal's arrest last year was among a string of Drug Enforcement Administration raids on medical marijuana suppliers in California.

Under strict orders from U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer, Rosenthal couldn't tell the jury he was growing marijuana as "an officer" for the city of Oakland's medical marijuana program.

Voters authorized Oakland's program and other medical marijuana providers across California under Proposition 215. Eight other states also allow the sick and dying to smoke or grow marijuana with a doctor's recommendation.

But federal authorities do not recognize those laws.

"There is no such thing as medical marijuana," said Richard Meyer, a DEA spokesman. "We're Americans first, Californians second."

Outside the courtroom, jury foreman Charles Sackett III said jurors suspected Rosenthal was growing medical

marijuana, since a host of protesters outside the courthouse held constant demonstrations.

Sackett, however, said the jury was following federal law when it reached its "tough decision."

"We had no legal wiggle room," Sackett said. When asked if he hoped the verdicts would be overturned on appeal, Sackett replied: "Personally, yes I do."

"There is no such thing as medical marijuana. We're Americans first, Californians second."

— RICHARD MEYER
DEA spokesman

About two dozen protesters were screaming and crying outside the courthouse after the verdict.

The government essentially portrayed Rosenthal as a major drug supplier. Because federal laws trump state laws, Breyer ruled that Rosenthal could not defend himself under the color of California's Proposition 215. Marijuana, under federal rules, has no recognized medical benefit.

"He was not trying to grow drugs for illicit purposes," said Nathan Miley, a former Oakland City councilman. "I think this does a disservice not just to Ed, but to those needing medical marijuana."

Rosenthal, who remains free on bail, did not immediately comment.

But in earlier interviews, he said Breyer, brother of Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, should have stepped down.

"He didn't want the whole truth out," Rosenthal said. In one of his books, "Don't get Busted," Rosenthal advises marijuana users and growers on how to avoid the law. He tells readers to take his advice seriously.

"You're not paranoid — they're really after you," he writes. "Although marijuana is widely accepted in society, it is not by the government, its police attack dogs, the courts and politicians."

Rosenthal has said he's anything but a drug dealer, noting that the plants agents seized didn't have buds, the part of the plant normally smoked for a high. He planned to give out cuttings to seriously ill people.

A founder of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, Rosenthal used to write the "Ask Ed" column for "High Times" magazine, and has researched and written nearly 20 books on marijuana. Millions of copies have been sold, with titles such as "The Growers Handbook," "The Big Book of Buds," and "Ask Ed: Marijuana Law."

Throughout the trial, Rosenthal's lawyers repeatedly tried to get medical marijuana mentioned. During closing remarks to the jury, defense attorney Robert Eye told jurors: "We don't ask you to check your common sense of justice when you enter the courtroom."

Rosenthal's lawyers were twice rebuffed by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in their bid to have the appeals court force Breyer to allow them to call witnesses that would have testified that Rosenthal's marijuana was being grown for the sick and dying.

"No motions for reconsideration, rehearing, clarification ... or any other submissions shall be filed or entertained," the San Francisco-based appeals court wrote.

DID YOU KNOW?: The electric chair was invented by a dentist.



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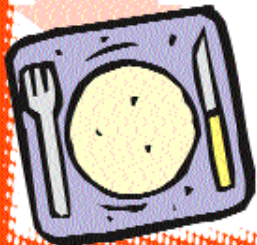
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STATE

Downtrodden dot-coms buckle down, show profits

BY MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Business Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — It's not quite the economic revolution once envisioned by brash entrepreneurs, but a handful of Internet businesses are actually making money.

In breakthroughs that show the promise of e-commerce wasn't all smoke and mirrors, four dot-coms recently reported their first quarterly profits.

The modest achievements of MarketWatch.com Inc., Ask Jeeves Inc., LookSmart Ltd. and Autobytel Inc. reflect the more serious dot-com approach that emerged after the nonsense of Internet mania a few years ago. Remember the days when sock puppets sold pet food on the Internet?

"We used to be up against a lot of stupid money that invested in bad ideas," said Larry Kramer, chief executive of San Francisco-based MarketWatch.com. "Now that most of the bad businesses have disappeared, the remaining companies are getting down to doing some real business."

With their profitable quarters, MarketWatch, Ask Jeeves and LookSmart join other prominent Internet companies that are already in the black.

The list of the Internet's publicly held money makers include eBay Inc., Amazon.com Inc., Yahoo! Inc., Overture Services Inc., Expedia Inc., FindWhat.com Inc. and E-Trade Group Inc.

Several privately owned dot-coms, including search engines Google and DealTime, say they have been making money, too.

Even more dot-coms are expected to become profitable this year.

