



MCCAIN'S ON A HOT STREAK
SEE PAGE 3

Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS ISSUE

Students rock the ballot box

Samohi holds mock election as a lesson in being civic minded

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SAMOH The legal minimum voting age in the United States might be 18, but to high school students, when it comes to elections and politics and hot-button issues, age is just a number.

Unfazed by their underage status, hundreds of Santa Monica High School students found a way to engage themselves in the electoral process on Super Tuesday, participating in a campus mock election during their lunchtime that directly emulated the real-world voting experience, from signing in with an identification card all the way to receiving the "I Voted" sticker.

"It was kind of empowering," Samohi freshman Taylor Weary said after casting her ballot and sticking an "I Voted" sticker on her forehead. "If this was a real election, I would actually have a say in what is going on."

A total of 442 students cast votes in the mock election, though 75 were voided because students either voted twice or scratched out the candidate's name on the ballot, making the choice illegible.

Democratic candidate Barack Obama, the Facebook phenomenon that has captivated a young audience, captured 66 percent of the vote, followed by former first lady Hillary Clinton with 19 percent and republican front-runner John McCain with 6 percent.

The senator from Illinois was Erin Jane O'Flynn's choice, believing the presidential candidate offers a fresh voice and new ideas.

"He really does unite," O'Flynn said. "He's brought a lot of republicans and independents together."

The high school's Associated Student Body (ASB) and the Students for the Advancement of Global Entrepreneurship (SAGE), a campus organization aimed at

SEE SAMOHI PAGE 13

ELECTION 2008



BIG DAY

Alexis Hawkins news@smdp.com
Stephen Godchaux casts his vote at the Santa Monica Public Library polling station on Tuesday. As of presstime, Hillary Clinton led the Democratic race while John McCain held a commanding lead over Mitt Romney. Results for local Measure R were not available.

Meeting of the big wigs

City officials travel to D.C. to discuss airport

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

CITY HALL City officials met face-to-face last week with high-ranking legislators in Washington, D.C. to discuss the future of the Santa Monica Airport, calling the meeting "fruitful" considering the influence wielded by those in attendance.

Mayor Pro Tem Richard Bloom, City Manager Lamont Ewell and city staff members had a roughly 45-minute conversation with three long-time lawmakers — Representatives Henry Waxman, D-Los Angeles, and Jane Harman, D-Venice, as well as Rep. James Oberstar, D-Grand Rapids, MI.

Oberstar is the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which oversees funding for the Federal Aviation Administration and its safety programs, among other duties.

"The meeting was quite fruitful from the stand point that both Chairman Oberstar, Congressman Waxman and Congresswoman Harman were very, very receptive to the reality that our airport requires a meaningful runway safety solution," Ewell said.

City officials have been negotiating with the FAA for roughly five years to come up with runway safety enhancements that will protect residents living within 300 feet of the airport from runway overruns. Residents in Sunset Park and Mar Vista have complained for years about the potential for massive casualties if a plane were to roll off the runway. The airport lacks proper buffers or runway safety areas and is surrounded by a dense suburban environment.

The City Council went so far as to ban larger, faster jet aircraft in November of last year, but have yet to hold a second

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Calendar

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2008

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues



Hours: 6:30 a.m. – 10 p.m. Daily

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS

Calling all docents

5905 Wilshire Blvd., L.A., open times

Finally, a use for that art history degree! The LACMA's Art Docent Council is seeking volunteers to lead tours of the museum's diverse collections.

Information and applications can be obtained by e-mailing a request to Admissions@lacmadocent.org. Applications are due no later than February 22, 2008.

Funny feelings

6360 W. Sunnyside Blvd., L.A., 8 p.m.

For all of those Barbara fans suffering from their diva-in-hiding pangs, the Arclight presents a quick-fix in "Funny Girl." Sing along to "Don't Rain on My Parade" and "People" and let that caged bird soar. Tickets are \$12.

For more information, call (323) 464-4226.

Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library book sale

601 Santa Monica Blvd., 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Friends Bookstore Volunteers will conduct a sale of specially-priced books. There will be about 100 books that have been signed by an author, are special editions, or have unique value. These books come from the donations of materials to the Santa Monica Public Library.

'Choosing the Quiet'

1227 Second St., 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Maurizio Barattucci's solo show, "Choosing the Quiet" will be on display at Emeritus College through February 29. Barattucci taught at the Art Department of Santa Monica College for 30 years and retired recently. For more information on this free event, call (310) 434-4306.

Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008

Protect your pair

1711 Ocean Park Blvd., 8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Mammograms are held every first Thursday of the month at Westside Family Health Center. Call (310) 450-4773 for more information and to make an appointment. Fees vary.

Lovin' Black History Month

1704 Montana Ave., 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Local performer Jo Todd celebrates Black History Month and Valentine's Day along with special guest, flamenco guitarist Bill Freeman at the Montana Avenue Branch Library.

Magic Meathands

4455 Overland Ave., Culver City, 8 p.m. – 9 p.m.

The "Magic Meathands" perform an hour of fully improvised hilarity based on audience suggestions and participation — presented by director Bill Johnson. Tickets are \$5 at The Spot Cafe & Lounge. For more information, call (310) 559-8868 or visit www.magicmeathands.com.

Improve eclectically

1323-A Third St. Promenade, 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Westside Eclectic's Level 1 Improv class is an introduction to the art of improv comedy. The intro covers core improv ideals, concepts and vocabulary such as hyper-listening, give and take, yes-anding, efficient communication and emotional response. The WE teaching staff creates a warm and open learning environment that facilitates establishing the foundation of a seasoned improviser.

What's New This Week

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

A free-wheeling review and discussion of the week's key news stories at home and abroad.

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.



Small business with big results

BY KEVIN HERRERA | Editor in Chief

WILSHIRE BLVD Big things come in small packages. Just ask Sherry Quay, the co-owner of one of the highest grossing UPS franchises in all of Southern California.

Her relatively tiny store, located at 1223 Wilshire Blvd., handles more than 1,800 packages a month and features more than 1,200 private mail boxes for those craving a Santa Monica address without the "P.O. Box" stigma. The store also has a notary public on the premises, makes keys, sends faxes and sells office supplies.

On average, the store registers roughly \$1 million in sales each year, Quay said.

"It's been wonderful," Quay said of the business, which she purchased from her ex-husband eight years ago and now runs with the help of her daughter, Angela Farrow. "A little store like this and to be able to do the volume we do is terrific. We are very, very lucky."

The secret to the store's success has to be the location and the range of services offered, the hard-working employees and loyal customers, Quay said Monday.

"It's tough being your own boss and it's a lot of work, but if you can persevere and have a great group of employees behind you, it's well worth it," Quay said. "In the last couple of years I've been able to step back and take a couple of days off. I'm very fortunate to have the employees and the customers I have."

Situated on a busy thoroughfare just feet from a post office, the UPS franchise is highly visible and easy to access. Those who can't get the services they need at the post office march on down to the UPS store.

"It's really convenient for me," said Tom Price, who has had a mailbox at the store for the last 17 years. "It's a great family run business with a great location. It's secure and it really just makes sense."

For the last 10 years, Joan McNamara, a mother of nine children spread across the continental U.S., has trusted Quay and her five loyal employees with birthday and Christmas

