

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

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26-9-20-3-42

Megamatch: 23

Jackpot: \$10 million

FANTASY 5

12, 13, 15, 33, 23

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 8, 4, 7

Evening picks: 8, 7, 9

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 3, Hot Shot

2nd Place: 10, Solid Gold

3rd Place: 4, Big Ben

Race Time: 1:41.18



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Police in Franklin Township, N.J., charged a 20-year-old man with shoplifting two pythons from the Animal Trax pet shop and driving away with them. The man's poor judgment was not the reason police caught him, but when they did later encounter the stolen snakes in the man's house in January, he admitted that one of the snakes had wriggled out of his pocket during the getaway, wrapped itself around his leg, and bit him in the "groin area."



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I've only met four perfect people in my life and I didn't like any of them."

— Unknown



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Law that targets rent control abusers back in business

Judge lifts injunction on law designed to remove abusers

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

SM COURTHOUSE — A judge has lifted a temporary injunction against a controversial housing law, allowing landlords to once again increase the rent on part-time tenants living in rent-controlled units.

Santa Monica Superior Court Judge James Bascue, who issued the injunction in November, credited officials for changing Regulation 3304 so the rent control board — and not landlords — has the authority to set higher rents. Judge Bascue said the rent control board now is likely to pre-

vail in a pending lawsuit that challenges the controversial law.

"The problem with the prior law was that it gave unfettered power to the landlord," Judge Bascue said. "I find, on its face ... the new regulation complies with the law, as written."

Passed last March under political pressure from lobbyists in Sacramento, 3304 lets local landlords charge market rates on tenants who use their rent-controlled units for part-time use such as vacation homes, offices or storage. The rationale behind 3304 was that rent control was designed to keep housing costs low, but has been hijacked by some renters who use the inexpensive units for something other than living in them.

Prominent real estate investor Robert Bisno last year filed a law-

See INJUNCTION, page 7

After 20 years, police seek justice in murder

Suspect was free nearly two decades before being arrested

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

A former Santa Monica bar owner accused of killing one of his customers in 1984 will face a judge today after being on the lam for two decades.

Antonio Aranda Pedraza was charged with murder June 28, 1984, six days after Javier Gamboa Garcia was shot multiple times in front of Jalisco Cafe on Olympic Boulevard near 18th Street. The cafe no longer exists, and neither did Pedraza — in the eyes of the law — until now.

Pedraza allegedly fled the scene and hadn't been seen by authorities since. Police suspected he fled to Mexico after they found his car abandoned in Santa Monica. He'd also reportedly left

"We flew witnesses in from Michigan and Chicago at great public expense."

— LT. RAY COOPER

Santa Monica Police Detective

his Los Angeles home with a large amount of money. But at some point, he returned to the United States and was finally arrested by Los Angeles police officers last July on drug charges. He allegedly sold narcotics out of a parking lot where he worked.

While Pedraza allegedly gave police a false name when he was arrested, his fingerprints revealed his true identity. Authorities then found he had an outstanding

See MURDER, page 8



John Wood/Daily Press

A man lights up a cigarette at the Santa Monica Pier Wednesday afternoon. Officials are considering making it a crime to smoke on the pier.

Smokers could be snuffed at Santa Monica Pier

By Daily Press staff

DOWNTOWN — Smoking cigarettes could soon be a criminal act beyond just the parks, in front of public buildings and the beach in Santa Monica. Now smokers could be targeted at the pier as well.

Concerned individuals and organizations were expected to address the Pier Restoration Corp. board on Wednesday night, advocating for a smoke-free Santa Monica Pier.

Last fall, the Santa Monica City Council directed city staff to draft an ordinance banning smoking on public beaches and the Santa Monica Pier. The City Council is now looking to the PRC, in its role of managing and preserving the pier, for its posi-

tion on the pending law.

Community activists say the pier is one of the few remaining piers without a policy restricting smoking. To back up their positions, they claim the following:

■ A May 2003 report by Santa Monica Pier staff reported 450 fires on the wooden pier in a single year, with 15 characterized as "substantial." There are currently more than 125 burn holes on the pier caused by smoldering cigarettes. Seal Beach and Santa Barbara both passed smoking policies on their wooden piers in response to smoking-related fires. The Venice Pier also is smoke-free.

■ The pier attracts 3 million visitors a year, many of them families with young children. The

See SMOKING, page 8

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The world is your oyster, Leo



JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

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

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ When focusing on creative projects, loved ones and friends, you cannot verify and clarify enough right now. Others mean well but have their head in the clouds right now. Keep on smiling, even if you find others to be a bit bizarre. Tonight: Play away.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Deal with the basics right now, as a boss could make something more complicated and/or have what you consider an unreasonable idea. Be smart. Play along for now, and try it on for size. You will welcome the end of the day. Tonight: Head on home.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ You need to reach out for others right now. You might have a strong hunch regarding the workplace and dribbles of information you've heard. Work with a seemingly wild idea. You might be surprised at the results. Tonight: Play away at a favorite spot.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Take a hard look at what a partnership might be costing you. You might want to make changes, or at least have a conversation with that person. Realize that he or she might not be grounded in the least. Tonight: Your treat.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ You star right now, and others seem drawn to you. Investigate new possibilities, perhaps those suggested by someone you think often lives in a dream world. You don't always see people clearly, and put a special person on a pedestal. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Listen to your sixth sense with others, especially regarding your health. Don't be tempted by "new age" diets or nutrition without first checking with a regular doctor. Use some of your creativity with your work and dealings with others. Tonight: Do something just for yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Where your friends are is where you want to be. A meeting could be instrumental to your well-being. Listen to suggestions. You might have an idea that needs firming up. You hit the bull's-eye the more you work with others. Tonight: Where the gang is. Just don't overdo it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Take charge right now. You might want to do something totally different but need to handle responsibilities that involve the outside world. Curb a tendency to daydream, if possible. Deal with personal issues later. Tonight: At home.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ What might be obvious to you isn't to someone else. Be ready to explain in several different ways in order to help others see what you see. Your ability to communicate needs to come out as you help others break out of the box. Tonight: Let your mind be entertaining.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Work individually with a partner you care about or with those in your immediate environment. You find that giving individual attention works. Discuss what is just an idea. Buy a lottery ticket, as you are lucky right now. Tonight: Togetherness works.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ You might not be seeing another clearly, or you might be casting a haze on a personal situation. You might not be realistic about what is going on around you. Your instincts lead you right now. Ask for advice, if need be. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ You might be all work, but others appreciate your thoughtfulness and ability to get the job done. What might be a dream or fantasy could become a reality. Discuss this idea with someone you trust. Tonight: Relax in a favorite manner.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Rock on at SMC

By Daily Press staff

It's all about the music at Santa Monica College later this month.

The Santa Monica College Emeritus College Band will present a program of classical, jazz and marches at its "March-Solo-Song" concert at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 20 in the SMC Concert Hall, 1900 Pico Blvd. Admission and parking are free.