Internet analyst Safa Rashtchy of U.S. Bancorp Piper Jaffray believes InfoSpace Inc., Netflix Inc. and Overstock.com Inc. will be among the online companies to register their first quarterly profits during 2003.

Meanwhile, Ask Jeeves, MarketWatch and LookSmart are all projecting more operating profits this year.

"Shame on us if we don't keep making money," said Ask Jeeves CEO Skip Battle.

Previous shakeouts in other high-tech fields, such as the personal computer industry, have proven that the early missteps of pioneers point the way to later success for managers who learn from the mistakes.

"Some of these companies are going to survive and become powerhouses," said Internet analyst David Kathman of Morningstar. "Others are going to survive and just become niche players."

The path to prosperity hasn't been smooth.

Online search engine Ask Jeeves lost \$699 million in six years before recording a fourth-quarter profit of \$2 million, its first from ongoing business operations.

Financial news site MarketWatch lost \$252 million in five years before recording a fourth-quarter profit of \$854,000.

Search engine LookSmart lost \$217 million in six years before posting its fourth-quarter profit of \$34.6 million. If not for a one-time gain, LookSmart's earnings would have been \$3.4 million.

Online car buying service Autobytel lost \$162 million over seven years before recording a fourth-quarter profit of \$462,000.

To climb out of their financial holes, these companies have had to make painful cuts.

Ask Jeeves has trimmed its payroll from 850 employees in 2000 to 350 workers today. MarketWatch pruned its annual expenses from \$70 million in 2000 to \$38.5 million in 2002.

In a sign of the sobering times, Ask Jeeves' remaining workers reacted to the news of the company's first profit with restraint that would have been uncharacteristic just a couple years ago.

**"Some of these
companies are going to
survive and become
powerhouses. Others are
going to survive and just
become niche players."**

— DAVID KATHMAN
Internet analyst

"People were smiling about it, but they kept working at their desks," Battle said. "There were no keg parties. We all know there is still a ton of work to be done."

Cost cutting isn't the only reason behind the recent earnings. Sales are also rising, sometimes at a rapid clip that's particularly impressive considering the overall economy's lethargy.

Emeryville, Calif.-based Ask Jeeves and San Francisco-based LookSmart are profiting from rising demand for a service that ranks online search results based on how much an advertiser will pay for the spot.

This specialty was just developing at the height of the Internet boom. Last year, ad-driven search results generated industrywide revenue of nearly \$1.5 billion, helping to enrich Yahoo, Google, Overture and FindWhat, as well as Ask Jeeves and LookSmart.

Paid search listings propelled a 16 percent increase in LookSmart's 2002 revenue to \$96 million, and the company believes sales will climb as high as \$150 million this year.

"People are very excited again because we have become a growing company," said Jason Kellerman, LookSmart's chief executive. "There is definitely a feeling that we are in the right space at the right time."

Other dot-coms are cashing in on technology licensing agreements, as well as consumers' willingness to buy more services and merchandise online.

The newly profitable Internet companies still have a long way to get their stocks back to prices set in their much-hyped initial public offerings.

Marketwatch's shares went public in January 1999 and peaked at \$130; they ended January 2002 trading in the \$5 range. Ask Jeeves' shares went public at \$14 in July 1999 and peaked at \$190.50; more recently, they have been hovering around \$5. LookSmart's shares went public in August 1999 at \$12 and peaked at \$72; they are stuck around \$3.

"These are all still risky stocks," analyst Rashtchy said. "But I was skeptical about whether these companies would make money, and they have delivered."

NATIONAL



Estimates show presidential public financing fund up slightly

BY SHARON THEIMER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The presidential campaign fund financed by taxpayers with a \$3 checkoff on their returns is in better financial shape than at this point in the 2000 election cycle, but still must reap millions of dollars more to avoid a shortfall.

As this year began, the fund had \$137 million, about \$4 million more than at the beginning of 1999, Treasury Department figures released Thursday by the Federal Election Commission show.

Candidates in the 2004 presidential primaries can start tapping the fund next January.

In the last presidential race, the fund didn't collect enough by January 2000 to give the primary candidates all the money they qualified for; each received about half their entitlement at that point. They could borrow the rest until enough tax money came into the fund to make up the shortfall.

The FEC expects new estimates within the next month or so that will give it a better idea of the fund's shape as the 2004 election approaches, spokesman Bob Biersack said. Money coming in from tax returns this winter will play a big role.

Public financing of presidential candidates began a quarter-century ago as one of several post-Watergate changes to campaign finance laws. The system is financed by taxpayers who check a box on their federal income tax returns to direct \$3 of their taxes to the presidential fund,

with no effect on their refunds.

The fund is tapped for the presidential primaries, the general election and political party nominating conventions. In 2000, it paid out a total of about \$240 million to qualifying candidates and parties.