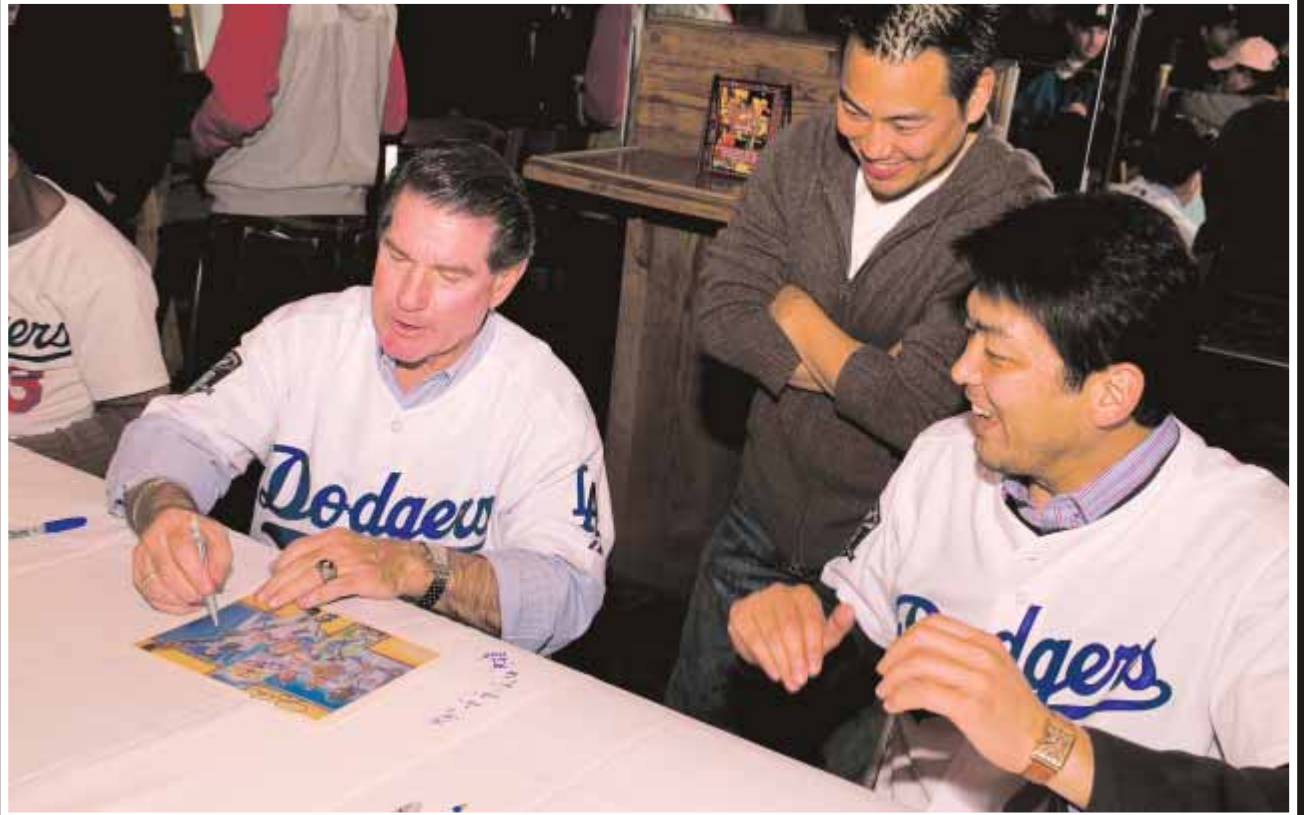
SEE BUSINESS PAGE 14



DODGER BLUE

(Above) A throng of Dodger fans descended on Yankee Doodles on the Third Street Promenade Tuesday to meet some of their favorites both past and present.

(Right) Dodgers great Steve Garvey (sitting on the left) signs memorabilia for an enthusiastic fan while current closer Takashi Saito looks on.



Photos by Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

McCain racks up victories on Super Tuesday

BY DAVID ESPO

AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON Sen. John McCain swept a string of delegate-rich, East Coast primaries Tuesday night, reaching for command of the race for the Republican presidential nomination. Democrats Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama traded victories in an epic struggle from Connecticut to California.

McCain, the early Republican front-runner whose campaign nearly unraveled six months ago, won in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Delaware to gain all 198 delegates at stake there. He also put Illinois and Oklahoma in his column.

Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee won in Alabama and in his home state. He also triumphed at the Republican West Virginia convention, and told The

Associated Press in an interview he would campaign on. "The one way you can't win a race is to quit it, and until somebody beats me, I'm going to answer the bell for every round of this fight," he said.