The 60-member concert band, part of SMC's acclaimed Emeritus College for older adults, is under the baton of Wallace Ueber.

On the program will be a wide range of pieces, including "A Tribute to Artie Shaw," selections from "Finian's Rainbow," symphonic songs, and "Marches, Marches, Marches!"

For further information, call (310) 434-4306 or (310) 474-5271.

Local Dems support Kucinich

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Democratic Club has officially endorsed Dennis J. Kucinich for president.

Democrats said it was a long, challenging meeting last month with speakers also representing Howard Dean, John Kerry, John Edwards and Wesley Clark. The Kucinich campaign won when a Dean supporter, after much debate, changed his vote to support Kucinich, giving him the necessary 60 percent of the vote required to secure the endorsement.

Last fall, Kucinich happened upon a Santa Monica Democratic Club meeting and attended incognito. When the group recognized him, they welcomed him and have now endorsed him as their presidential candidate. Santa Monica is considered one of the most progressive cities in the U.S. and the Santa Monica Democratic Club members say the organization reflects that vision. They, like Congressman Kucinich, voted against the decision to go to war in Iraq and against the U.S.A. Patriot Act.

If the walls could talk

By Daily Press staff

Do houses have histories?

According to building biographer Tim Gregory, they do. Gregory is a noted registered public historian, certified archivist, researcher and writer with more than 20 years of experience in local history and historic preservation.

Finding your home's history will be the focus of conversation on Feb. 22 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., hosted by the Santa Monica Conservancy.

The talk is geared to those who are curious about their homes and want to find out, for example, who designed and built it, and who lived there in the past. It also could be helpful for those who may be considering applying for landmark or structure of merit designations.

"Our homes are physical documents of our times," notes Sherrill Kushner, program organizer. "If you know where to look, they have stories to tell us about who lived and worked in them and what they valued. They also reveal what was popular and possible in architectural technology and style."

Santa Monica Conservancy members may attend without charge; non-members \$5. The Santa Monica Conservancy is dedicated to the preservation of Santa Monica's irreplaceable historic resources.

Reservations are required. Call (310) 485-0399.

Learn how to move on

By Daily Press staff

Most of us want to live a more fulfilling existence, a life free of imagined limitations. But what really prevents us from fully reaching our goals? Why do we, even

See BRIEFS, page 7

surf report

The mix of local windswell and a steep NW swell will continue to fade today but mix with some cleaner conditions.

Today expect 3-4', waist- to chest-high, occasionally 5 ft. and fair conditions. Expect light winds through the first part of the day and WNW wind, 10-15 knots by the afternoon.

Outlook: A new NW swell is expected for Friday with waves building into the weekend.

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break. Epic.

Today the water is:

57°

	LOW TIDES		HIGH TIDES	
	LOW ONE	LOW TWO	HIGH ONE	HIGH TWO
MONDAY	12:02 AM	1:48 PM	6:20 AM	8:37 PM
TUESDAY	12:49 AM	2:17 PM	7:00 AM	8:59 PM
WEDNESDAY	1:25 AM	2:46 PM	7:32 AM	9:18 PM
THURSDAY	1:59 AM	3:17 PM	8:08 AM	9:42 PM
FRIDAY	2:34 AM	3:45 PM	8:41 AM	10:07 PM
SATURDAY	3:05 AM	4:08 PM	9:15 AM	10:37 PM
SUNDAY	3:45 AM	4:36 PM	9:48 AM	11:02 PM

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The Q Line

Former U.S. weapons inspector David Kay testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that there were a series of failures in pre-war intelligence on Iraq. He said we were almost all wrong about weapons of mass destruction.

His statements solidify what many people have thought for months — that there was no imminent threat of Iraq building a nuclear arsenal. Now, there's been talk about launching an independent investigation into the United States intelligence community.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know: "Should an investigation be launched and who should be held responsible if, in fact, the intelligence doesn't support the war effort?"

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



Elisabeth Howard
Director

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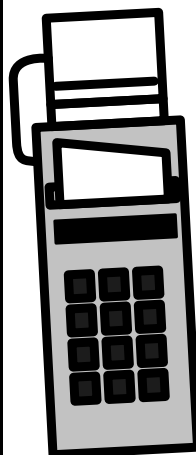
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LETTERS

Stop sign, not a roundabout

Editor:

Teenage driver Sarah Capers had it mostly right (SMDP, Feb. 4, page 4). The roundabout at 26th Street and Washington Avenue is confusing and misused daily, and an accident waiting to happen. This is yet another place where my dog and I have nearly been killed, since the roundabout's installation.

We don't need supervision and re-education, though. What we need is a stop sign.

Evelyn Jerome
Santa Monica

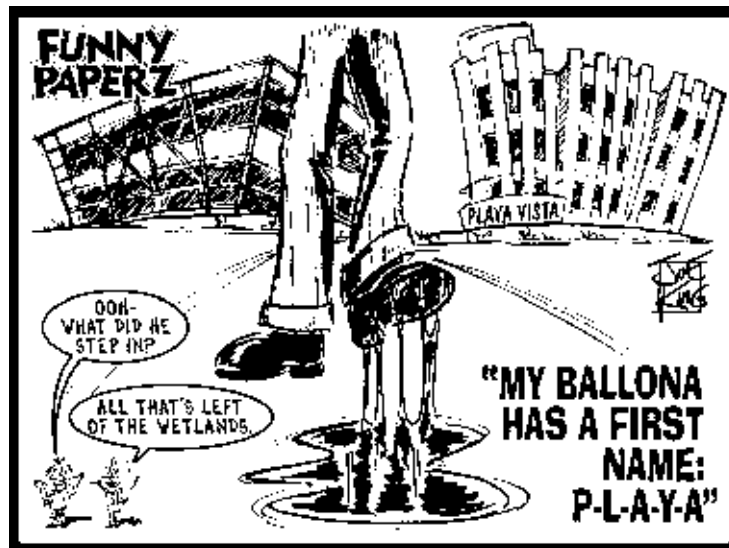
Roundabout part of the problem

Editor:

What a well thought out and intelligent letter (Sarah Capers, SMDP, Feb. 4, page 4). I agree with all you say and you had some very good suggestions. The solution to the traffic flow may be nearer than we think. If the City Council keeps up their present thrust, the streets will be narrower and with the condos and apartments being built all over the city, throwing more and more cars into the mix, eventually all drivers will have to park their cars in a giant parking structure outside the city limits and there will be no car traffic allowed in the city. A shuttle or bus system will carry people to homes, apartments, jobs, shopping, etc. Keep up the present trend and it will have to happen.

I was also interested in your comments on older drivers. In fact, as a senior citizen, I would like to add that my observation of senior drivers is enough to make me cringe — and stay as far away from them as I can. I saw an elderly woman so not in control of her vehicle that she couldn't maneuver a simple, slow right turn onto another street. The look of utter horror on her face as she struggled with her steering wheel and sped onto another street would have been amusing if not so tragic. She looked like a 5-year-old who got hold of mommy's keys and went for a joyride she had no way of handling.