In 2000, President Bush became the first major-party candidate to opt out of public financing in the primaries, and is considered likely to skip it again in 2004. Bush raised more than \$100 million for the 2000 primaries and could raise even more this time; the new campaign finance law doubled individual contribution limits to \$2,000 per election.

Bush and the half-dozen Democratic hopefuls have not said whether they will opt out of public financing in the primary or the general election.

During the primaries, candidates who agree to spending limits get federal matching dollars for the first \$250 of each donation they receive up to the entitlement limit, which was \$16.9 million in 2000.

For the general election, candidates who agree to the limit are given full federal financing; it amounted to \$67.5 million in the 2000 election. The allotment, pegged to the cost of living, has risen in each election by \$6 million to \$10 million.

Even though it costs them nothing to check the \$3 box, taxpayers' participation in the presidential public financing system has declined in recent elections.

The good news is that the fund hasn't dropped dramatically since the 2000 election, said John Green, a University of

Akron political scientist examining presidential public financing as part of a Campaign Finance Institute task force.

"Nobody really thinks it will collapse in 2004, but every election cycle we come closer to not having the funds to make the system work," Green said. New funding should be considered, such as an increase in the size of the checkoff, having Congress tap tax money or providing free candidate ad time through a tax on broad-

casters, he said.

Michael Malbin, executive director of the Washington-based institute, said the fund needs fundamental changes to make it more attractive to candidates. The spending limits haven't kept pace with the cost of campaigning or the newly compressed primary election schedule, for example, he said.

An increase in contribution limits could prove another disincentive, Malbin said.

Going 'postal' on the mailman



Bob Eighmie/Associated Press, Miami Herald

A hijacked mail delivery truck, front left, is shown while pursued by police vehicles during a 90-minute slow-speed chase in Miami on Friday. Authorities said the mail truck contained an armed man who was holding a mail carrier hostage.

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INTERNATIONAL

Helicopter crash kills four soldiers in Afghanistan

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press Writer

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — The twisted wreckage of a U.S. helicopter lay on an Afghan plain Friday as troops searched for clues to a crash that killed four members of an elite unit that slips special forces commandos behind enemy lines.

The hulk of helicopter lay near Bagram Air Base, with snow-covered mountains far in the distance. The military said it was unsure what caused Thursday's crash. There was no indication of enemy fire.

The four soldiers killed were all members of an elite aviation regiment based at Fort Campbell, Ky., military officials said Friday. The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment — known as the Night Stalkers — was one of the first units deployed to fight in Operation Enduring Freedom, America's war on terrorism.

The victims were identified as Chief Warrant Officer Mark S. O'Steen, 43, of Alabama; Chief Warrant Officer Thomas J. Gibbons, 31, of Maryland; Staff Sgt. Daniel L. Kisling Jr., 31, of Missouri; and Sgt. Gregory M. Frampton, 37, of California. Hometowns were not released.

O'Steen and Gibbons were pilots. Kisling and Frampton were maintenance crewmen.

"These men gave their lives in the defense of freedom, doing what they loved most, flying with the 160th," Lt. Col. Emmett Shaffer, the regiment's deputy commander, said Friday. "I ask for your prayers, both for those we have lost, and those who continue our mission."

The special operations helicopter went

down Thursday night seven miles east of the air base while on a training mission.

It was the deadliest day for the American military in Afghanistan since March 4, 2002, when seven soldiers were killed and 11 wounded at the outset of Operation Anaconda against remnant Taliban and al-Qaida forces.

"It always hurts when you hear" that an army helicopter has gone down, said Chief Warrant Officer Stan Kosiatek, a Black Hawk pilot. "We don't know why it went down, we just know it was one of our fellow aviators."

The helicopter that crashed is known as the MH-60, an adapted version of the Black Hawk which Army special operations forces use for long-range, low-level penetration of hostile territory at night.

Col. Roger King, spokesman for the U.S. military at the Bagram base, said the crash was not connected to continuing U.S. military operations in southeast Afghanistan, where troops backed by helicopters were scouring caves in the Adi Ghar mountain for rebel fighters.

The U.S. military relies on helicopters in Afghanistan because there are few good roads or airfields, the terrain is steep and rugged, and many routes remain littered with mines.

But Afghanistan's roiling dust often clogs engines, and the high altitude of Bagram strains rotors. Bagram lies nearly 1 mile above sea level and the thinner air reduces the lifting capacity of helicopters.

"Afghanistan is a tough place to fly," King said.

Any changes in the U.S. military's aerial operations would depend on conclu-

sions of the investigation into the crash, King said.

Since U.S. military action in Afghanistan began in October 2001, at least six U.S. helicopters have crashed or had hard landings that have injured or killed troops. Two Army Rangers and two Marines have been killed, and at least 11 other troops have been injured.