Romney, the former governor of Massachusetts, won a home state victory. He also took Utah, where fellow Mormons supported his candidacy.

Democrats played out a historic struggle

between Clinton, seeking to become the first female president and Obama, hoping to become the first black to win the White House.

Clinton won at home in New York as well as in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Arkansas, where she was first lady for more than a decade.

Obama won Georgia, Alabama,

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Some tough love is needed

Editor:

The article ("On death's doorstep," page 1, Feb.1) about 60 volunteers from... local agencies conducting a survey of the city's most vulnerable homeless, reminds me of a bank commercial I see often on TV.

In it, you have a group of corporate board member types hiking through the woods. One of them falls into quick sand. As he's going under, the others decide to have a board meeting to determine what action to take. Finally when he is almost totally submerged with only his hand showing, a quick thinking member of the group act's on his own. He throws him a rope and pulls him out, saving him.

The message is obvious, act!

Stop talking about it. Dare I say, if the article is correct and there are 110 homeless that are in danger of dying this year, because of a combination of disease, drugs/alcohol and mental illness, then these people need a rope, not a survey. You have 60 people out there interviewing people living on the streets in danger of dying. How absurd! Hey people, how about you pick them up, put them in a van and take them to a shelter, where they can get medical help.

Hell, that's not even two homeless people per volunteer. This should be done even against their will. I know I sound mean, but what is compassionate about allowing a sick human being to just lay there in filthy clothes, unprotected from the elements? Especially the mentally ill who are incapable of making rational decisions. They should be treated like children. Would you allow a sick child to sleep in the streets?

As far as housing, well I haven't lived here that long, but I would be willing to bet, that with the money Santa Monica has spent over the years on the homeless, you probably could have built a luxury hotel for them. These people need a shower, clean clothes, food and medical attention. And the truth is that many of them won't stay in shelters because they don't want to and they don't have to. They have options. The weather here is mild. They are allowed to pan handle. Public drunkenness is tolerated. And I guess there are no laws against sleeping in the streets. Most people respond to incentives. Take them away and they also respond ... Force these people into shelters were they can be cared for.

The truly mentally ill need permanent care. Those on drugs and alcohol should be treated but not indefinitely. And those who are able to should be made to get a job. After awhile if they refuse to work, then the tax payers hand out should end. Now I know not all the problems will be solved but a lot of it will. And the problem will be much more manageable.

(We) have people who have been living on the streets for (close to) 30 years. So obviously what is being done, ain't working. I believe there are many people who believe as I do but are afraid to voice it because it's not politically correct. People like the single woman walking down the street at night and is approached aggressively buy a man asking for money. What about her right not to be harassed?

John McColgan

Santa Monica



Going Postal

Steve "the Mailman" Breen

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Immigration reform with some real teeth

SO YOU WANT "THEM" OUT BUT WHO will take care of the yard? You sneer at them on street corners hawking for day labor on your way to IKEA, but then pick four of them up on the way back to help you load your 10,000 pounds of bedroom swag into the house. Why can't they learn English, for crissakes, so I don't have to fumble through a Spanish dictionary to explain how to clean the toilet? And who's gonna pick up the kids from soccer practice while I go to my Tantra Pilates class?

There has been some stupid notion out there among some alleged Americans that "they" don't belong, they broke the law, they are shredding our social services, overburdening our schools, sleeping with our daughters, short sheeting the bed, adding too much cheese and guacamole and they can't drive!

OK, you're right. Feel better? Go watch Dr. Phil for two hours and then go lie down on the bed that Consuelo just made.

The fact remains, folks, that we have 12-15 million illegal aliens in this country sieving through a border as porous as a Minuteman's brainpan. And don't think that only Republicans are hawkish on this subject. I have spoken to a fair number of folks here in Democratopia Santa Monica who are closet Illegal Alien (IA) haters. You want them to come and do your laundry in Santa Monica but you want them to go back to the east side of the 110 Freeway where they belong. You know who you are. You may now go to the back of the Credibility Bus, please. One of the proposed solutions is to deport them. We tried ... 3,600-plus IAs got the toe in the keister last year alone. At that rate it will take us 4,166 years to get rid of them all on the high end. Go Homeland Security. That "they" came back across the border 20 minutes after they had lunch in Tijuana that afternoon is just another example of human need over governmental crisis management.