And I have yet to see an elderly person driving who is not making major errors of timing and judgment. Thankfully, most other drivers avoid the accident while the oldest goes on their merry way — like Mr. Magoo, with accidents and near misses going on behind them. Maybe there are fantastic old drivers, I'm not saying there aren't —



Member: AACC, NCS, SCS, SCS --

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I just haven't seen any yet. I quit driving long before I had to and I am quite happy to let bus drivers take me where I need to go.

When a senior's judgment of when it's too much for them to drive is impaired, the family or the state should take their keys and sit them down. I actually heard one old guy say, "Well, if I kill myself in an accident, so what? I've lived a good long time." How about the innocent people he might take with him? Ask, Mr. Weller, the poster boy for senior drivers.

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica

Is the sky falling on America after the XXX Super Bowl?

NEWS
on the
EDGE

By Ron Scott Smith



Warning: The column you are about to read may contain language and images unsuitable for adults. As for you kids, probably no big deal.

They took the (VIII) out of Super Bowl XXXVIII on Sunday, and a reeling nation blushes bright red and holds on for dear life. You can't blame it on Clinton, can you? What the hell, go right ahead and blame it on Clinton.

At Houston's Reliant Field on America's newest national holiday — Super Bowl Sunday — a truly memorable football game was decided in the last seconds by an Adam Vintieri, deja-vu-all-over-again, 41-yard field goal. The game however will forever be remembered as a mere footnote to the night Justin Timberlake got to second base with Janet Jackson. Stole second base, actually. Got into the red zone but didn't score, to keep it in football terms.

To listen to the response coming out of the right radio and TV echo chambers — the self-appointed watchdogs of a morally decaying America, you'd have to conclude that the sky is falling smack down on the head of everything good. "There's never been a more serious attack on our culture," wailed national radio host Mike Medved, while up and down the dial, fellow Chicken Littles — from Limbaugh and Prager in the morning, to Elder and Savage in afternoon drivetime, — they fretted, they moaned.

O'Reilly and Hannity picked up the torch over on TV's Fox News Channel, with the no-spin-meister declaring, "We've reached the nadir, this is the total collapse of our culture." But, you know, I think they both protest too much. It was only a brief glimpse of a right breast, and perhaps, in the name of their "fair and balanced" network, they'd have liked to have been presented with the left side of the story too.

Perhaps the sanest response in all of America came from a 10-year-old who happened to be watching the MTV halftime show close to where I — much to the benefit of my own standards — missed it. "Janet Jackson just showed her boob," said the kid, matter-of-factly, and really, America, that's that. Get over it.

In a further sign of America's deteriorating moral climate under the Bush watch, earlier on Triple X Sunday, after a pre-Super Bowl NBA game between the Lakers and Raptors, the Big F-Bomber, Shaquille O'Neal, dropped a couple of them on an unsuspecting nation in a live post-game interview, saying, "People pay good money to come watch these athletes play and they (the refs) try to take over the f***-ing game." But that's not the one that got him thrown out of his next game, because Bush's decadent FCC officially ruled earlier this year that, if used "as a superlative" and not in "a sexual way," it's fine. Rock star Bono, at the Golden Globes last year, said while accepting his award, "This is really, really f***-ing brilliant," and, as it was used in the superlative, he got a pass. Where the big Laker screwed up was when he went on to say, after the interviewer informed him that they were on live TV, "I don't give a f***k." See, giving a "f***k" makes it a sexual noun, and thus the punishment.

It's been a tumultuous year for the moth-

er of all four-letter words. And by the way, putting "mother" in front of it somehow seems to give the damn thing an extra wallop, doesn't it? Front-running Sen. John Kerry recently responded in a Rolling Stone interview to a question about his vote to give the president the authority to go to war if necessary, "Did I expect George Bush to f***k it up as badly as he did?" And that's a no-no because in using it as a verb, it's "sexual," and you haven't heard the end of this one yet, trust me.

Lenny Bruce got arrested in 1961 for saying a whole mouthful of that thing, some of it with the "mother" in front, while doing his stand-up act in San Francisco, and it appears that, 43 years later, the word is still way out of bounds for a decent society with its head buried in the sand. He used to ask his audience to say it over and over again, out loud, 10 or 20 times, until it stops sounding obscene, and starts sounding stupid and irrelevant, like any word using the two stupidest letters — the "f" and the "k" does.

The fact is, there are some clear and present obscene words much more dangerous to the fabric of a sane and healthy society than that "f" one that seems to stir up so much trouble. Say the words, "weapons of mass destruction" over and over again, 10 or 20 times, and it gets no less offensive or obscene, does it? No matter who owns the things. What's really obscene is that those words now rate their very own capitalized acronym — WMD — because it's just too much effort to say the whole thing all the time.

Dick Cheney is someone who has said those words over and over, but it doesn't seem to have hit the stupid level yet. He and best buddy, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, recently went on a duck hunting trip together, on the eve of the high court hear-

ing about the case brought against the vice president for refusing to reveal who he met with in formulating the nation's energy policy. Say "Enron" 10 or 20 times. But it doesn't get any less indecent or obscene, does it? Scalia, one of the five justices who voted against the Florida recount, effectively handing the nation over to Cheney and his young Texas protégé, bristled at the notion that anyone might question his ability to judge the case impartially.

The vice president is already being touted by media wise guys as the likely Republican presidential nominee in 2008, and it begs the question, could he really be physically up to that task? You must admit, he has paced himself in this first term — we've barely seen him. We did see him here in LA in January, and lest you underestimate, here's what he said in an LA Times interview. "Am I the evil genius in the corner that nobody ever sees come out of the hole? It's a nice way to operate actually." Now I don't know about you, but that one kind of brought up the goosebumps on my arms. And they weren't the good goosebumps.

And, finally, I don't know what qualifies him to officially do this, but a Norwegian scientist by the name of Jan Simonsen has nominated George W. Bush for the Nobel Peace Prize. Norwegians make some very fine vodka, and drink very much of the very fine vodka. Enough said.

(Except for this. If you saw a bunch of asterisks in between the "f" and the "k" when I used the bad word in this report, even though it may have been in the sanctioned "superlative" form, blame it on the f*****g editor.)

(Ron Scott Smith may be f***ked after this column. E-mail him at EdgeoftheWest@aol.com)

OPINION



To phone or not to phone: Cellular is our way of life

My cousin from London, England was here on business last week and we began talking about the differences in our cultures.

What startled him the most was when he witnessed what he termed the "dog sale" on a street corner in Santa Monica. Were we actually selling caged dogs off the sidewalk? After a quick laugh at his expense, we explained that it was a pet adoption. The next day, he pulled a Starbucks card from his wallet and excitedly told us it was a cash card he had won here at his sales meeting. On it: \$10. "You do have Starbucks in London?" I asked. "Of course," he said but he had never heard of the card before.