Including the latest casualties, the U.S.

military has had 25 soldiers killed in action in Afghanistan since the war on terror began. Twenty-two deaths were due to non-battlefield incidents.

Nine other Night Stalkers have died in America's war on terrorism since Sept. 11, 2001.

King said the 8,000 U.S. soldiers based in Afghanistan would rebound from the latest loss.

Black Hawk down: Four U.S. soldiers killed



Suzanne Plunkett/Associated Press

The remains of a U.S. Black Hawk MH-60 helicopter which killed four American soldiers lies beside U.S. soldiers in Bagram, Afghanistan on Friday. The Special Operations helicopter killed all those aboard when it went down Thursday evening seven miles east of the Bagram Air Base. There was no indication of enemy fire and the cause of the crash is under investigation.

Shanghai to resume work on world's tallest skyscraper

BY MARTIN FACKLER
Associated Press Writer

SHANGHAI, China — China's business capital has long yearned for an architectural landmark to fit its world-size ambitions.

After years of delay, Shanghai may finally get it. Defying unease about eye-catching skyscrapers since the Sept. 11 terror attacks, a developer said Friday it will resume work this month on a glass office tower that will be the world's tallest building.

Construction of the Shanghai World Financial Center started in 1997 but soon stopped as a financial crisis swept Asia. The site in the center of the city's new Pudong financial district has been a gaping pit ever since.

While the developer struggled to raise money, city officials sounded upbeat, promising the project would one day resume.

"The Shanghai World Financial Center will become a building matching the city's position as a world financial center," said a statement last February by the Pudong district government.

The original blueprint called for a height of 1,518 feet, topping the current record holder — Malaysia's 1,483-foot Petronas Twin Towers.

Tokyo-based Mori Building Co. said it has changed the planned height, though the company and the city government refused to disclose the new goal until an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 13.

But "it will be the tallest building in the world," Mori spokesman Toru Nagamori said.

The attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center raised doubts about the future of super-tall buildings.

Other cities — such as Seoul, South Korea — have announced plans for record-setting skyscrapers. But after Sept. 11, projects including a tower planned by developer Donald Trump in Chicago have been scaled back.

Experts said concerns about terrorism are a low priority in Shanghai, which is eager to become a business center to rival New York City or Tokyo.

"Nothing less than the world's tallest building is suit-

able for Shanghai's ambitions," said Lu Yongyi, a professor of city planning at Tongji University in Shanghai. "Sept. 11 seems very remote from China."

Of greater local concern has been the new skyscraper's signature feature — an enormous round hole through the building near its pinnacle.

A few in Shanghai said the hole resembled the rising sun flag of the building's Japanese developer, raising the still raw issue of Japan's World War II occupation. The city and Mori refused to discuss the criticisms.

On a poster near the construction site, the tower and its hole looked more like a gigantic bottle opener.

The new skyscraper will join a Shanghai skyline

already crowded with futuristic buildings, many featuring sections shaped as orbs, discs and other eye-catching geometry.

The building will overshadow its neighbor, the 88-story Jinmao Building — China's tallest skyscraper and the third-tallest in the world.

Most of the new tower will be office space, though 10 floors near the top will hold a hotel. Nagamori refused to say how much, if any, of the building's planned space had been leased.

Lu said the building should have no trouble finding tenants, since demand remains high in Shanghai for first-class commercial space.

U.S. consulate probe in Mexico reportedly focuses on ring selling visas, border cards

BY RAUL LLAMAS
Associated Press Writer

NUEVO LAREDO, Mexico — State police officials said Friday that a U.S. investigation of the busy U.S. consulate in this border town apparently is centered on a woman accused of selling U.S. visas for \$1,900.

State police said complaints were filed here last year against Margarita Martinez Ramirez, alleging she failed to deliver a visa after accepting payment.

Many others did receive visas, however, according to the El Diario newspaper, which said Martinez, who did not work at the consulate, sometimes met visa customers at a local Church's Chicken restaurant and split her fee with Mexicans employed by the consulate.

Neither U.S. nor Mexican investigators have been able to locate her recently, according to police.

Spokesmen at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City said they could not comment on the case while it was under investigation.

The visa section of the U.S. consulate in Nuevo Laredo was closed Wednesday and was to remain closed at least through next week to investigate visa operations. Thomas Armbruster, the consul general in Nuevo Laredo, said the roughly 30 Mexican citizens working at the consulate were being interviewed by U.S. investigators from Washington, Mexico City and Monterrey.

U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Wednesday investigators were looking into "allegations that a number of individuals received visas illegally from this consulate," but he did not provide details.

A state police commander said Martinez apparently had been selling visas for at least four years.

The Laredo Morning Times reported that residents of the Colonia Solidaridad in Nuevo Laredo, across the border from the Texas city, said they had been offered legitimate U.S. border crossing cards for \$400.

