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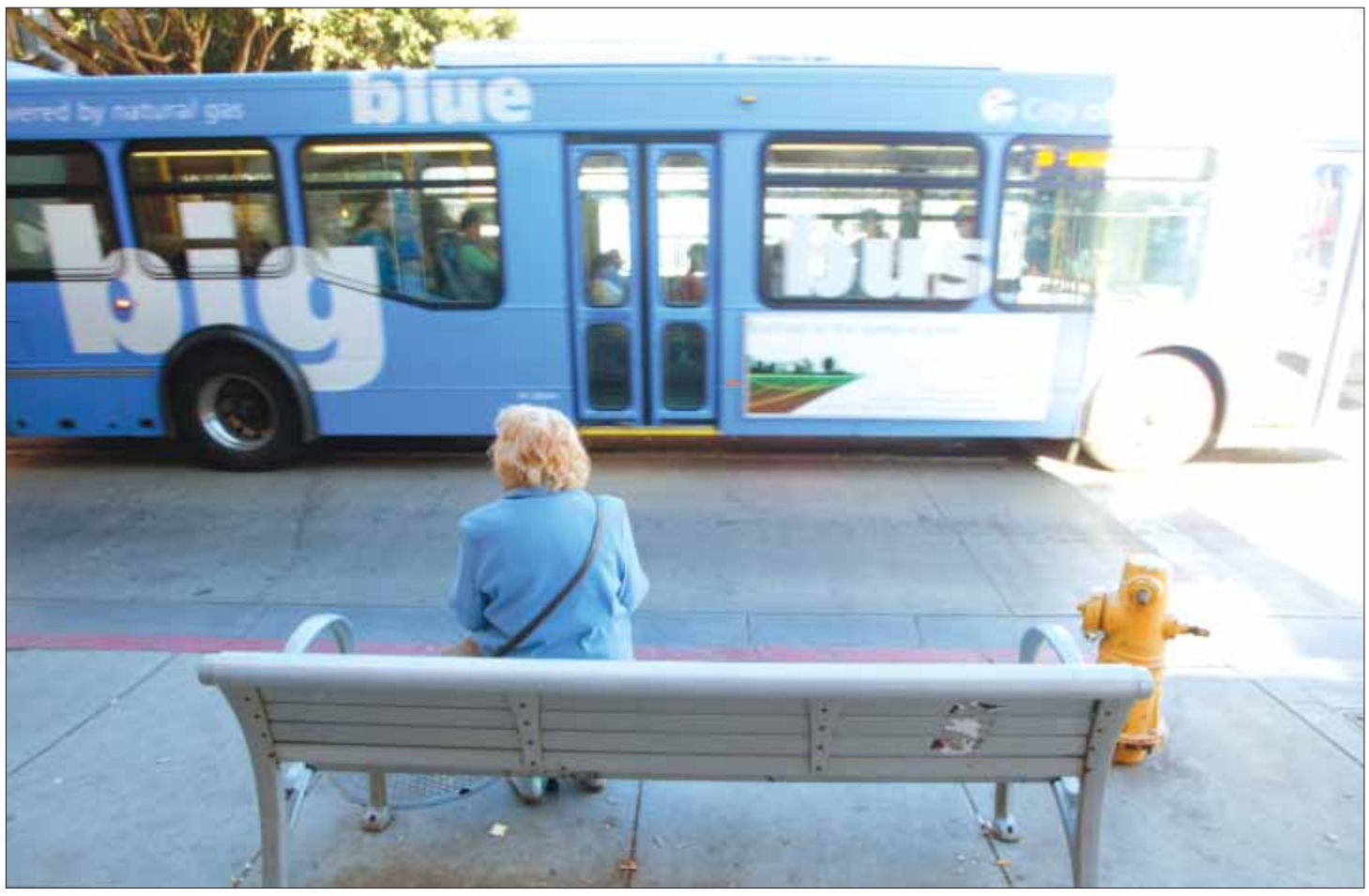
Volume 7 Issue 78

Santa Monica Daily Press

NOT FUN AND GAMES
SEE PAGE 7

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE TAKING CALLS ISSUE



Byron Kennerly *news@smdp.com*

MAKING CHANGES: **A woman waits for a Big Blue Bus at the intersection of Fourth Street and Broadway. BBB officials were forced to make cuts to some routes because of the budget crisis in Sacramento. Some of the most popular lines will get additional buses during rush hour.**

Budget woes force BBB to make cuts

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

CITYWIDE Looking to be more reliable during rush hour traffic and cut costs because of the budget fiasco in Sacramento, public transportation officials are adjusting their bus schedules, with changes to go into effect Feb. 15.

The City Council last week approved the changes that will add some additional buses to the most crowded lines while eliminating or reducing rides on those routes that are the least utilized.

Big Blue Bus officials estimate the changes, part of a shake-up that occurs three times a year, will result in a reduction of 4,299 service hours for the year with a savings of $430,000, money that will help offset increases in fuel prices and a significant dip in state funding for transit. It is estimated that BBB will lose

SEE **BBB** PAGE 8

Initiative campaigns cost big bucks to fund

BY STEVE LAWRENCE
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO The rest of California's economy was slumping, but the state remained a treasure-trove last fall for campaign consultants and others who make money off political races.

Led by the heated fight over gay marriage, campaigns spent $227.2 million to pass or defeat 11 propositions on California's November ballot, according to post-election contribution reports that had to be filed with the secretary of state's office by midnight Tuesday.

That's short of the record but still repre-

SEE **FUNDING** PAGE 9

SMMUSD prepares to weather hard times

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SM LIBRARY The good news is Santa Monica and Malibu students continue to excel in the classroom, posting high marks on state tests and winning national academic awards.

But the bad news is the school district that boasts these achievements is expected to take a significant hit from the state economic crisis, hurting its ability to continue providing the current level of services to students.

Among the praises and academic accolades of student success stories during the State of Our Schools presentation on Monday was a somber reminder that the district's finances are expected to take a turn for the worse in the coming months as officials anticipate cuts from Sacramento.

State of Our Schools, which was sponsored by the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, Community for Excellent Public Schools and the Santa Monica-Malibu Council of PTAs, was a kick-off to Public Schools Week when all campuses will be opened to the community. Held at the Santa Monica Public Library, the event featured presentations by Dr. Stephen Carroll, a RAND expert on the economy, Interim Superintendent Tim Cuneo, and a panel featuring Santa Monica High School students, teachers and counselors.

The Samohi gospel choir started the evening with a performance.

The district could face as much as $12 million in cuts over the next 18 months, which could result in larger class sizes. While revenues from local parcel tax measures fund approximately 23 percent of the district's budget, much of the remaining revenues come from state and federal sources.

SEE **DISTRICT** PAGE 10



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Kiwanis Club weekly meeting

Santa Monica YMCA
1332 6th St., 12 p.m. — 1:30 p.m.
Join the Santa Monica Kiwanis Club for its weekly luncheon with guest speakers. Call (310) 613-1249 for more information.

Walk the labyrinth

First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica
1008 11th St., 1 p.m. — 2 p.m.
Come to the Simkins Hall at First United Methodist Church in Santa Monica to walk the labyrinth, an ancient form of meditation where one follows an inlaid path in quiet contemplation. Call (310) 393-8258 or e-mail Mary Garbesi at mary.garbesi@santamonicaumc.org for more information.

Thursday, Feb. 5, 2009

Robbie Kaye photo exhibit

Bergamot Station
2525 Michigan Ave. Call for times
A retrospective of vintage and antique dolls, mannequins, ceramics, glass and other materials will be the centerpiece of this new exhibit. Robbie Kaye is a native of New York and has focused her recent work on Santa Monica's seaside vistas, buildings and fauna. For more information, call (310) 828-4001.

What's new this week?

Fairview Branch Library
2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. — 2:30 p.m.
Join us for a free-wheeling review and discussion of the week's key news stories at home and abroad. Subjects cover politics, the economy, society and culture. Discussion moderator, Jack Nordhaus, is a former college history professor. Call (310) 450-0443 for more information.

Laugh it up

Shakti's Elements
717 Broadway, 11 a.m. — 12 p.m.
Certified laughter yoga leader Kim Selbert guides an all-ages group through a body-mind exercise routine appropriate for all fitness levels. For more information, call (310) 849-4642 or contact Selbert via e-mail at kimselbert@mac.com.