While taking him to his hotel, I nearly crashed my car when he told me that people in England were banned from using their cell phones while driving. Apparently, Parliament has passed a bill whereby if you're caught holding a cell phone to your ear while driving you will be fined \$40 pounds. (About \$72 U.S.)

I was stunned. Surely, we all have the freedom to know and decide when it's a good time to use a cell phone and when it's not. Don't we?

Thankfully, the British debated the bill. On the one hand, there are the young, less confident drivers to consider. And we can't possibly be 100 percent attentive to the road while holding a phone and participating in a conversation with a person on the receiving end. But on the other hand, is changing a CD, putting on lipstick or grabbing a map from the glove compartment any different? It means only one hand is on the wheel and they are all distractions that could — and do — lead to accidents.

My cousin then explained that the ban was only for holding the phone and people could still get a full day's work done using hands-free devices. I was confounded but regardless, my thoughts turned to something more perplexing: The world before the cell phone.

Growing up, my family drove 18 hours to our grandparents' cottage every

summer without one. When we weren't fighting for space in the back seat, we played word games, listened to stories on the radio and slept.

The first time I was ever exposed to a cell phone — other than my Dad's TV-size, leather-encased one — was when my friend pulled one from her purse in a bar. We were teenagers — it was the '80s. Her parents had bought it for her as a safety precaution. A brilliant idea in retrospect, a "checking-up-on-her" tool was more how we considered it back then. I decided right away that I wouldn't allow my parents to buy me one.

My cousin and I started to count how many people were talking on cell phones in their cars. It turned out to be about 80 percent of the drivers that we passed, or who passed us.

A teenager turned at a Sunset Boulevard intersection, no doubt chatting with a girlfriend about their party choices for the night. A mother sat idle next to us at a red light talking on the phone while turning to hand a fresh sippy-cup to

her little boy strapped into his chair in the back seat. A woman and a man dressed in business suits drove past us and both were on their cell phones — checking their voicemails is my guess.

Throughout the day, we noticed grocery shoppers with cell phones to their ears as they grabbed soup cans off shelves and selected garlic from bins. In a restaurant, we saw a table of young men all with their cell phones placed up next to their water glasses with the exception of the one who was on his phone. We walked past a hairdresser and saw a woman on her phone sitting under a heat lamp with her hair wrapped in cellophane and dye dripping down her neck.

Truly, it was as exhausting and disturbing as the last time I got cut off by a driver talking on a cell phone. There's no way that policy will ever pass here, I told my cousin.

I decided to share this critical news about the ban in England with some colleagues and soon realized my head had

been in the sand. This legislation wasn't a new phenomenon and similar bills had already been passed in the U.S. and Canada. A little lazy research online also revealed that others had been put forward elsewhere, including here.

Days later, I found myself leaving the office and as soon as I drove out of the underground parking lot, I dialed a client. Then, I called my husband to see what

time he was leaving and then a friend just to say "hi" all within my five-minute drive home. Go figure.

Oh ... and I received an e-mail from my cousin confirming that Starbucks cash cards are not available nor accepted in England.

(Amy Perritt, a Santa Monica resident, didn't write this column hands free, but she was talking on the phone.)

Guest Commentary

By Amy Perritt



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BUSINESS

10 strategies on how you can preserve your wealth



IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

By John Kim

Are you wealthy? You may not think you are. But when you've accounted for your home, investments, personal property, retirement accounts and all insurance that you own in your name, you may have assets over \$1 million — and that means you're "wealthy," according to the IRS.

In 2003, every dollar over \$1 million (incrementally increasing to \$3.5 million by 2009) may be taxed up to 49 percent (decreasing to 45 percent by 2009). If a majority of your assets are in retirement accounts, including qualified plans and IRAs, your estate could lose over two-thirds of its value to federal estate and income taxes. If a significant portion of your assets is earmarked for your grandchildren, you could be faced with a "generation skipping transfer tax" on top of what you may already have paid in gift and estate taxes (levied at a rate of 49 percent over \$1,120,000 in 2003). After all these taxes, your beneficiaries might receive a much smaller portion of what you worked so hard to accumulate.

You may want to consider these strategies to help preserve your wealth:

1. Prepare a will. Be sure it keeps pace with changes in your own personal circumstances or objectives and adjustments in tax laws. Marriage, divorce, birth, a move to another state or a change in your

finances should signal an immediate review and possible updating of your will. Unfortunately, seven out of 10 Americans die without a will and, consequently, the laws of their states decide the disposition of their property.

2. Use your estate tax exclusion. The IRS allows U.S. citizens to pass the first \$1 million of assets in 2003 (incrementally increasing to \$3.5 million by 2009) to their beneficiaries free of federal estate tax.

If you are married (with a U.S. citizen spouse), don't rely exclusively on the marital deduction, which allows one spouse to give to the other any amount of assets free of gift or estate tax. Make sure the first spouse to pass away takes advantage of his or her exclusion amount.

3. Re-title assets as necessary to ensure that each spouse can use the estate and gift tax exclusion to which they are entitled. Make sure there are sufficient assets in each spouse's name. Also, if you decide to use a revocable living trust, to avoid probate and to provide for management of your affairs if you become incapacitated, remember to re-title those assets that you wish to place in the trust. Failure to re-title, in both cases, may eliminate the intended benefits of your estate plan.

4. Monitor retirement plan assets. Determining the appropriate strategy for dealing with the estate and income taxation of qualified plans and IRA accounts depends on your objectives and the needs of your family. These assets are subject to income tax, when withdrawn, as well as estate tax. Therefore, you might wish to take steps to avoid withdrawing funds in your IRA to pay potential estate taxes. If you need to use IRA assets to fund a trust

using your applicable exclusion amount or to fund a marital trust, we recommend you consult your attorney or tax advisor before taking any action.

5. Gift away what you don't need. Lifetime gifts to family members or others can reduce your assets and subsequent estate tax liability, by removing the appreciation on those assets from your estate. You are entitled to transfer up to \$11,000 per person each year without incurring any gift tax or reducing your lifetime gift tax exclusion amount. (Spouses together may gift up to \$22,000.) Lifetime gift tax gifts made directly to educational institutions for tuition or to medical providers are also excluded from gift tax.

Gifts to qualified charities may also be advantageous from a tax standpoint. The value of charitable donations, including financial assets such as stocks, artwork, real estate and certain business interests, and any future appreciation of those assets, reduces the value of your estate. These charitable donations also may qualify for current income tax deductions.

6. Keep enough assets liquid to satisfy estate taxes. Generally, the IRS requires that any federal estate tax liability be satisfied within nine months of the date of death, and that payment must be in cash. There are four typical sources from which funds can be obtained: cash reserves, loans, liquidation of assets or life insurance proceeds. If properly owned by a trust or third party, life insurance proceeds may be especially advantageous; they are income tax free to the recipient and avoid estate tax. Be sure your heirs aren't forced to sell investments at "fire sale" prices because of a shortage of liquid funds.