Security workers at the consulate said at least three Mexican employees of the consulate had been taken across the border for questioning.

SPORTS



Smile, you're a winner



American Monica Seles returns the ball against Russia's Lina Krasnoroutskaya during their quarterfinal match of the Toray Pan Pacific Open Tennis tournament in Tokyo on Friday. Seles won the match 6-4, 6-4.

Itsuo Inouye/Associated Press

49ers still looking for Mariucci's replacement

By The Associated Press

SANTA CLARA — Philadelphia Eagles offensive coordinator Brad Childress was eliminated Friday as a candidate for the San Francisco 49ers' head coaching vacancy.

Childress was among four coaches who have interviewed for the job, but the team plans to look "in a different direction," according to a statement from general manager Terry Donahue.

That direction appears to be defense.

The three remaining candidates who have been interviewed are San Francisco defensive coordinator Jim Mora, New

England defensive coordinator Romeo Crennel and New York Jets defensive coordinator Ted Cottrell.

Donahue also is expected to interview at least one candidate from the college ranks.

Tampa Bay defensive coordinator Monte Kiffin signed a three-year contract extension with the Buccaneers on Thursday, backing out of an interview for the San Francisco job. Donahue also talked to Philadelphia defensive coordinator Jim Johnson, who signed a new deal with the Eagles.

No timetable has been set for replacing Steve Mariucci, who was fired Jan. 15.

Fights for two vacant titles in Las Vegas tonight

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — On a card with two world title fights, the most interesting fight Saturday night might be a 10-rounder between rising young star Miguel Cotto and former lightweight champion Cesar Bazan.

Cotto, a member of the 2000 Olympic team from Puerto Rico, takes a big step up in class when he meets Bazan in a 140-pound fight.

The fight is part of a card at the Mandalay Bay that includes fights for two vacant titles. In the main event Juan Manuel Marquez and Manuel Medina fight for the IBF featherweight title, while the second fight matches David Santos and Carlos Hernandez for the IBF junior

lightweight championship.

Cotto, though, is a fighter to be watched as he tries to win for the 14th time in as many fights against Bazan, who is 39-5-1.

Cotto has been brought up slowly, partly because he suffered a broken arm in a 2001 traffic accident, and though Bazan isn't the fighter he was when he held the title he will be his toughest test yet.

Marquez is a 4-1 favorite in the main event in his first title try since losing a decision to Freddie Norwood in 1999. He's 10-0 since then and eager to make the most of this opportunity.

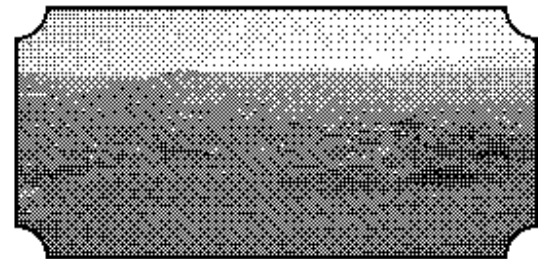
In the second title fight, Hernandez will have the president of El Salvador, Francisco Flores, sitting ringside to cheer him on against Santos in a 130-pound title fight.

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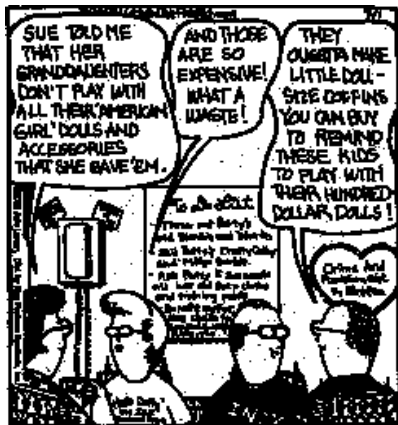
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 33 Retrain bit
 36 Vulgar
 38 More pleasant
 39 Long-necked bird

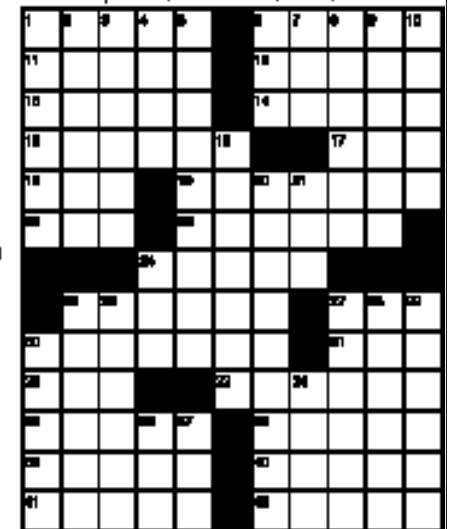
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DOWN
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 26 Evening party
 28 Charm

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For Rent

WeHo \$750.00 Classic New York Style brick bldg, hrwd flrs, PET OK, Stove, Ceiling fan, Crwn Molding, Close to shops and rest. Pkng avail.