Preschool story time

Montana Ave. Branch Library
1704 Montana Ave., 11:15 a.m. — 11:45 a.m.
The Montana Avenue Branch Library presents stories for children ages three through five.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.

State school system faces 'precarious' times ahead

BY JULIET WILLIAMS
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO Warning that its public schools are in a "precarious" state, California's top education official on Tuesday called for more money even as lawmakers were considering billions of dollars in cuts to help address the state's massive budget deficit.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell said California's system of funding education, in which money is directed at dozens of specialized programs enshrined over decades, isn't working.

"The state of public education in California is precarious," he said during his annual state of education address. "Beyond the immediate crisis, and even more alarming to me, is the long-term future of our common education system."

California spends about $48 billion a year on K-12 education, almost half its general fund, but its students fare poorly when compared to their peers in other states on standardized tests.

The state's schools also have a persistent gap in achievement rates: white, Asian and wealthier students far outperform students who are black, Hispanic and poor.

O'Connell said without more money, California will ensure a two-tiered education system for its students.

"Families who struggle financially will be left with a substandard system, one that cannot possibly prepare their children to be able to compete in a changing global economy," he said.

His comments came as Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders are struggling with a budget deficit estimated at $42 billion through June 2010. Whatever compromise they reach is sure to include billions of dollars in cuts to public schools.

Education interest groups are at odds over what programs should be given a lower priority.

Schwarzenegger, a Republican, has proposed giving school districts more spending flexibility that would allow them to spend the money where local officials decide it is most needed.



Melody Hanatani *melodyh@smdp.com*

TURNING SUNSHINE INTO POWER: **Jayshawn English (right) and Jason Drury, rep with California Solar Electric, install panels at the Venice Community Housing Corp. roof on Rose Avenue Tuesday. English is thinking of a career in green construction, hoping to own a company.**

Green movement gets younger

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

VENICE It was just a few years ago that Jayshawn English was running into trouble with the law, placed on probation after he was convicted of being an accessory to burglary.

Today the 21-year-old from West Los Angeles is thinking of a career in green construction, hoping to one day own a wind turbine business to power communities.

He's among a group of at-risk young adults who are participating in an offshoot of a local program that provides secondary education and job training, helping them develop the skills and experiences needed to launch a career.

The new program, which is part of the YouthBuild initiative with the Venice Community Housing Corp., focuses on job training in the growing green sector, educating the participants, many of whom are high-school dropouts, on the background of the sustainability movement and offering hands-on experience with solar panel construction. The construction training portion of the program will wrap up this week.

"We're excited about the opportunity to not just develop a career path, but to have the flexibility to look at the market and create a career path that others might be interested in," Steve Clare, the executive director of VCHC, said.

Funded by a $170,000 grant from the S. Mark Taper Foundation, the program was created in partnership with Earthplay Learning Adventures, Environmental Solar Design, GrowinGreen Energy, and California Solar Electric, which is a preferred provider for the Solar Santa Monica initiative in which City Hall encourages the installation of solar panels.

The program began with a course where the youths learned about green initiatives. They also received a lesson on the basics of solar panels and how the systems operate.

Students who were interested in the latter phase of the program, which includes the solar panel installation training on the VCHC roof, were required to submit a resume before going through a formal interview with a representative from California Solar Electric.

The experience that the students gained through a program can take them beyond a career in construction, Shawn Jacobson, a solar energy consultant and education coordinator with California Solar Electric, said.

SEE **SOLAR** PAGE 10

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Think again, Arnold

Editor:

As a Santa Monica resident and longtime patient advocate, I ask and urge Gov. Schwarzenegger to oppose proposed budget cuts in mental health services and proposed redirection and redistribution of Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act) funds.

In 2004, Californians voted to reverse severe underfunding of the California public mental health system by supporting and enacting Proposition 63.

Proposition 63 has expanded community care keeping people out of costly hospitals, homeless shelters and criminal justice institutions.

By redirecting and redistributing MHSA funds, the budget proposal by the governor risks turning Los Angeles County residents in need away from community services and placing them back in costly institution settings or out on the street. This is not leadership. This is a step backward and is not in the best interest of our state and its people. His plan to eliminate critical provisions of Proposition 63 could lock California permanently into the inadequate financing of mental health which existed prior to MHSA passage.

The budget proposal by the governor would eliminate the local mental health department's ability to render services other than crisis services. The annual cost of incarceration is about $50,000 per person while the cost of community treatment in an outpatient setting averages $16,000 per person.

The proposed budget action by the governor eliminates MHSA funding for prevention and early intervention. These mental health services are particularly important for families given our economic instability and high unemployment. Families under stress have increased mental health incidents of crisis and adults higher suicide rates.

I ask and urge the governor to respect the intent of Proposition 63 and the people of California and reconsider proposed budget cuts in mental health services and Proposition 63.

Robert Donin
Santa Monica

Advocating for more bike lanes

Editor:

Sadly, Mr. Bauer, the dream of the city built for cars has long turned into a nightmare. Where have you been in the last 20 years? Open the door of your vehicle (carefully, there may be a cyclist passing) and look around. Cars and roads built for trips most of which can be cycled with pleasure, health benefit and climate bonus – if only the bike lanes would be on the ground. Do you really want more of the dead city built for cars?

You write with the anger of those who know that the cause is lost. Street beautification is out – non-motorized circulation is in! Are the experts from the emergency services, who know nothing about urban planning, to be entrusted with street planning in Santa Monica?

I spoke at the meeting, and I will gladly show you my Santa Monica resident parking permit. And then I will invite you to a short demonstration of the pleasure of cycling, and I can even teach you how to do it safely, and together we begin the liberating process of life outside the car. The time has come to look beyond the bonnet, Mr. Bauer.

Dr. Michael Cahn
Santa Monica

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Going Postal

Steve "the Mailman" Breen — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Making a home for the recently homeless

A 2006 SURVEY BY THE NATIONAL Coalition for the Homeless listed the "20 meanest cities" vis-a-vis the plight of the homeless, I was amused to learn that three staunchly liberal California cities made the list. Über-liberal San Francisco, stewarded by Democrat stalwart Nancy Pelosi, pegged the 11th spot. Los Angeles made 18th. The jolly roger gut-buster for me, however, was that piously progressive PETA/Pilates/Prius beneficent Santa Monica tagged into the top 10 of Meanest Municipalities in the U.S. at number nine!

In urban-chic lexicon, "Who da thunk it?"

But don't be discouraged folks by your lofty and oftentimes rhetorical circular logic that doesn't always square with your closeted oafishness towards less fortunate individuals, as a hopey-changey light-worker intervention is just an alien-belligerent channeled experience away. In the words of the president's chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, "You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. It's an opportunity!"

Recently, the president signed the executive order to close Gitmo by 2010 but without a clear resolve of where to relocate those poor, abused terrorists currently squatting in air-conditioned comfort in sunny Cuba. Terrorists have now become the "New Homeless."

Nancy Pelosi nixed a suggested refurbishment of Alcatraz in order to relocate them to her district. You'd figure that the Bush-bashing residents of the Bay Area would make the terrorists feel like home, but then this would impede Mme. Pelosi's national stature as a well-heeled homeless hater. After all, image over substance supplants everything in the current milieu of liberal fascism.

This missed opportunity, however, shouldn't be ignored by Santa Monica. In the trash heap of history, Santa Monica was once known in the 1980s and '90s as "the city of the homeless" and what a truly successful experiment in social engineering has there ever been, wouldn't you agree? Since many of these homeless terrorists allegedly can't go back to their host countries for fear of reprisals or better paying jobs blowing up our embassy in Yemen, Santa Monica needs to step up and represent in this "new era of responsibility."

So I consulted a local anti-terror expert for a solution.

My co-worker and anti-terror expert Harout Kaladian works in the cubicle next to mine at the Post Office here in Santa Monica. He and his family had to hastily exit Lebanon as refugees in 1980 in the middle of the Lebanon Civil War on the heels of the explosive excesses of Islamic jihadis. I consider him more of an expert on terror and human rights than any poodle-brained Amnesty International street walker shilling for sympathy outside of the local Peete's Coffee. Together, however, Harout and I have come up with a solution. We call it the "Gitmo to SaMo Relocation Initiative."