7. Have a trustee of an irrevocable trust purchase your insurance policy. Usually, life insurance proceeds avoid probate and are exempt from income tax. However, the proceeds will be subject to estate tax if you own or have rights in the policy. Purchasing the policy within an irrevocable trust may prevent life insurance proceeds from increasing your estate tax liability. You may also elect to have a third party, such as an adult child, purchase the policy.

8. Know what you have and where you have it. Your estate plan should make sense. Remember to balance your tax concerns with your non-tax concerns. Keep copies of your important papers and make sure that appropriate parties know where these papers are kept.

9. Choose executors and trustees wisely. Selecting one family member among several may create unforeseen problems down the road. You may burden an individual with special responsibilities for which they may neither be suited nor prepared. The fiduciary duties may call for the expertise, impartiality and independence of a corporate trustee, at least as co-trustee. You may also wish to employ a professional, such as an accountant or attorney, as executor or trustee.

(John Kim is a financial consultant with Smith Barney in Beverly Hills. He can be reached at (310) 205-4939 or visit www.fc.smithbarney.com/jkim. This article is based, in whole or in part, on information provided by the planning services department of Smith Barney. Smith Barney does not provide legal or tax advice. Please consult with your tax and/or legal advisor for such guidance. Smith Barney is a division of Citigroup Global Markets Inc. Member SIPC.)

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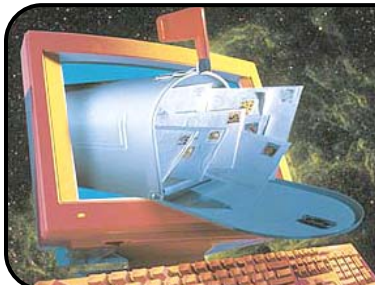
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Preliminary hearing set for murder case

MURDER, from page 1

murder warrant against him.

Pedraza's preliminary hearing was set for Wednesday at the Airport Courthouse, but his attorney, Scott Furstman, had a scheduling conflict and was in court in San Jose on another case. Matt Kookanim, another attorney representing Furstman, asked Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Katherine Mader to move the case to another day.

That didn't sit well with Santa Monica Police Detective Lt. Ray Cooper, who was the lead investigator on the case. He and the prosecutor contested the rescheduling, saying they had gone to great lengths to be ready to state their case against Pedraza. They noted they'd flown two witnesses from the Midwest to LA to testify.

"We flew witnesses in from Michigan and Chicago at great public expense," Lt. Cooper told the Daily Press. "It's hard to convince people to put their lives on hold and we have an issue with (the defense attorney) deciding at the last minute that

he had a calendar conflict."

Judge Mader instructed court personnel to call Furstman in San Jose and order him back to LA. The preliminary hearing will begin today at 8:30 a.m. The hearing allows the prosecution to lay out its case. Judge Mader will then determine if there's enough evidence to proceed with a trial. Pedraza has pleaded not guilty, according to court documents.

Lt. Cooper said Garcia was shot 14 times, execution style. Three of the shots went to the back of the head. Pedraza apparently got into an altercation with Garcia and kicked him out of the bar for being overly intoxicated. Garcia was outside the bar when Pedraza allegedly came at him from the side of the building armed with a gun. Pedraza allegedly pulled a .38 caliber gun out and began shooting at Garcia.

Pedraza was 36 years old when the shooting occurred. On Wednesday, the aging 57-year-old appeared in court wearing a gray mustache and a blue jump suit issued by the county jail.

It's getting harder to light up in Santa Monica

SMOKING, from page 1

vast majority do not smoke, yet are subjected to toxic secondhand smoke on the often crowded pier.

■ Cigarette butts that aren't discarded onto the pier usually get thrown over the side of it, directly into Santa Monica Bay or onto the beach. Cigarettes are the No. 1 source of beach trash and threatens wildlife who mistake the toxic butts for food.

■ Several environmental and health organizations support a smoke-free Santa Monica Pier, including the local chapters of the Surfrider Foundation, Environment Now, the American Lung Association, American Cancer Society and American Heart Association.

The pier would be just one of many places smokers wouldn't be able to light up in Santa Monica.

A California law went into effect on Jan. 1 that prohibits smoking within 20 feet of any public building, including universities and community colleges.

AB 846, signed into law by former Gov. Gray Davis last year, specifically prohibits smoking within 20 feet of main entrances, exits and windows of any building owned, leased or occupied by the state, county or city.

The state law compliments Santa Monica's anti-smoking stance. The Santa Monica City Council last March voted to ban smoking in its 15 parks because of health risks associated with second-hand smoke and the likelihood that children could ingest discarded cigarette butts.

Violators could end paying as much as \$750 after court fees and penalties. Enforcement is done by random, periodic checks in the parks by the city attorney office's consumer protection unit and the Santa Monica Police Department.

As far as the statewide law is concerned, it's anticipated that clear signage and placing ash cans at least 20 feet from affected entrances, exits and windows will make the law virtually self-enforcing.

Super-sized photos of Mars

BY ANDREW BRIDGES
AP Science Writer

PASADENA — Thirty pints of ink, 3,000 square feet of photographic paper — and counting.

That's what NASA has burned through printing otherworldly, super-sized pictures of Mars that are then sent to dozens of museums, many of which display them immediately. It's part of NASA's aggressive effort to promote interest in the Red Planet and the agency's stunning photos.

The martian landscapes appear just as big and colorful as those seen by NASA's twin rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, 130 million miles away.

The largest photograph NASA has printed so far is a monster panorama as long as a motorhome.

"Bigger is better," said engineer

Myche McAuley, who works in the image processing lab at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Each rover carries nine cameras, from the panoramic to the microscopic. There are more — and better — cameras on Mars today than ever before.

"It was always our intent to build a set of cameras capable of revealing Mars just as if you were standing there," said Cornell University astronomer Steve Squires, the mission's main scientist. "But it's hard to find a display medium that does it justice."

An Imax movie is in the works. Until it's in theaters, there's engineer Kris Capraro.

Working in a cramped room at JPL, Capraro steadily produces the largest photographs NASA has ever printed during an ongoing space mission.

NATIONAL



Governor calls for Western regional presidential contests

BY BARRY MASSEY
Associated Press Writer

SANTA FE, N.M. — New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, fresh from a successful presidential preference caucus in his state, dusted off an old idea for giving the Rocky Mountain and Western states more clout in picking presidential nominees.

Richardson, chairman of the Western Governors' Association, said Wednesday he will lobby other governors to hold presidential contests early in the 2008 presidential campaign, perhaps in February after the traditional first-ever New Hampshire primary.

The Democratic governor has a twist on the western primary proposal, however. He advocates that each state hold caucuses — party-run, party-financed affairs — rather than have state-run primary elections paid for by taxpayers.

"It's time for the West to take its place in the election process," said Richardson. "The fact that Arizona and New Mexico, two western states, got so much attention, visibility, such large turnout, shows that the West — the mountain West — can have a say in the selection of future presidents."

New Mexico held a presidential preference caucus on Tuesday and Arizona had a primary.