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CONFERENCE ROOM: Available for weekly, daytime meetings or individual dates. Close to freeways, W. LA. Seats 60. Attractive, windowed, AC space. Affordable, comfortable. Chairs, tables. Large white boards. Video/Audio equipment. Available (310)820-6322.

OFFICE AVAILABLE in 5 office suite. 1121 4th St., SM. Law/Library, (West), reception, copier, fax. \$825/mo. with secretary desk. Marcia, Agt. (310)394-4492.

SANTA MONICA Main St. \$500.00 to \$750.00. Space available for rent. Hottest location on Main St. Can be vendors like clothing, jewelry, candles, salts, etc. Call only (310)430-3595.

VENICE: LOFT office space. 900 or 1800 sq. ft. Parking & bathroom. Wood floors & skylights. 215 Windward. \$1900 or \$3900. (310)567-9262.

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Aw, rats: Olympics cancelled

By The Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — For now, it's being called "the event formerly known as the Rat Olympics."

All it took was a call from the U.S. Olympic Committee to get Nebraska Wesleyan University to rethink the title of a psychology class project, one that's been around 28 years.

Project organizers were informed that the name "Olympics" is protected under federal law and that Wesleyan, a small private school, could be sued if the word wasn't changed. Rare exemptions, such as the Special Olympics, have been granted.

The annual project, which has received nationwide media attention over the years, teaches rats to perform in various competitive events.

Wesleyan will hold a contest to choose a new permanent name for the competition.

Les Miserables too raunchy for stage

By The Associated Press

WILLIAMSPORT, Md. — Even in this age of raunchy rap and tasteless television, high school drama coach Ruth Ridenour warned students trying out for "Les Miserables" that it contained swear words.

Three, precisely: "hell," "bitch" and "bastard."

The students were all right with that, but some parents were not.

Several complained, and administrators are now preparing to consider whether the musical — four

weeks into rehearsals and set for an April 11-13 run — is too raw for this Potomac River town of 1,900.

WilliamSPORT High School will form a committee to review the lyrics if it receives a written request to do so, said Principal John Davidson. At least one person has picked up a complaint form, and three parents have called to complain.

The fuss surprises some students.

"It's just acting and I'm not in this production just to say the language," said Bryant Sigler, 15, who stars as the musical's protagonist, Jean Valjean.

"I'm in it because of the story that the words tell."

The play, a sanitized version of the hit Broadway musical, tells of Valjean's persecution after he steals a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. Other characters include a prostitute and a dishonest innkeeper.

Sigler has started a campaign to rescue the production by passing out 500 handbills printed with "Save Les Miz."

Aspiring actress Emily Conrad, 15, said the community should support the production.

"I feel that if we're mature enough to handle this, then the audience should be mature enough to handle it," she said.

Caught in Cabo

By The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — An armored car driver who vanished last week along with more than \$100,000 was detained in Mexico, authorities said.

On Thursday, the FBI and Mexican authorities detained Philip Carlos Salcedo Jr., 23, in Cabo San Lucas, Baja California, FBI spokesman John Iannarelli said.

Authorities said Salcedo would be arrested on theft charges and turned over to the FBI. Iannarelli said he expected Salcedo to be back in San Diego in time to appear in federal court Friday.

"We are happy my son is alive and well," said Salcedo's father, Philip Salcedo Sr. "We all support him and love him very much."

The Loomis Fargo armored car Salcedo was driving

was found abandoned in downtown San Diego on Jan. 23 with its engine running and door open. Moments earlier Salcedo had dropped off a fellow security guard, at a city administration building for the car's final pickup of the day, police said.

The next day, FBI agents found money and deposit bags in Rosarito, Mexico. Police initially treated the case as a possible kidnapping and robbery, but later said they considered Salcedo the "prime suspect."

Salcedo's family hired a private investigator to help find the married father of two, saying they believed he had been threatened and were concerned for his safety.

Horse killers on the lam

By The Associated Press

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. — It would have been curtains for Coco and Casper if somebody hadn't sprung them from the big doghouse.

The canines, sentenced to die for attacking a horse, are on the lam after they were freed during a Tuesday morning break-in at the animal control center. Their final walk had been set for 5 that afternoon.

Authorities suspect their accomplices are also their owners, 28-year-old Shenandoah Warner and Christina Ball, 34, both of whom also have left the area, authorities said.

When animal control workers arrived Tuesday morning, they found all the dogs — except Casper and Coco — roaming about the shelter.

Casper is described as a 2-year-old deaf Dalmatian/pit bull mix; Coco is 8, a terrier and has only one eye.