The first step is to change the mall construction of Santa Monica Place to an all-green LEEDS compliant penal structure called the "Santa Monica Islamic Life Exchange" facility or S.M.I.L.E. Instead of a Neiman-Marcus/Nordstroms shopping hell, it will be a work-release compound featuring loud speakers calling the Muslim faithful to prayer five times a day and valet car-bomb parking. New issues of the Quran to the "New Homeless" will also be accompanied by autographed copies of "Dreams of My Father," "The Audacity of Hope" and a new secure-comm Blackberry just like President Obama's.

THE JOLLY ROGER GUT-BUSTER FOR ME, HOWEVER, WAS THAT PIOUSLY PROGRESSIVE PETA/PILATES/PRIUS BENEFICENT SANTA MONICA TAGGED INTO THE TOP 10 OF MEANEST MUNICIPALITIES IN THE U.S. AT NUMBER NINE!

Other facets that Harout and I discussed was our proprietary C.E.L.L. program or "Cultural Exchange and Live-in Lottery." All residential addresses that supported the 2008 Democratic ticket will be placed in a lottery pool.

Once a month, 248 addresses would be pulled and if you are the lucky winner you would host in your home for that month a "Gitmo guest" of your choice. Just think, 9/11 architect Khalid Sheikh Mohammed doing lap swims in the pool and smoking cigars with the habitués at the Shores. Maybe he could call the rest of his family to fly in for a short visit.

Isn't this truly a humane "opportunity" for a cultural "meeting without pre-conditions?"

Or since Caribbean island living for terrorists is deemed so untenable according to the faux-Americans of the ACLU and their Gollums, there is an option, however, that an island on American soil is currently available in Adak, Alaska located at the end of the Aleutian Island chain. We wouldn't even need to put up fence as the polar bears would solve any possible jailbreak. Or the terrorists could just go moose hunting with Gov. Sarah Palin although I've heard that she takes hunting tips from Dick Cheney and has had driving lessons from Ted Kennedy.

Just think of the opportunity!

STEVE BREEN has some great Arabic language CDs he's willing to loan and is still the "best looking mailman at the U.S. Post Office" He can be reached at dulcamarax@yahoo.com

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Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Sports make monkeys out of us all

THE HIGHEST-RATED SUPER BOWL EVER was last year's game between the New England Patriots and the New York Giants in Phoenix. The Pats were attempting to become the first-ever 19-0 champions of pro football and almost 100 million people tuned it to watch, most hoping they would lose. I, a life-long Pats fan, was in the employ of a former NFL player at the time and spent most of that Super Bowl week with him in Arizona. By the time I drove us back to Santa Monica the next day, I truly understood what Dickens meant when he wrote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

I was allowed behind the closed doors of the NFL and looking back, I wish it had never happened because I'll never see pro football the same way again. The fact that these men are held in such high esteem that people will not only spend ridiculous amounts of money to watch them play, but will also pay through the nose just to be around them says that our societal priorities are so far out of whack that we've barely evolved beyond primates. And it's long past the time when we should re-examine a culture that celebrates grown men who play children's games for a living and ignores the obscenity of the financial scale of the enterprise.

Like a lot of kids, I grew up playing sports. But unlike a lot of kids with my demographic profile (poor, black, and raised in the inner-city), I never focused on sports as some kind of "way out." Maybe it was the fact that I went to school in a small Boston suburb where good grades, not good 40-yard dash times, were seen as the key to getting into college. Weston, Mass. produced more than its fair share of great athletes, but sports were more about teaching important life lessons to young people about teamwork, preparation, doing your best, sportsmanship, and handling disappointment than anything else.

That's what sports should be about, but that's a far cry from what we see every year on Super Bowl Sunday. The week of parties leading up to game day, the hours and hours of pre-game blather, the musical performances, military fly-overs, ceremonial coin tosses, halftime shows, and endless post-game analysis all turn 60 minutes of athletic competition into a colossal waste of time and, in this economy, an unconscionable waste of money.

A big part of the problem is how we, as humans, are wired. In a study conducted at Duke University, a group of rhesus macaques were trained to regard squirts of cherry juice as currency — or "monkey money." It turns out that they would voluntarily accept smaller amounts of juice (spend monkey money) if they could look at pictures of the dominant males, even less juice (spend more monkey money) if they could look at female genitalia, and would have to be given more juice than usual (be paid monkey money) to look at pictures of subordinate males. To me, this study helps explain why we spend $20 billion per year on porn and how the NFL has become an $8 billion per year industry. And it makes me wonder if or when we, as a society, are ever going to evolve?

Because there is something as immoral about professional sports-entertainment as a multi-billion dollar industry as there was about the Romans feeding Christians to the lions in their coliseum. Just look at the story of former Houston Oilers running back Earl Campbell. After four years of playing for a scholarship at the University of Texas, he played eight professional seasons in the NFL. Now, at the age of 53, the Hall of Famer and Heisman trophy winner has severe arthritis in both knees, suffers from chronic back pain, and can barely move around on his own. My former employer, 20 years Campbell's junior, now suffers physical problems of his own. At a recent worker's compensation hearing to determine if the four teams he played for should continue to provide his medical care, Campbell was asked humiliating questions like, "do you dance?" and "do you drink alcohol?" and "are there stairs in your house?" Essentially, the best lawyers money could buy tried to attribute his ailments to something he did off-the-field and not the 10 years he spent crashing into large men at top speed in an NFL uniform. That's just wrong.

To me, the solution is simple: nationalize our professional sports leagues. When the principal product is a television broadcast utilizing public airwaves, and that broadcast would be impossible without tens of thousands of people buying tickets to see hundreds and hundreds of athletes perform "for the love of the game," there is no good reason why the benefit should enrich only a few dozen super-wealthy families and mega-corporations. It works in Green Bay where the Packers are a "community project, intended to promote community welfare" for "exclusively charitable" purposes, and it can work everywhere a NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL team plays. If only we, as a society, would start thinking like rational human beings and stop acting like monkeys.

KENNY MACK is a multi-platform content provider living in Santa Monica who is shopping his book, "Word In Edgewise: The Collected Opinions of America's Smartest Columnist" to forward-thinking publishers. He can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com

The Q Line

More control?

The City Council recently released over $800,000 to the school district that it was withholding due to problems with special education. As part of the discussion, some called for the council to wield more control over the district.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Should the council have more control over the school district as part of the joint-use agreement, which is currently being renegotiated?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. Please limit responses to a minute or less.




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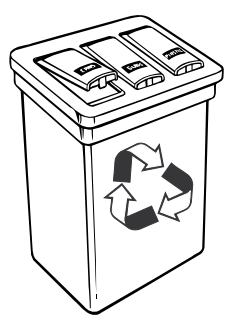


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ECONOMY

U.S. auto sales at 26-year low

BY KIMBERLY S. JOHNSON AND TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writers

DETROIT Consumers frightened by the prospect of losing their jobs stayed away from auto showrooms again in January and sent U.S. car and truck sales falling 37 percent, a familiar refrain for the struggling industry but an unwelcome start to a critical year for U.S. carmakers.

Devastated by an economy in which few people have the spare cash to buy a car or can obtain the financing to do it, Chrysler's domestic sales for January were less than half what they were a year earlier.

Sales fell 49 percent at General Motors and 40 percent at Ford. Toyota and Nissan's sales each fell at least 30 percent.

"How many ways can you say disaster?" asked Aaron Bragman, an auto industry analyst with the consulting firm IHS Global Insight in Troy, Mich. "That's across the board. It's not unique to one company."

With January's drop, the industry's sales have declined for 15 straight months when compared with the same month in the previous year. There hasn't been a year-over-year increase since October 2007, when light vehicle sales rose a paltry 1 percent, according to Autodata Corp. and Ward's AutoInfoBank.

The industry's sales of 656,976 vehicles, compared with just over a million in January 2008, translates to a seasonally adjusted annual sales rate of 9.57 million, according to Autodata. That's the worst performance since June 1982, when the nation was mired in a recession.

Huge declines in low-profit fleet sales to rental car companies made January an exceptionally bad month, even though automakers said they were encouraged that retail sales appeared to be stabilizing after four straight months with an industrywide sales plunge of at least 30 percent.