Richardson contends a regional presidential contest on the same date would focus national attention on Western issues, including water rights.

"We'd be in favor of that and think that it would be very helpful," said Donald Dunn, chairman of the Utah Democratic Party. "... I think it's important for the western states to have the voice."

Former Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt tried to engineer a western primary of eight to 10 states in 2000, but couldn't attract enough interest.

Utah and Colorado held primaries on March 10, 2000, and Wyoming held party caucuses that day.

New Mexico was among the states that rejected the idea and kept its primary in June. Opposition from Democrats in the Legislature doomed the proposal when it surfaced in 1999. Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, a Republican, had endorsed the concept of a western regional primary although he had reservations about the potential cost.

Richardson said party-run caucuses would resolve the financial question. The state Democratic Party estimates Tuesday's caucus cost about \$300,000. At least 20 percent of registered Democrats cast ballots, according to preliminary party figures.

"It's time for the West to take its place in the election process. The fact that Arizona and New Mexico, two western states, got so much attention, visibility, such large turnout, shows that the West — the mountain West — can have a say in the selection of future presidents."

— BILL RICHARDSON
Governor of New Mexico

In Utah, the 2000 presidential primary cost taxpayers \$600,000 and only 10 percent of voters participated. This year, with a Republican in the White House, Utah Republicans skipped a primary although Democrats plan a Feb. 24 party-financed contest.

But Utah Gov. Olene Walker said she was not opposed to such an idea.

"At this point we haven't seen or heard much about that, but we are definitely willing to review a proposal," Walker said through a spokeswoman Wednesday.

Richardson said he will try to recruit Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada and

Oklahoma for Western regional caucuses in 2008.

The governor, who served as energy secretary and U.N. ambassador in the Clinton administration, was the driving force behind a change in state law that allowed Democrats to hold their first-ever presidential caucus.

"The success here in New Mexico shows that it is good economics, good politics, good visibility for states that greatly benefit from the same issues," said Richardson.

Floyd Ciruli, a longtime Denver pollster, said Richardson's proposal may work given the momentum generated by this year's earlier contests in New Mexico and Arizona. Those contests demonstrated that the West can command a piece of the nominee selection spotlight, but the timing of a regional contest would be key, he said.

"New Mexico and Arizona got a lot more attention than Colorado and Utah are going to get," Ciruli said.

But maintaining the interest once the current election season ends will be key.

"We get really stirred up about this every four years, and then it goes away," Ciruli said.

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NATIONAL

Tourist fined, jailed for trashing area near geyser

BY ROBERT W. BLACK
Associated Press Writer

CHEYENNE, Wyo. — A tourist pleaded guilty to driving his pickup truck across fragile soil near a Yellowstone National Park geyser and was sentenced to jail and fined Tuesday.

Adam Ray Elford, 22, of Vancouver, Wash., pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge Stephen E. Cole in Mammoth Hot Springs to driving off-road, damaging park resources, having a loaded gun in his truck, improper food storage and driving on a suspended license.

"The judge said it was the worst, most egregious case of resource damage he's ever seen in the park," federal prosecutor Don White said. "The judge has been here in the park over 20 years."

Investigators said Elford and a companion drove a 2000 Toyota four-wheel-drive pickup around two barriers Oct. 10 and spun "doughnuts" on fragile soil known as sinter surrounding Lone Star Geyser south of Old Faithful before getting stuck.

Elford was given 90 days in jail, with all but 20 suspended. He also was fined \$1,560 and ordered to pay restitution.

Damage was initially estimated at \$2,900, and Cole asked park officials for an updated estimate after winter snows melt. He said Elford would be responsible for the full amount. In addition, Elford was ordered to reimburse his court-appointed attorney and pay a towing bill

of \$380.

According to White, Elford and Austin B. Olsen, 19, of Battle Ground, Wash., removed a barrier, drove down a path reserved for hikers and bicyclists, removed another barrier, then drove into a meadow by crossing a thermal channel and steam vent about 100 yards from the geyser. The truck became mired in ruts 6 to 8 inches deep.

"The judge said (the park) will never be the same."

— DON WHITE
Federal prosecutor

"He told the judge this is what they do all the time in Washington, drive around barriers," White said. "They saw one here so they decided to do the same."

The pair, unable to dislodge the truck, camped overnight, built a fire, shot a gun in the middle of the night to scare off any nearby bears, then in the morning asked arriving tourists to help tow them out.

The tourists refused, but gave the two a ride to the ranger station at Old Faithful Village.

Workers spent more than 80 hours trying to repair the damage before the snow fell.

"The judge said it will never be the same," White said.

Olsen's case is pending.

Study shows that Yucca project may not be a waste

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Nevada's lawyers are fighting in court to stop the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project. But a new study shows that the project already is providing thousands of well-paying jobs in Nevada, and ending it would mean substantial economic loss to the state economy.

In 2000, the Yucca Mountain project contributed \$195.7 million to Nevada's economy and accounted for 3,650 jobs, according to the report by the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

"If the Yucca Mountain Project were discontinued, economic losses ... would be substantial," Keith Schwer, director of the center and an author of the report, told the Las Vegas Review-Journal for a Monday report.

The study says construction of the repository — a grid of tunnels 1,000 feet underground — could boost Nevada's gross state product by as much as \$228 million during peak activity in 2006. Average annual economic benefit from transportation and operations could top \$127 million per year.

The Energy Department projects spending \$58 billion on the repository, which it wants to open in 2010. The agency plans to submit an application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the end of this year.

The Bush administration and Congress in 2002 approved the plan to entomb 77,000 tons of spent commercial nuclear reactor fuel and highly radioactive military

and industrial waste beneath an ancient volcanic ridge 90 miles from Las Vegas.

Nevada is fighting the project in federal court in Washington, D.C., where oral arguments were heard last month. A ruling is pending.

Steve Holloway, executive vice president of Associated General Contractors in southern Nevada, said Yucca Mountain already provides good jobs.

"Of course, they don't talk much about it," he said of current workers. "They're sworn to secrecy."

Schwer said what he termed "perception-based risk impacts" would partially offset some economic gains.

He said that unlike gambling and tourism, which can be affected by national and international recession, Yucca Mountain would be a stable source of economic activity "independent of the vagaries of the financial markets."

Mary Riddel, associate director of the center and co-author of the Yucca Mountain report, noted that public concerns about the safe transport of nuclear waste could affect development in southern Nevada.

"If households perceive the risk as too high, they may relocate in order to protect themselves from transportation accidents," she said.

Riddel headed a 2003 survey of 343 southern Nevada residents and found that between 1 percent and 3 percent of households living near proposed nuclear waste truck routes would relocate.

However, she said risk-tolerant residents might also move in.



NATIONAL □ INTERNATIONAL



Bush budget projections include \$2.4B from Alaska oil

By The Associated Press

FAIRBANKS, Alaska — President Bush's budget projections for the fiscal year 2006 include \$2.4 billion in revenue from oil lease sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The hitch is that drilling in ANWR would require congressional approval and that's something the Senate has refused in recent years.