The dogs attacked a horse May 4, and were ordered euthanized. The horse had to be killed.

The sentence, however, was stayed four months to allow Warner and Ball to appeal; officials said the two made several pleas but never filed an official request.

Prosecutors said they will proceed with criminal charges against Warner and Ball.

Harboring and hiding the dogs is a misdemeanor offense that for each day carries a possible sentence of up to 30 days in jail and a \$10 to \$50 fine per dog.

SANTA MONICA SCENE °CALENDAR EDITION

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2003

TODAY

Organic Farmer's Market every Saturday. 8:30am to 1pm, Arizona and Third Street. (310)458-8712

Shots for Tots & Teens will provide FREE immunizations and TB skin tests to all infants, adolescents and teenagers under the age of 18 at the Saint John's Health Center cafeteria on the Ground Floor. FREE Valet parking is available off Santa Monica Blvd. 10am to Noon. Saint John's Health Center, Cafeteria - Ground Floor. Arizona and 22nd St. (310)829-8234.

Weekly Storytime, 11:00 a.m. Come to Barnes & Noble for Saturday readings with the kids! Call 310-260-9110 for more information.

Book reading by local writer Monira Sohaili at Dutton's Brentwood Books. Monira's book teaches children the value of tolerance through fables about plants, animals and people. Reading will start at 11am, 11975 San Vicente Blvd. Is Brentwood. (310)476-6263

MAGICOPOLIS presents HOCUS POCUS! (Fish Bones Choke Us). The stage explodes with a colorful mix of Magic, Special Effects, Sleight of Hand, Comedy and Music that's sure to delight audiences of all ages. At MAGICOPOLIS, 1418 Fourth Street, Santa Monica. Fridays & Saturdays at 8pm, \$20. Saturday & Sundays at 2pm, \$15. For tickets call 310-451-2241.

Cat & Kitten Adoption Fair: Every Sat & Sun, 12pm to 4pm @ Centinella Feed, 1448 Lincoln Blvd in Santa Monica. Donations include spay/neuter, 1st vaccines, flea/worm treatment as needed. Knowledgeable support for new adopters. Rescue Me Pet Foundation. (310)452-9568.

Psychic Faire & Spiritual Healing Festival - Admission & Healings are free. Tarot, Past Lives, Career, Palm, Love Life, Money, Aura and More. Readings \$8 contribution or three for \$20. 1pm to 4pm, 1731 21st St. (between Michigan and Olympic) For information or directions call (310)587-3536.

The Red Ribbon Squares, Santa Monica's official square dance club, will be celebrating their 52nd Anniversary at Marine Park (16th & Marine St.) in Santa Monica with Lee Schmidt calling the squares and Margaret Wilson cueing the rounds. Elegant Hor D'oeuvres will be served all evening. Starts at 8pm with pre-rounds at 7:30pm. Admission is \$7. Information (310)395-3383 or (310)398-7973

SUNDAY

The Bitter Redhead presents Saucey Monkey. Show starts at 9pm. 2102 Lincoln Blvd., Santa Monica. For more information please call (310)450-6776.

Farmer's Market every Sunday. 9:30am to 1pm, Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Come and enjoy one of the largest and best farmer's markets in California! (310)458-8712.

Santa Monica Pier Winter Concert Series begins at 2pm today with a special performance by the Tom Nolan Band. Admission is FREE! Parking is available in most beach lots and the Tide Shuttle runs from Downtown Santa Monica to the Pier for only \$.25. For more information please call the Santa Monica pier Information Line at (310)458-8900.

Puppetolio! presented by the Santa Monica Puppet & Magic Center. All ages, 3 and up. This musical revue features marionettes, ventriloquism, magic and more. Shows are always followed by a demonstration, Q & A, and a tour of the Puppet workshop and Museum. Saturdays and Sundays at 1pm and 3pm. Wednesdays and Holidays at 1pm. Seats are \$6.50. 1255 2nd Street in Santa Monica. Reservations/Information (310)656-0483. www.puppetmagic.com

Almost Vaudville. 2 pm and 5 pm. UnUrban Coffeehouse. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, (310)315-0056.

MOVIE °GUIDE

LOEWS CINIPLEX BROADWAY CINEMA

1441 Third St. at Broadway
About Schmidt (R) 12:50, 3:45, 6:40, 9:35, 12:25.
Biker Boyz (PG-13) 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:05, 11:20.
The Hours (PG-13) 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50, 12:35.
The Guru (R) 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:20, 12:55.

MANN CRITERION

1313 Third St.
Adaptation (R) 12:30, 3:45, 7:10, 10:25.
The Recruit (PG-13) 11:15, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00, 12:30.
Confessions of a Dangerous Mind (R) 1:00, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10.
Gangs of New York (R) 11:30, 3:15, 7:00, 10:30.
National Security (PG-13) 12:15, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:15.
Darkness Falls (PG-13) 12:00, 2:20, 4:45, 7:20, 9:45.