"If you're starting from an extremely low point, pretty much anywhere you go is up," said Bragman, whose company has predicted annual sales for this year of 10.3 million, down from last year's 13.2 million and 16.1 million in 2007.

But executives anticipated a treacherous beginning of 2009 before the market improves.

George Pipas, Ford Motor Co.'s top sales analyst, wasn't sure whether 15 months of industrywide sales declines is a record, but if it is, it won't last long.

"I can tell you that it's only going to last for one month," Pipas said, predicting year-over-year declines until perhaps later in the year. Then, he said, with only a small increase, sales should surpass the dismal levels seen at the end of 2008.

U.S. automakers will need sales to improve if they want their turnaround plans to be successful. After receiving $13.4 billion in federal loans to stay afloat, General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC have said they are basing their plans on industrywide sales this year of 10.5 million and 11.1 million vehicles, respectively.

But few people were expecting the automakers to start 2009 at such a pace. January is typically a slow sales month, and the market isn't likely to improve until the second half of 2009 as economic stimulus efforts take effect and access to credit improves.

The hefty incentives automakers have rolled out have done little to boost sales. Chrysler has been offering employee pricing, zero-percent financing and up to $6,000 in rebates on its vehicles, and GM said it will launch another zero-percent financing with the help of the $5 billion in federal aid its financing arm, GMAC, received late last year.

The biggest dent last month was in fleet sales — big volume sales to rental car companies and municipalities — which fell sharply in January as production slowed or was shut down at many U.S. auto plants for most of the month.

GM said its fleet sales fell 80 percent to just over 13,000 vehicles in January, marking their lowest sales level since 1975.

"The overall fleet business, rental car companies are holding their inventory, probably double to triple what they were a couple years ago in terms of their turn rates," said Mark LaNeve, GM's North America vice president of sales, services and marketing. "There is a definite lack of demand."

Chrysler said its January fleet sales fell 81 percent from year-ago levels. Ford said fleet sales fell 65 percent, but the decline in the automaker's retail sales had stabilized.

"What we're looking for is stabilization. You have to stop falling before you can start rising," said Emily Kolinski Morris, Ford's top economist.

Chrysler attributed part of its 66 percent drop in car sales and 49 percent decline in truck sales to a shortage of affordable credit for its customers, noting that the $1.5 billion federal loan for its financing arm wasn't received until the second half of the month.

One of the few large automakers to post a sales increase was South Korea's Hyundai Motor Co., which posted a 14 percent gain. Hyundai credited its offer that covers a new vehicle's depreciation for customers who want to return a car because they lost their job.

"This program gets to the root cause of today's economic concerns — fear of job loss," Hyundai regional general manager Peter DiPersia said in a statement.

Subaru posted an 8 percent sales increase from a year earlier, its second-straight month of sales gains.

Toyota Motor Corp.'s sales dived 32 percent for the month, as sales of its Prius hybrid slid 29 percent. Nissan Motor Co.'s sales dropped 30 percent.

Honda Motor Co.'s sales fell 28 percent, but the Japanese automaker saw a 6 percent increase in sales of its Fit subcompact, and sales of the updated Acura TSX sports sedan rose 16 percent.

Ford shares rose 8 cents, or 4.3 percent, to $1.96 Tuesday, while GM shares fell 4 cents to $2.85. Toyota's U.S. shares rose $1.71, or 2.7 percent, to $65.59, and Honda's shares climbed 69 cents, or 3 percent, to $23.41.

The Associated Press reports unadjusted auto sales figures, calculating the percentage change in the total number of vehicles sold in one month compared with the same month a year earlier. Some automakers report percentages adjusted for sales days. There were 26 sales days last month, one more than in January 2008.



Real Estate 101

Mike Heayn

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Security deposits a must

THE OTHER DAY, MY FRIEND CALLED AND asked if I had a blank copy of an apartment lease. He had a new roommate moving in and wanted to protect himself from liability. We got into a conversation and he said the main reason for the lease was so that his security deposit would be protected should his new roommate accidentally or intentionally damage the apartment. My friend had contacted the property owner and they were fine with him switching roommates, but said he was on the line should anything get damaged. The purpose of a security deposit is to allow an owner to have some recourse against a tenant should the tenant cause damage to an apartment unit.

A security deposit is an amount of money that is placed up against a unit. Just as a bank will use a property as collateral against a loan, a property owner will use a deposit as security against a rental unit. Cities in L.A. County have limits on the amount of monies that can be collected from a tenant for an apartment security deposit. In most cities, the maximum allowable security deposit for a one-year apartment rental is two-months rent. A security deposit can be a large amount of money for many renters.

For example, if a two bedroom, two bathroom apartment rented for $2,200/month and the owner required two-months rent as a deposit, that would translate into $4,400, plus whatever the prorated rent for the month was at the time of move-in. Even split with a roommate, that amount of money is no small amount for many renters

Renting to someone you do not know is a tricky situation. Real estate investors and property owners must rent to tenants so their properties generate revenue. Even ancillary income, such as laundry income, comes from tenants. In a rental property, cash flow is derived from the gross income — paid by tenants — minus expenses and debt service. Most investors do not have enough friends to fill their properties. And I know several owners who would not rent to their friends for fear of jeopardizing a friendship should the rental arrangement go south.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of hearing multiple horror stories from owners who had at least one bad tenant destroy a unit. One such story involves a bitter tenant who lost her job and was unable to make the next month's rent. Instead of leaving the apartment, she decided to stay and be evicted. She left the water running in her unit 24 hours a day. Since the owner paid for the water, his bill went up substantially, but that was not the worst of it.

While going through the eviction process, the tenant had her friends remove all the plaster from the inside of the unit, including the ceiling. She also damaged the refrigerator, stove and removed all the cabinet doors in the kitchen with a hammer. To finish the job she broke both bathroom sinks and removed all the hardware from the interior doors out of spite.

Of course, this is an extreme case, but even after the owner took her to court and won, she was unable to pay him anything since she was still unemployed. The owner was stuck having to pay over $15,000 to renovate the unit.

The owner had collected two months rent from the tenant, but that did not begin to cover the damages the tenant caused. This example of the nightmare tenant illustrates why apartment owners are cautious about whom they allow into their properties and why they collect a security deposit. In the end, even with a security deposit, an owner can lose more money than the tenants puts up.

After talking with my friend and telling him why security deposits were collected, he decided that his new roommate and him would sign a new lease with the apartment owner so he was not the sole person on the hook for damages to the unit. No one likes putting up a security deposit, but it is easy to forget why they are requested. At the end of the day, a tenant can cause far more damage to a unit than they can put up as a security against an apartment.

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GAMING

Electronic Arts hurt by weak holiday sales

BY BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK Hurt by weak holiday sales, video game publisher Electronic Arts Inc. posted a wider net loss for its fiscal third quarter and fell short of analysts' expectations Tuesday.

But the economic turmoil was not the main culprit. Chief Executive John Riccitiello said a "a significant portion" of the quarter's shortfall, as well as the company's sharply reduced outlook for the rest of the year, has to do with EA's own performance.

"Clear and simple, our titles did not perform to our expectations," Riccitiello told analysts during a conference call. EA had warned in December its holiday sales were softer than expected, even though the overall industry had a strong season.

For the three months that ended Dec. 31, the publisher of games like "Rock Band" and "Madden NFL" lost $641 million, or $2 per share. In the same period a year earlier, it lost $33 million, or 10 cents per share.

Excluding charges, EA said it would have earned 56 cents per share, but that was less than the 88 cents per share expected by analysts polled by Thomson Reuters.

Revenue jumped 10 percent to $1.65 billion. The company also booked $88 million of revenue related to digital content and online-enabled games. Counting the deferred revenue, the sales total was $1.74 billion, below analysts' expectations of $1.9 billion.

Still, EA's shares, which closed up more than 4 percent in Tuesday's trading, jumped nearly 5 percent in the after-hours session in what may have been investors' growing confidence that the company's cost-cutting measures are going in the right direction.

Wedbush Morgan analyst Michael Pachter said he was "really impressed" that EA took responsibility for the weak results, and called the cost-cutting measures "realistic." EA is in the process of laying off 1,100 employees and closing 12 facilities.

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Changes add more buses to crowded routes

FROM BBB PAGE 1

as much as $3.5 million in state funding, and it could get worse if plans to take more transit funds are approved by Gov. Schwarzenegger to close the budget gap.