Nevertheless, the Bush administration believes it is appropriate to count on ANWR's oil leasing revenue in fiscal year 2006, Interior Secretary Gale Norton said.

"Whatever happens in Congress, that will continue to be a focus," Norton said.

The Interior Department budget, released Monday, outlines spending plans for fiscal year 2005, which begins Oct. 1. But Bush's overall budget plan also includes government income projections

"Their agenda is clear — they want it all, they want it now, any way they can get it."

— CINDY SHOGAN

Executive director, Alaska Wilderness League

several years into the future, which is where the ANWR leasing revenue is found.

Under the administration's plan, half the \$2.4 billion would go to the state of Alaska. Current law calls for 90 percent to go to Alaska.

Unlike past years, the Interior Department's budget proposal doesn't request any money specifically to develop leases in ANWR, which covers the eastern end of Alaska's North Slope, or the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, which covers the western half.

Kathleen Clarke, BLM's national direc-

tor, said the agency's budget has enough money built in to handle any lease sales.

Cindy Shogan, executive director of the Alaska Wilderness League, said the administration still doesn't understand how thoroughly the American public opposes ANWR drilling.

"This act only shows how deeply out of touch the president is with current political and economic realities," Shogan told the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

She also criticized the administration's recent decision to allow leasing across most of NPRA's northwest region. The first

such lease sale may come as soon as April.

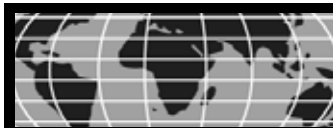
"Their agenda is clear — they want it all, they want it now, any way they can get it," Shogan said.

Norton said the department strives for balance in its management of the federal estate.

"We seek to leave a legacy of healthy lands and thriving communities," she said.

The president's ANWR budget language, if adopted by Congress in its annual budget resolution, would also open an alternative path toward drilling that faces fewer obstacles than traditional legislation. The procedural bills that could authorize drilling would not be subject to filibusters, which have thwarted pro-drilling forces in recent years.

But divisions in Congress among budget-drafters have prevented pro-drilling forces from using that strategy in the past.



WORLD BRIEFLY

Nuclear black market aided terrorists?

By The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The nuclear black market that let Iran, Libya and North Korea acquire weapons technology from Pakistan under the noses of international monitors raises suspicions that terror groups also acquired bomb components or plans, experts told The Associated Press.

Al-Qaida apparently has shown interest in acquiring nuclear technology. Two Pakistani nuclear scientists were detained in late 2001 after meeting Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan on suspicion of giving away secrets, but they were later released without being charged. The military, which controlled the weapons program, also is known to have elements who sympathize with the Taliban and bin Laden.

Pakistan has for years denied spreading nuclear technology and claimed its arsenal was safe from extremists. But strong international pressure after Iranian revelations to the U.N. nuclear watchdog forced Islamabad to begin an investigation of its weapons program in November. It admitted last month for the first time that scientists had leaked technology.

Officials say Abdul Qadeer Khan — the father of Pakistan's nuclear program — has confessed to selling equipment related to centrifuges, which are used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, to Iran, Libya and North Korea. Libya also received designs for a nuclear bomb from Pakistan that it handed over to U.S. and British intelligence last month, European diplomats say.

Khan, however, has denied making a confession, according to the leading Islamic party, Jamaat-e-Islami.

Key party to back Sharon

By The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The opposition Labor Party said it would back Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to dismantle Jewish settlements in Gaza, assuring him of a parliamentary majority even if ultranationalists quit Sharon's coalition in protest.

Sharon on Tuesday shrugged off the growing threats to his government, saying he is determined to go ahead with plans to remove 17 settlements in Gaza and three in the West Bank without waiting for a peace deal with the Palestinians. He said he would try to form a new governing coalition rather than back down.

The prime minister's surprise announcement Monday divided Israelis into two camps: those who believe Sharon, for decades the main architect of Jewish settlement expansion, is truly changing course; and those who suspect him of trying to sow confusion and deflect attention from a widening corruption probe against him.

Commentators said whatever Sharon's motives, his declaration has created irreversible facts, and no future

prime minister could demand to hold on to parts of Gaza in a peace deal with the Palestinians. "The words that were uttered can never be taken back," commentator Dan Margalit wrote in the Maariv daily.

Brokerage asst. testifies in Stewart trial

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A young, lanky former brokerage assistant took the witness stand against Martha Stewart and began recounting the story prosecutors hope will persuade jurors the domestic style-setter lied to cover up a stock tip.

Douglas Faneuil, a former assistant at Merrill Lynch & Co., testified Tuesday that broker Peter Bacanovic made it clear he wanted the stock tip passed to Stewart by blurring: "Oh my God, get Martha on the phone."

The alleged tip: ImClone Systems founder Sam Waksal and his family were frantically trying to unload their shares of ImClone stock. Waksal later admitted he had illegal insider knowledge of coming bad news that would send the stock tumbling.

Faneuil, the government's star witness, told jurors of a hectic morning at Merrill on Dec. 27, 2001, with Waksal's accountant and Waksal's two daughters barking sell orders at him in just the first hour of the day.

Muslin groups canvassing for voters

By The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — Stung by a backlash after the 2001 terror attacks and hoping to increase their clout in this year's presidential election, Muslim groups are mobilizing to sign up new voters across the nation.

Several thousand Muslims filled out voter registration forms during sign-up drives last weekend that coincided with a major Islamic holiday, when people traditionally visit friends and relatives.

Thousands more took the forms home and said they would complete and mail them to local election boards in time to register to vote in the November presidential election.

"I came here, I worked hard, I became part of the economy and I pay my taxes," said Amir Gauhar, a 35-year-old Pakistani-born resident of Burlington Township who registered to vote Sunday at a drive in Princeton.

Across the nation, similar voter registration drives were held over the weekend, including in the suburbs near Dearborn, Mich., home to the nation's second-largest Arab-American community after New York City.

Ricin scare continues in D.C.

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Unopened mail is being collected throughout the Capitol complex by investigators

searching for letters that could be contaminated with the deadly poison ricin.

Three Senate office buildings remained closed after a white powder determined to be ricin was found in an office of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist on Monday, a little more than two years since Congress grappled with another potentially lethal toxin, anthrax.

Meanwhile, a law enforcement official revealed that another letter containing ricin and bound for the White House had been intercepted in November.

Tests were ongoing on the ricin found by a young worker in Frist's fourth-floor mailroom in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Authorities want to learn whether it was sufficiently potent and in a powder fine enough to kill people.

Even without final test results, House Speaker Dennis Hastert said, "It's serious enough that they're picking up everybody's mail."

Death rate still high in Iraq

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly two months have passed since Saddam Hussein's capture, yet American soldiers still are dying at a rate of more than one a day.

Forty-five soldiers died in January and three more in the first three days of February. The January toll was five more than in December, despite hopes that Saddam's Dec. 13 capture would weaken the Iraqi insurgency and slow the killings from roadside bombs and other attacks.