AMC THEATRE SM 7

1310 3rd Street
Just Married (PG-13) 12:50, 3:25, 5:40, 8:15, 10:30.
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (PG-13) 1:20, 4:40, 8:30.
Catch Me If You Can (PG-13) 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:20.
Chicago (PG-13) 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:15.
25th Hour (R) 12:45, 3:45, 7:00, 10:05.
Kangaroo Jack (PG) 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 9:50.
Final Destination 2 (R) 12:45, 3:15, 5:35, 8:05, 10:30.

LANDMARK NU-WILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Nicholas Nickleby (PG) 1:00, 4:00, 7:30, 10:30.
The Pianist (R) 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:15.

LAEMMLE MONICA

1332 2nd St.
City of God (R) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00.
Far From Heaven (PG-13) 1:30, 4:15, 7:10, 9:55.
Frida (R) 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:05.
The Quiet American (R) 1:45, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40.

AERO THEATER

1328 Montana Ave.
My Big Fat Greek Wedding (PG) 5:30, 7:30, 9:30.



BACK PAGE

Condition of America's homes: Look in the toilet

BY GENARO C. ARMAS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — To understand how much the typical American home has changed in 60 years, just look in the bathroom. It's hard to find one that doesn't have hot water, a toilet and a bathtub.

In 1940, barely half of U.S. homes had all three features.

Likewise, a telephone was a luxury item for many Americans when World War II began. Now they're ubiquitous, with some families placing them in every room, including the bathroom.

And it's not just what's in the home that's changed.

The size of new homes increased by over 50 percent between 1970 and 2000. Formal living rooms have been replaced by more livable family rooms and dens, kitchens have expanded to include eating areas, and bathrooms have proliferated.

"Americans put homeownership on a pedestal," said Howard Decker, chief curator of the National Building Museum in Washington. "When you understand how central the single-family home is to the American dream and American mythology, you can understand why a bigger version of the home is better."

The Census Bureau has since 1940 collected detailed data on how Americans live. Some results from the 2000 census still are being tabulated, but what already

"My first reaction when I heard was 'Good, finally, it's about time.' I didn't want to have to go back there with an outhouse after getting used to a bathroom in the Navy."

— JAMES "DING" BRANNAN
Retired government worker

has been released shows dramatic changes in the evolution of the American home.

In 1940, only 55 percent of homes with plumbing had what the government considers a "complete system" — hot and cold running water, a flush toilet and a tub or shower. Sixty years later, 99 percent of all homes had all those features.

James "Ding" Brannan, 69, grew up in a home that used a coal-burning stove for heat. He shared an outhouse with his three siblings and had no regular access to indoor plumbing until he was 17 and joined the Navy. His parents added a bathroom while he was overseas.

"My first reaction when I heard was 'Good, finally, it's about time,'" said Brannan, a retired government worker whose home in Bowie, Md., has two bathrooms. "I didn't want to have to go back

there with an outhouse after getting used to a bathroom in the Navy."

The Census Bureau has altered questions to reflect changes in how people live. For instance, the government once asked if a family had access to a phone, either inside the house or outside, such as one shared with neighbors. As recently as 1960, just over one in five homes did not have access.

The 2000 census only asked whether a family had a phone in the home. Only one in 50 did not.

In the future, more homes will come with a built-in Internet connections and multimedia systems, said Ross Heitzmann, director of business development for the National Association of Home Builders Research Center.

"Each generation's luxury is the next

generation's standard," said Robert Lang, a demographer with the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech in Alexandria, Va.

American homes also are spreading out. More than half of new homes in 2000 had two or more floors, compared with fewer than one-fifth in 1971. The percentage of new homes built with four or more bedrooms grew from 24 percent to 34 percent over roughly the same period, even though Americans generally are having fewer children.

Lang said homeowners often convert extra bedrooms to home offices or entertainment centers, examples of what he calls "the genius Americans have in finding new uses for a room."

The emergence of suburbs during the mid-20th century helped spur the proliferation of larger homes. People who left cramped quarters in cities desired space, both inside and outside the home.

The average size of a new single-family home soared from 1,500 square feet to over 2,200 square feet between 1970 and 2000. The percentage of new homes built with at least 1 1/2 bathrooms rose from 15 percent to 54 percent during the same time.

"I don't see how homes can get any bigger," said Ray Hine, 74, a retired home builder from Winston Salem, N.C. "I'm just glad I got out of the business, because I would be scared getting on the roof of these new houses."

DID YOU KNOW?: In the US, murder is committed most frequently in August and least frequently in February.

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