"This is the first time in a longtime where we've had to make significant cuts," said Dan Dawson, customer relations manager for BBB. "We don't want to cut [service], but we're forced to make hard choices. … When we look at things and say we have to make cuts, we have to try and use a scalpel rather than a giant knife."

Lines that will be affected are 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and the Sunset and Tide rides as well as Rapid 3 and 7. Only those lines and rides that carried very few passengers were trimmed or eliminated, Dawson said, with resources shifted to the most popular routes to help alleviate overcrowding.

BBB constantly monitors ridership to see if travel patterns shift. Lines that carry at least 60 passengers for at least two miles are identified as needing more resources to meet demand and ensure a level of comfort for riders. When fewer than 20 passengers are being carried per service hour, guidelines suggest the line be trimmed. Services that carry 15 or fewer passengers require significant reconfiguration or elimination, according to BBB staff.

Here are some of the changes:

• Line 1— Connecting Main Street and UCLA via Santa Monica Boulevard, drivers have a hard time with this line because of increased traffic congestion and overcrowding. Some buses are running late. To help, BBB officials are adding one bus and one driver every afternoon to restore the regular 10-minute frequency between buses on weekdays, 15-minute frequency on Saturday and 20-minute frequency on Sundays, adding 3,798 annual service hours. The trade-off is that during midday, weekday service frequency would decrease by a minute, from 10 to every 11 minutes.

• Line 3 and Rapid 3 — These lines, which travel along Lincoln Boulevard to LAX, experience some of the greatest overcrowding in the BBB system, with as many as 38 riders having to stand during some trips. One Line 3, which hits UCLA, Montana Avenue and the Green Line, one trip would be extended on weekdays in the evening peak period from the Green Line Station to Montana, increasing annual service hours by 150. One Rapid 3, one southbound trip at 1:35 p.m. and one northbound trip at 2:30 p.m. would be added to reduce the mid-day service gap, adding 508 additional service hours.

• Line 4 — Operating on San Vicente and Sawtelle boulevards, transporting passengers from Westwood to Main Street, Line 4 is the least productive line on weekends in the entire BBB system with only 17 per hour on Saturdays and 13 passengers per hour on Sundays. On Line 4, weekend service will operate hourly rather than every 30-35 minutes. The last hour of service on all days is also poorly utilized with no passengers recorded on some trips. The last trip every day will now end at 8 p.m. The net change will be an annual decrease of 3,379 service hours.

• Line 5 — BBB is eliminating the last eastbound and westbound trips in the evening on both weekdays and weekends due to ridership fewer than 10 passengers per hour. One bus will be added in the afternoon to allow for slower operating times due to traffic congestion. The result is a decrease of 147 service hours.

• Line 6 — Known as the SMC Commuter, Line 6 will be re-routed heading from Santa Monica toward Palms to avoid picking up passengers at 20th and Pearl streets after residents complained about students littering and making noise while waiting for the bus. The new route will pick up on Pico and buses will continue east to Bundy where they will turn right. It will require additional service hours because of traffic congestion on Pico.

• Rapid 7 — One trip will be added in the late morning when SMC is in session. The trip will be timed for a major class dismissal when over 60 passengers have been observed trying to board the bus.

• Line 9 — A trip to the Pacific Palisades may take a little longer in the evenings. With ridership low, one round trip will be eliminated every evening, resulting in hourly service after 7 p.m. daily.

• Line 10 — The Downtown Los Angeles Freeway Express will be trimmed on Sunday only, with the first morning trip to and from Union Station and one trip in the early evening to and from Union Station being eliminated. The morning trips that will be eliminated average seven passengers per hour while the evening trips average nine.

• Sunset Ride — This route connecting the Arboretum, Water Garden, Pico and Sunset Park neighborhoods and Airport Park with SMC campuses will operate at a 30-minute frequency after 4:03 p.m. because of low ridership at that time.

• Tide Ride — This line, which has the lowest productivity of all BBB lines on weekdays with only 12 passengers per hour, will be reconfigured to serve the new Annenberg Community Beach House when it opens this spring. It will operate on weekends only, all year long between 9:45 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. with later hours added for summer. BBB officials do not feel weekday service is warranted given the low number of anticipated visitors and the availability of parking nearby. It is estimated the two Mini Blue buses will operate on a 30-minute frequency.

Some in the business community, mostly hotels, have expressed concerns about the reconfiguration and how it will impact tourists, however, Dawson said BBB is offering special day passes to beachside hotels for their guests.

The good news, Dawson said, is the passage of Measure R, which raised the county sales tax by half of a cent to pay for transit. BBB expects to get as much as $3.5 million during the first year, helping offset the loss of state funding. That said, it all depends on consumer confidence. If people buy, that means more tax revenue.

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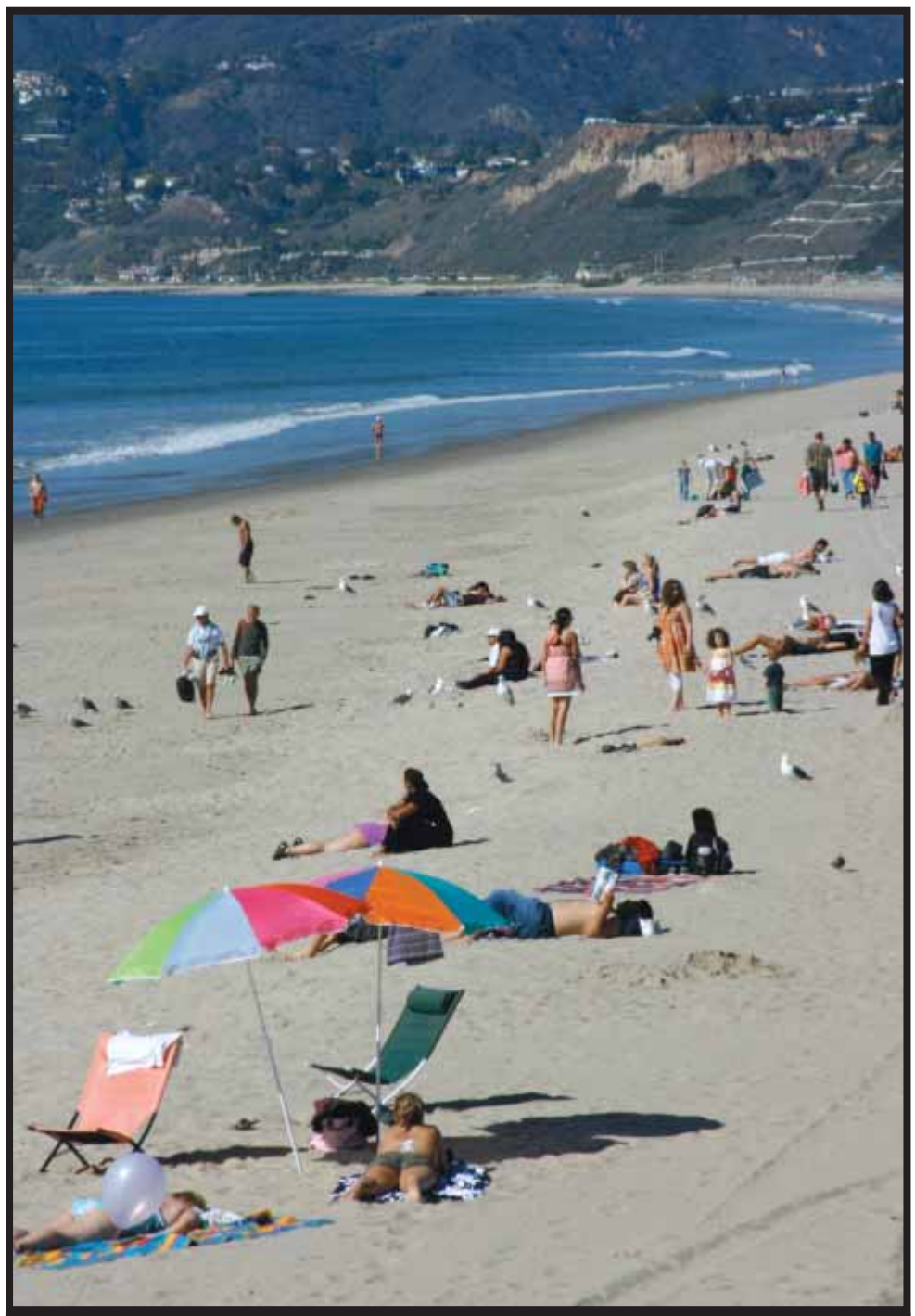

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LIFE IS A BEACH

Rachel Dardaashti *news@smdp.com*

Visitors take advantage of the unseasonably warm weather on Tuesday by taking a stroll along the beach or catching some rays. Temperatures were in the upper 70s, but get ready for a change. Forecasters say it'll cloud up today and rain is likely overnight.