The number of deaths in January will rise to 47 when the Pentagon changes the status of two soldiers who are missing and believed to have died in the Tigris River on Jan. 25. That would make the second highest monthly total since last April when daily combat from the invasion was still under way.

Details of 'Accutane suicide' emerge

By The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Charles Bishop loved "Star Trek" and Tom Clancy novels. He worried about learning how to drive, and had only been on one date. He rarely mentioned the father he never knew, but learned a love of flying from his mother's best friend, a man he considered a father figure.

In volumes of recently filed court records, those are some of the ordinary details from the life of a 15-year-old boy that make an enduring mystery of why he stole a small airplane and crashed it into a Tampa skyscraper, leaving a suicide note sympathetic to Osama bin Laden.

His mother and grandmother have filed a \$70 million lawsuit against the makers of the acne drug Accutane, blaming it for sparking his irrational act in January 2002.

The drug company denies Accutane is linked to suicide, but it does warn doctors and users to watch for suicidal behavior.

In hours of depositions, Bishop's mother, grandmother and the dermatologist who prescribed him Accutane about eight months before Bishop's death said they saw no indications of impending suicide.

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DOWN

- 3 Flat
4 Number with a point
5 Lewis of "News-Radio"
6 Tenochtitlan resident
7 Israeli gun
8 Steven Tyler's daughter
9 Golf need
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18 Team animal
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20 First name
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22 Highlands group
25 Indian gown
26 Poker mistake
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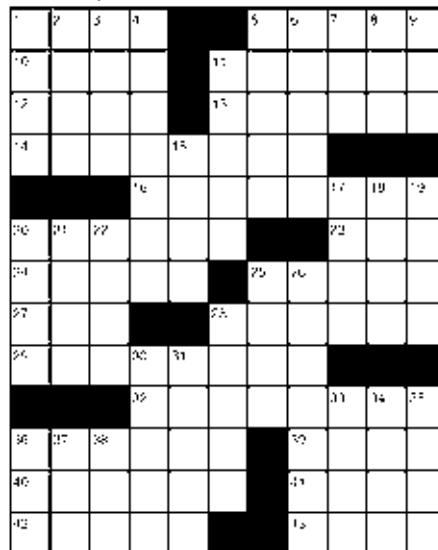
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— Jim Rickwalt, Johnnie's Italian Restaurant



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Hollywood movie mogul sells Aspen home for \$46M

By The Associated Press

■ **ASPEN, Colo.** — Hollywood mogul Peter Guber sold his 650-acre ranch and mansion for \$46 million, believed to be a record price for residential property in the Aspen area.

Guber, who produced "Rain Man" and "Batman" and is now chairman of Mandalay Pictures, sold the ranch and 15,000-square-foot house Tuesday to Dawn and Roland Arnall of Aspen.

Robert Ritchie, the real estate broker who listed the property, said the previous record price was \$23 million for a house and land near Woody Creek, a community just northwest of Aspen.

Guber had asked for \$63 million for the ranch, which lies between the Snowmass and Buttermilk ski resorts. The house has seven bedrooms, seven and a half baths, a theater, a gym and a basketball court.

The property also has two guest cabins and a barn with living quarters.

■ **NEW YORK** — Rosie O'Donnell has postponed work on "Celebrity Detox," a book that was supposed to come out this summer.

"She has a lot going on and thought it best to take a breather and revisit the book later," said Jimmy Franco, a publicist for Warner Books, which had reportedly paid seven figures for the book.

No new publication date has been set, Franco said Wednesday. According to Warner's own catalogue, "Celebrity Detox" will "reveal the events that unhinged her desire for the spotlight" and will introduce readers to "the lost little girl turned mega-star."

O'Donnell is currently working on a stage adaptation of a previous book, the best-selling "Find Me," which came out in 2002. "Taboo," a Broadway musical she produced that stars Boy George, closes Feb. 8 after an unprofitable three-month run.

■ **NEW YORK** — Vanessa Williams, already an actress, singer and former Miss America, is adding runway model to her resume.

She'll join famous catwalk faces Alex Wek, Frankie Rayder and Angela Lindvall in presenting The Red Dress Collection at Friday's Heart Truth fashion show, part of New York Fashion Week.

Unlike most shows that preview next season's designer clothes, the Heart Truth show, sponsored by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and Johnson & Johnson, tries to raise awareness about the dangers of heart disease.

"I've always been hyperaware of heart disease. My father, who lost both parents (to heart disease), ate a lot of oatmeal and berries and he always exercised. He did it all way before the trend," Williams told The Associated Press. "My participation in this is an outgrowth, it was a no-brainer for me."

Models will wear red dresses by top designers such as Donna Karan, Vera Wang and Oscar de la Renta; Williams' gown is by Carmen Marc Valvo, who has created many of her red carpet gowns. Coincidentally, Williams said, red is one of her best colors.

Is she nervous about her first turn on the runway? "I'm 40. I have four kids. I am who I am, and I'm up there for a good cause."

After Fashion Week, the gowns become part of a LifeWise-sponsored road show that will bring free risk-factor screenings to shopping malls in Chicago, Dallas, Miami, Philadelphia and San Diego.

■ **AUGUSTA, Ga.** — James Brown has filed papers seeking an annulment from his wife, claiming she never divorced from a previous marriage.

Brown was arrested last week in South Carolina on a domestic violence charge involving 33-year-old Tomi Rae Brown.

The 70-year-old Godfather of Soul allegedly pushed

the woman to the floor during an argument in a bedroom of their Beech Island, S.C., home and threatened to kill her while holding a chair over her, according to an Aiken County sheriff's report.

She had scratches and bruises on her right arm and hip and was taken to an Augusta hospital, deputies said.

Brown, who has denied the accusations, was arrested Jan. 28 and released from jail the next day; hours later, he filed for an annulment.

His attorney, Jim Huff, told The Augusta Chronicle that Brown's wife said she never sought a divorce from Javed Ahmed, whom she married in Houston in February 1997.

If convicted of the domestic violence charge, Brown faces a maximum penalty of a \$500 fine and 30 days in jail.

■ **MARATHON, Fla.** — The mother of pop singers Nick and Aaron Carter failed to appear in court for a scheduled arraignment on a battery charge, and a bench warrant for her arrest was immediately issued.

Jane Carter was charged with attacking the girlfriend of her estranged husband, Robert Carter, last month. Sheriff's officials in Monroe County said she broke a window to enter her husband's home and attacked the couple while they slept.

Carter allegedly pulled 29-year-old Ginger Elrod from the bed by her hair and beat her, sheriff's officials said.

Her \$5,000 bond has been forfeited because of the missed court appearance, officials said. A message left for her publicist was not returned Tuesday.

The alleged fight took place after a meeting between the Carters and their 16-year-old son Aaron, during which the family apparently resolved some financial differences. Aaron Carter, the younger brother of Backstreet Boy Nick Carter, 24, accused his mother of taking more than \$100,000 from his bank account without permission.

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