And it is a crisis. In another way of looking at this, ponder that if the People's Republic of China had landed 12 million screaming Chinamen to take over all the Panda Express Restaurants, that would be considered an invasion. But there are two solutions to this "Mexican Problem"; er, I mean, illegal immigration problem to stem this catastrophe and threat to our cultural myopia.

Solution one: Declare martial law (it's an

invasion ergo a threat to national security). Suspend habeas corpus and posse comitatus as we don't need those pesky courts to get in the way and we'll need the armed forces to start rounding up all those invaders hanging out at Home Depot. For transportation, we will commandeer 85 percent of every US bus companies' fleet to take them to the detention centers. IAs are the only ones that ride the bus anyway so they won't be missed. For detention centers, since we lack the logistics and infrastructure to house a population that is 1.5 to 2 times larger than the Big Apple, we will cancel all NFL and MLB seasons to commandeer the stadiums as processing centers. We will emplace gender segregated tent cities complete with food, appropriate clothing and lots of soccer balls. "Real" Americans won't mind foregoing a score of seasons watching over paid, steroid fueled man flesh parading around in tight pants playing ball. Beer sales in this country will go the way of ENRON so dump your Budweiser stock now. To prevent escape attempts all stadiums will be mined with bunker busters and manned with sniper teams. Consuelo and her three kids might be strapped with suicide burritos. The gas is terrible.

Our founding fathers would be appalled. We don't do this to people who come into the country illegally. We only create reservations for the people who were already here in the first place! Maybe the IAs can start their own casinos to help pay for their incarceration to relieve real American taxpayers. Can you say, "Amerika uber alles?"

Solution two: Provide a path to citizenship with appropriate criteria as was outlined in John McCain's recent legislative efforts and a current plank in his presidential agenda. Ronald Reagan did well in 1986 when he provided amnesty to set the stage for a compassionate response for people in the shadows. When I see an able bodied, American born white man pan handling and two blocks away an illegal alien hanging out by Bourget Bros. scrounging for day labor, I then ask myself, "Who really deserves to be called an American?"

STEVE BREEN is a self-described Reagan Republican and "the best looking mailman in Santa Monica." He can be reached at dulcamarax@yahoo.com.

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Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack

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Infants are the must have accessory today

I LOVE THIS LITTLE BUBBLE WE LIVE IN here in Los Angeles — especially Hollywood. I love the fact that people who don't know the difference between the Electoral College and community college are endorsing candidates. I love the fact that people who are famous because they are attractive and have the ability to walk and talk at the same time (also called acting) think their opinions matter. And I love the fact that actors and entertainers in our fair city set the trends that the rest of the country will eventually follow, despite the fact that a lot of these people aren't capable of getting through their day without the help of assistants, nannies, stylists, publicists, and drivers. There is one recent trend, however, that gives me pause: The new infatuation with motherhood.

In 2006, the infant became the "must-have accessory" in Hollywood. Last year, with the undeniable return of the pre-baby body for Katie Holmes, Angelina Jolie, Heidi Klum, and Gwen Stefani, it became clear that a woman could have a family and still be hot enough to earn a living in front of the camera. Then it was on. Now you can't swing a teenage paparazzo on Robertson Boulevard without hitting a celebrity with a bun in the oven.

As a public service, I will now quote my sainted grandmother, Lurlene Patterson (rest in peace, Nana), who once told me, "the most important thing a father can do for his kids is to love their mother."

What she was saying was that a father teaches his kids how a man should behave by example. He shows his boy children how to treat women (in general) and the woman he loves (in particular); at the same time, he shows his girl children what to expect (and what not to accept) from a man.