Industry groups open up wallets

FROM **FUNDING** PAGE 1

sents a huge investment in television and radio advertisements and other campaign spending.

"That's a lot of money," said Robert Stern, president of the Center for Governmental Studies, a Los Angeles-based think tank that studies campaign finance issues.

The record for spending on ballot measures in one California election was set in 2006, when donors poured $333 million into campaigns for and against 13 propositions on the November ballot.

A 12th proposal on last November's ballot, which authorized the sale of $900 million in bonds to finance veterans' home loans, attracted little or no spending.

It was just the opposite in the campaign over Proposition 8, the gay marriage ban that passed with 52 percent of the vote. Supporters and opponents spent more than $83 million, making it the most expensive ballot measure on a social issue in the nation's history.

Kim Alexander, president of the California Voter Foundation, a nonprofit organization, said the fundraising for and against Proposition 8 was unlike anything she has seen in her 15 years tracking campaign spending.

"It was a truly nationwide, grassroots effort on both sides," she said.

The record for spending on a single California proposition also was set in 2006, when $154.3 million was spent in the fight over Proposition 87, which would have imposed a tax on oil production.

California ballot initiatives often generate huge amounts of spending because the effect — win or lose — can ripple across the nation.

"And industry groups that are affected by these measures know that the stakes are high, that if something pops out of the initiative process in California it's something that other states and the federal government will notice," Alexander said.

Industry groups weighed in heavily on two unsuccessful energy-related measures on last November's ballot, propositions 7 and 10.

Three utility companies, Edison International, PG&E Corp. and Sempra Energy, provided almost all of the $29.8 million spent to defeat Proposition 7, which would have required utilities to get at least half their electricity from renewable energy sources such as windmills and solar panels by 2025.

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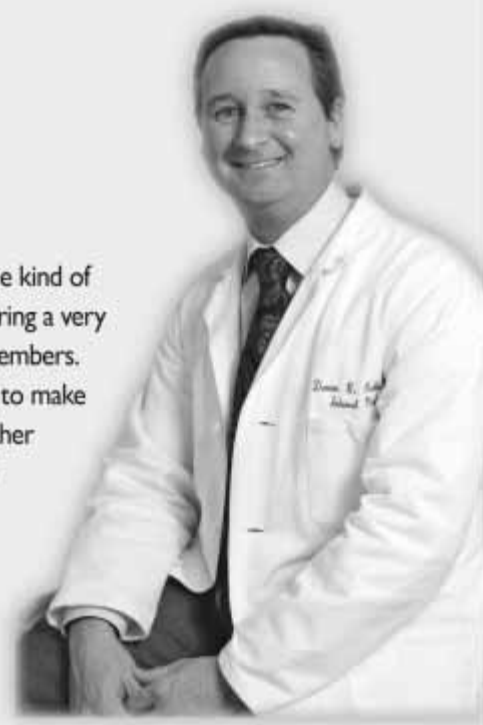
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District continues to enjoy academic achievement

FROM **DISTRICT** PAGE 1

"You can see how dependent (we are) when the state budget is floundering," Cuneo, who is expected to be appointed the permanent superintendent on Thursday, said.

The impact of the recession on students is also becoming apparent as the number of applications for the federal free and reduced lunch program increases. More students are visiting school nurses or social services to receive medical attention because their parents have lost their jobs, Cuneo said. There has also been an increase in the number of former private school students enrolling in the district.

While the district is expected to take a financial hit, the effect should be buffered by a rainy day fund for economic uncertainties, which is estimated to have roughly $6 million. The fund is part of a healthy $21 million reserve that the district has been building.

With an enrollment of 11,565 students, the district receives about $6,208 from the state and federal governments for each student, which is about $700 less than the national average. Another $2,412 per student comes in from local parcel tax revenues.

Despite the economic troubles that loom for the district, officials had much to celebrate — student achievement.

State test scores continue to rise for students, exceeding the California statewide average by more than 1,000 points. Students are also taking more challenging courses at the high schools where more than 1,177 have enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement course during their four-year career.

High school students are also taking courses at Santa Monica College to get a head start on their post-secondary education. Approximately 712 students enrolled in at least one course over the summer with about 85 percent of them receiving passing grades, most of which were As.

District officials acknowledge that more needs to be done to close the achievement gap.

"You have my commitment we will continue to target and work with students to make sure they move up and are as successful as the rest of our student body," Cuneo said.

EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNITY

The quality of public education could play heavily into property values.

Carroll, who analyzed various studies on education, spoke of how a solid school district can have a positive impact on the community, making it a more desirable place to live and therefore increasing the price to buy a home in the city.

One research suggested that a one percent increase in average math and reading scores could lead to a 0.5 to 1 percent jump in property values, he said.

"It isn't only people who have kids who are willing to pay more, but people who don't have kids are willing to pay more because high quality schools reflect higher quality communities," he said. "Everyone one of you who lives in a house in Santa Monica enjoy higher housing values because of the quality of the schools."

Education has also been connected to better health and lower disease rates. Those who went through a higher quality school are also less likely to engage in self-destructive activities such as drug and alcohol abuse.

Better education also leads to higher earning power and spending, which in turn boosts business property values, Carroll said.

LIFE AT SAMOHI

Vanessa Carvajal's first experience at Samohi was the same as many freshman when they begin high school.

"I just wanted to hide in the corner and read a book," Carvajal, now a senior, said.

She was among eight students and teachers who talked about their impressions of the high school, some speaking about how working with mentally and physically disadvantaged peers had changed their perspective on life, others crediting sports with improving their work ethic.

The students all praised Samohi's house system in which all pupils are assigned to one of six "houses" where they have a support system consisting of a principal and counselors.

"The house system gives you one-on-one connection with your counselor," said Jennifer Chyu.

The teachers spoke about the joy of working with their students.

Gilda de la Cruz teaches Latin American literature and is also the coordinator for the AVID — Advancement Via Individual Determination — program, preparing students, many of whom are minorities and come from lower-income families, for college. The AVID class of 2008 achieved a 100 percent acceptance rate to four-year universities.

"It's pretty inspiring for me," she said. "They have the ability and they can do better."

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Students to pursue green jobs

FROM **SOLAR** PAGE 3

"They can go as far as they want with this," he said, adding that the knowledge in sustainability is applicable to other jobs.

The curriculum also included the development of a business proposal dealing with green issues, according to Selim Sandoval, the CEO of GrowinGreen Energy.

English, who never gave much thought to the topic of sustainability before the program, hopes to make his business proposal — which involves replacing structurally deficient palm trees with wind turbines — a reality.

"This looks like something I could build a career out of," English said.

It's a sentiment shared by his peers in the program, including Jorge Mendez, a 17-year-old West Los Angeles resident who has been with Venice Community Housing Corp. since 2007.

"It's something new and something I would like to keep doing," Mendez said.

melodyh@smdp.com



City of Santa Monica

COMMUNITY MEETING

EXPOSITION LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

WHAT: Informational Meeting on EXPO in Santa Monica

WHEN: Tuesday, February 17, 2009, 7PM-9PM

WHERE: Civic Auditorium, East Wing, 1885 Main St.

You are invited to learn more about the Exposition Light Rail Project coming to Santa Monica. The light rail line will increase mobility in our community, and support the community's Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE). It is crucial that the light rail line serves Santa Monica in the best way possible. Attend the meeting to learn more about the details proposed by the Exposition Construction Authority (the EXPO Authority).

The City of Santa Monica Planning and Community Development Department is hosting this meeting to help residents and business community members understand this complex project, with a focus on segments in Santa Monica. Presentations will be given by City staff and the Authority's project director. We hope you will attend.



EXPO Phase II Alignment Alternatives

UPCOMING DATES

- FEBRUARY 10: Santa Monica City Council study session on the Exposition Light Rail Project.
- MARCH 3: Council recommendations to the Authority and Metro. You are invited to attend the City Council meetings to provide additional input to the Council.
- JANUARY 28–MARCH 13: Public Comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). After the public comment period, the Authority will select the preferred route. The Authority is accepting written comments and testimony at hearings on February 18, 23 and 24, 2009.

View the DEIR at
http://www.buildexpo.org/phase2_overview.php.

Big Blue Bus lines #1,2,3,5,7,9 & 10. Secured bike parking provided. Free auto parking at the Civic Center lot.

For questions or comments, please contact Kyle Ferstead at (310) 458-8341 or email at kyle.ferstead@smgov.net. No RSVP is required.



SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 57°

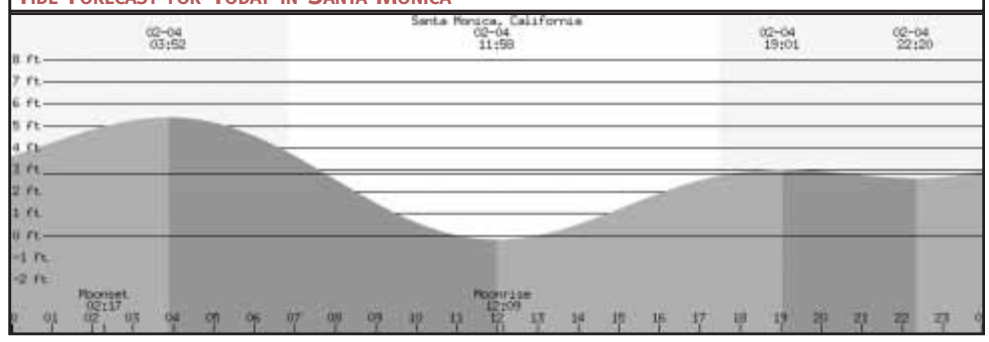
Swell Forecast (1-1 FT)

No NW is expected, but some light southern hemi should bring occasional knee to maybe waist high waves to south facing breaks.

Long Range Synopsis

Thursday the 5th we should see ground swell from the Kamchatka/Aleutian activity, coming in mostly from 290 degrees with 15-second periods.

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **January 27, 2009**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - www.healthebay.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 5
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 38 / 29
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 9 / 12

The Beach Report Card is made possible by simplehuman, The Goldhirsh Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, Ford

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Los Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Seguit Creek mouth	A+	A+
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	F
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Las Alisa creeks	A+	A+
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	B
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	F
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	A+
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A+
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	A+	A+
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A+
Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach	A+	A+
Pearce State Beach at creek mouth	A+	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Pearce Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	F	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A	A+
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily	F	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A+	A+
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	A+
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (paint zero)	A+	A+
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	D	B
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	A+
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	A	B
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	D	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	A+	F
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	A+

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain	F	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua)	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	D	A+
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	A+	D
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	D	F
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain	A	F
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms)	A+	A+
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A	F
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	A+
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	A+	F
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A+	A+
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	B
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St.	A+	A+
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower	B	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	D	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A+	A+
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty)	A+	B
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	A+
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	B

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
ns -- no sample taken

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay

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Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card® is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A–F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(323) 466-FILM

Call theater for information.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade
(310) 458-1506

Bride Wars (PG) 1hr 30min
2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45

Yes Man (PG-13) 1hr 44min
10:00

Milk (R) 2hrs 08min
1:10, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50

Inkheart (PG) 1hr 46min
2:30, 5:00, 7:30

Notorious (R)
1:20, 4:05, 6:50, 9:35

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG-13) 2hrs 48min
1:15, 4:45, 8:15

My Bloody Valentine 3D (R) 1hr 41min
1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:45

New in Town (PG) 1hr 36min
1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:30

The Uninvited (PG-13) 1hr 27min
2:10, 4:55, 7:30, 9:40

Defiance (R) 2hrs 17min
1:30, 4:35, 8:00

Frost/Nixon (R) 2hrs 02min
1:20, 4:10, 7:10, 9:55

Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (R) 1hr 32min
2:20, 5:05, 7:40, 10:00

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

Revolutionary Road (R) 1hr 59min
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50

Doubt (PG-13) 1hr 44min
1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:55

Slumdog Millionaire (R) 2hr 1min
1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00

The Wrestler (R) 1hr 45min
1:30, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) 1hr 27min
12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:30

Gran Torino (R)
1:20, 4:30, 7:40, 10:20

Taken (PG-13) 1hr 33min
12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

Valkyrie (PG-13) 2hrs
7:10, 10:10

Hotel for Dogs (PG) 1hr 40min
11:50am, 2:30, 5:00, 7:20, 10:00

Marley & Me (PG) 2hrs
1:30, 4:20

The Reader (R) 2hrs 02min
1:00, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50

For more information, e-mail news@smdp.com

Clear your desk, Capricorn

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ You are a spirit to deal with: With as much energy as you exude, others have to run to keep up with you. An Aries focused on his or her objectives is hard to stop. You demonstrate the power of will. Tonight: Visit with friends; catch up on news.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Knowing when too much is on your plate is smart. How you discharge an overwhelming load becomes a question of style. Some of you might take on your boss or the system. Are you sure this is the right way? Tonight: Get some extra rest.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Check out Aries and know that you have even more energy. Investigate potential connections. Differences can help evolve a tighter plan. Tonight: Choose what would make you smile.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★ Take time before launching into action. You might question which way to go. Follow your instincts, and you will be OK. A partner bucks your ideas. Use the criticism. The power of using different opinions comes out. Tonight: Decide on something reflective and quiet.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Keep your goals in your mind's eye, even though you certainly have distraction served up on a platter. You could be surprised by what goes down in the next few days. Listen to others. (Yes, it is possible they are withholding something!) Tonight: A great midweek break.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ Take a stand and be willing to back it up. Fiery interactions earmark your daily life. You could choose to allow a situation to become contentious. You will learn more and see a hole in a project. It never hurts to rethink a project before starting. Tonight: A must show.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ No one could ever say you are short on imagination, but especially right now. If you want to try a different approach or do something very differently, now is the time. Intellect merges well with fantasy, producing spectacular results. Tonight: Get into a game online or with someone in person.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ If you want to do something differently, by all means, do so. Sometimes you get caught in a particular situation and need help focusing on other matters. No wonder someone loses his or her temper out of the blue. Can you blame this person? Tonight: Someone is fussing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Others come to you with great ideas and new insight. Your perspective could change radically. Listen to advice that comes in out of left field. You might be surprised by another's anger or sarcasm. Tonight: Relax and then hang out.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Curb a tendency to risk and get a bit too wild. Listen to feedback from someone you care about. He or she could trigger some anger or hurt. Remember that everyone gets sore once in a while. Tonight: Clear your desk.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Answers are found left and right. Try to be more effective and direct in your dealings. Listen to someone close. Allow your imagination into the mix, and great ideas will knock on your door. Tonight: Fun and games.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ If you have better ideas, why not express them? Keeping some matters close to the chest doesn't help and surely isn't practical. Check out what's going on behind the scenes. Tonight: Order in.

Happy birthday

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

Expect the best this year, and you just might get it! You are lively, caring and animated. Others find you to be nearly an endless source of creativity. Funnel this strength into your work and home life rather than scatter it around. Imagine its power if it were directed. If you are single, your animal magnetism speaks. Others hear it and come toward you all year long. Pick and choose your companions with care. You could be meeting someone significant to your life's history. If you are attached, you discover the power of being a couple. Be especially considerate of your sweetie. GEMINI loves to flirt.

Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



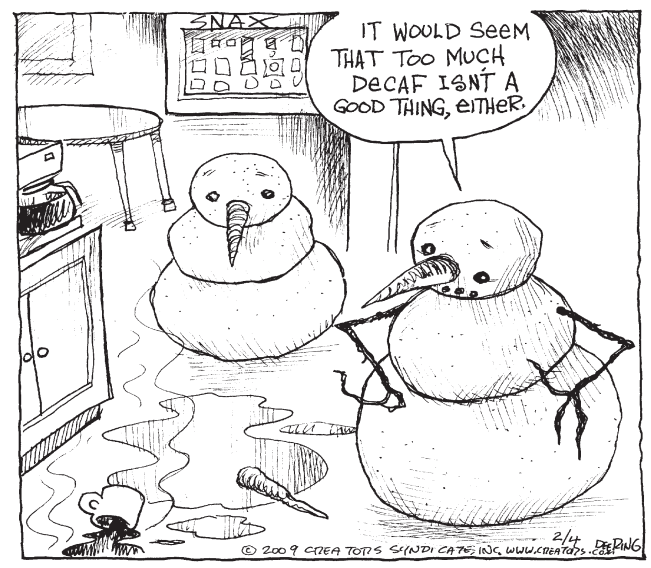
Garfield

By Jim Davis



Strange Brew

By John Deering



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from ★ (easiest) to ★★★★★ (hardest).

Difficulty Level ★★★

		6	4					
				8				
		5	9	6	3	4		
	7			2			8	
5								3
4								5
2								6
	8			9			7	
		1	5		7	3		

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

4	5	6	3	9	2	1	8	7
1	2	3	8	5	7	9	6	4
8	7	9	1	4	6	5	3	2
6	8	4	2	3	5	7	9	1
2	1	5	7	6	9	3	4	8
9	3	7	4	1	8	2	5	6
7	9	2	6	8	3	4	1	5
5	6	1	9	2	4	8	7	3
3	4	8	5	7	1	6	2	9

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MYSTERY PHOTO

Rachel Dardashti *news@smdp.com*

The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured gets a pat on the back from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to *editor@smdp.com*.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Mariner
7 Tarzan's pals
11 Regal fur
12 Drained of color
13 Stupor
14 Gobi setting
15 Flaw
17 Pampered one
20 Fleet makeup
23 Oklahoma city
24 White wine
26 Tour carrier
27 Low digit
28 Fiction
29 Jazz instrument
31 Cease
32 Mixes up
33 Invites
34 Disables
37 Summon
39 Remove from power, in a way
43 Early shepherd
44 La Scala setting
45 Hard at work
46 Blotto

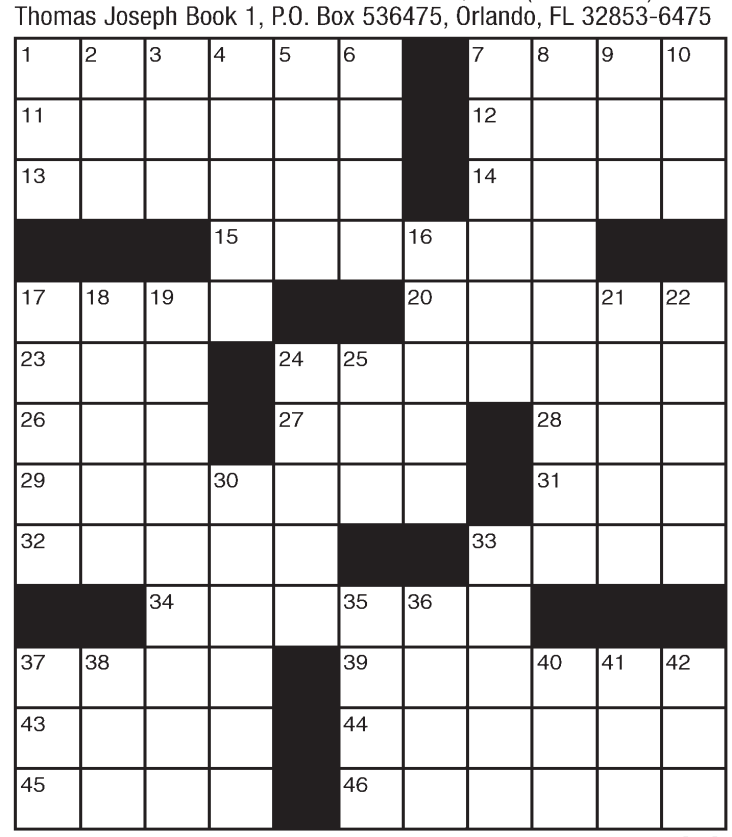
DOWN

1 Filming site
2 Airport sched. abbr.
3 "— little teapot ..."
4 Jitterbug's cousin
5 Formerly
6 Sailing hazard
7 Cochise's people
8 Flavored lozenges
9 Yale student
10 Yacht spot
16 English county
17 Rum cakes
18 Grownup
19 Fortresses
21 Piano sound
22 Future flowers
24 Like forest rocks
25 Stop — dime
30 How some drugs are taken
33 Target for Tell
35 Adds up
36 Mile or meter
37 Truck part
38 — Dhabi
40 Bar concern
41 French article
42 Zeus or Apollo

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

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



2-4

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 13 16 19 53 55
Meganumber: 2
Jackpot: $50M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 4 34 35 38 43
Meganumber: 17
Jackpot: $70M

FANTASY 5: 3 5 16 22 27

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 5 5 1
EVENING: 8 3 9

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 09 Winning Spirit
2nd: 12 Lucky Charms
3rd: 11 Money Bags
RACE TIME: 1.47.73

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 at http://www.calottery.com

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ An Oregon district attorney's office set out two years ago to prosecute David Simmons for having sex the year before with his girlfriend, then 14, while he was 17. A grand jury in Jefferson County refused to indict Simmons, but the prosecutor acted exactly like the indictment had gone through, and no one, even Simmons, noticed the mistake. Only when Simmons agreed to plead guilty in exchange for a 30-day sentence in October 2006 did the news finally reach the foreman of the grand jury that had "no-billed" Simmons, and the foreman's complaint caused the judge to dismiss the conviction. However, in December 2008, prosecutors in neighboring Lane County charged Simmons anew for that 2005 tryst, claiming that "double jeopardy" does not apply because the Jefferson County case never legally happened (in that Simmons was never really indicted).

■ Hysterectomies by ordinary surgery can take hours to perform, several days' recovery and six weeks off from work, largely from the trauma of cutting open the abdomen, but recent advances in laparoscopy have reduced the burdens dramatically because the four required incisions are each only about one-eighth of an inch long. The Chicago Sun-Times reported in December that one of the leading practitioners, Dr. Richard Demir of South Barrington, Ill., had recently been recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records for having removed a 7-pound uterus via laparoscopy (by cutting the organ into smaller pieces and pulling each out through the tiny incisions).

TODAY IN HISTORY

1789 electors chose George Washington to be the first president of the United States. (However, the results of the balloting were not counted in the U.S. Senate until two months later.)

1938 the play "Our Town" opened on Broadway.

1974 newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst was kidnapped in Berkeley, Calif., by the Symbionese Liberation Army.

WORD UP!

defalcate \di-FAL-keyt\, *verb*: to steal or misuse money or property entrusted to one's care

Santa Monica Daily Press

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GIVE OF YOURSELF American Cancer Society Discovery Shop needs volunteer sales help. You can contribute by spending 4 hours per week Thurs., Fri., or Sat.assisting in our up-scale resale shop in Santa Monica. Conact Terry or Shaunnah at (310) 458-4490.

Line Cook with valid drivers license for catering delivery Must speak English. Please call (310)985-0080

MYSTERY SHOPPERS! Earn up to $150 daily. Get paid to shop pt/ft. Call now 800-690-1272.

OCEAN HOUSE, an upscale assisted living community, is looking for caregivers who can assist our residents with escorting, showers, and other activities of daily living. Must be drug free, have great people skills, and a love for seniors. Various shifts available and on weekdays and weekends. If interested, please come by and fill out an application at 2107 Ocean Ave. SM 90405. EOE

Help Wanted

$8,000 GUARANTEED! Receive $8 for every envelope stuffed with our sales materials. 24hr information. 1-877-220-4470.

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Send resume to UCLA Healthcare, Attn: Monica Barboza, 10920 Wilshire Bl. Ste. 400, L.A., CA 90095. EOE

EARN UP TO $500 weekly assembling angel pins at home. No experience required. 817-230-4879, www.angelpin.net

WORK FROM HOME: Government Office Jobs. Full Benefits. $12 - $48 hour FT/PT. Call 1-888-293-7370.

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North of Montana	=	$3,475,000	$995,000
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	$1,995,000	$799,250
South of Wilshire	=	$799,000	$799,000
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