For this new crop of Hollywood MILF's-to-be (or MTB's), the dynamic is reversed, but the premise is still the same. The point being that when a mom and a dad can demonstrate to their kids that they are committed to loving and supporting each other no matter what, those kids are much less likely to settle for anything less from their partners.

Why is that so important? Because it's so rare. In my circle of friends, only two or three out of 10 sets of parents have done the right thing (stayed married, remained faithful, and were focused on

raising healthy, well-adjusted kids). In a city like ours (which cannibalizes its young), the importance of good parenting is magnified a thousand times. And in the Internet age, the old practice of inventing a romantic back-story to tell the kids when they get old enough to ask how mommy and daddy met is over. You're going to have to tell them the truth, even if you can't handle it.

Do you understand what I'm saying, Nicole Richie? Are you listening to me, Halle Berry? Me entiendes, Jessica Alba? The biology is simple: The sperm fertilizes the egg, which grows into the fetus, which becomes the child. In that process, you only need a man for his seed and nine months later you have your "Mini Me"; born to parents who may or may not actually love each other and a "celebrity" for life, whether or not he or she wants to be. The child-rearing is much more difficult.

I have gotten comfortable with the idea that I'll have to look at pictures of Suri Cruise, Shiloh Nouvel Jolie-Pitt, and Jayden James Federline every time I buy food at a supermarket for the next 30 years. These Hollywood MTB's need to get comfortable with the idea that in another 20 years (or less), it could be their daughter being rolled into an ambulance semi-nude and whacked out of her mind on anti-depressants and booze, surrounded by paparazzi and with helicopters circling overhead if they, as moms, don't do the right thing and proactively provide their kids with some kind of male role model.

I say this because we're all watching it happen to my beloved Britney and her little sister before our eyes. Lynne Spears put her daughters in front of the camera at an incredibly young age (just like these Hollywood MTB's are going to do, whether they want to or not) and in the process, sold all three of their souls to the entertainment industry. It's a shame, too, because all the money in the world won't give her or her daughters the one thing they really want — a husband and father who loves them.

KENNY MACK is a writer, comedian, and loving uncle to twelve nieces & nephews living in Santa Monica. He can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com.



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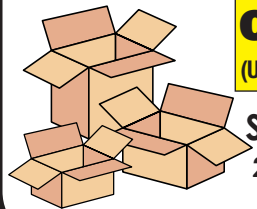
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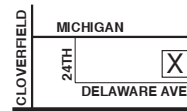
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The **Q-Line**

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Standing with the ban

Does your favorite restaurant still use Styrofoam? The city recently introduced a ban on the ecologically unfriendly packaging, but it will take a while before it begins enforcing the new ordinance.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Would you stop going to your favorite eatery if they don't comply with the Styrofoam ban sooner than later?

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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Pilot was ordered to drop altitude

By the Associated Press

LOS ANGELES A rookie helicopter pilot who clipped a power line and died in a fiery free-way crash had been ordered to fly lower, federal investigators said in a preliminary report.

An air traffic controller told Michael Patrick O'Neill to fly at or below 500 feet to avoid hitting airplanes that were landing at Los Angeles International Airport from an unusual direction, the National Transportation Safety Board said.

O'Neill, 29, was heading from El Monte Airport to Torrance Municipal Airport on Jan. 25 when he went down. The crash spilled debris in the south-bound lanes of the Harbor Freeway in South Los Angeles but nobody on the ground was hurt.

The power line he hit was about 120 feet above the freeway, the NTSB said.

The air traffic controller ordered him to decrease altitude to avoid aircraft that, because of wind and rain, were heading into

LAX from the opposite direction to their usual flight path.

The controller will not be disciplined, said Ian Gregor, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration.

"Once we give a pilot an instruction to proceed at or below 500 feet, it is up to the pilot to decide whether to remain at a safe altitude," Gregor said. "It's also up to the pilot to stay clear from any obstacles."

O'Neill, who obtained his private pilot license on Nov. 1, was flying a rented Robinson R-22 helicopter.

He did not file a flight plan before takeoff. His instructor told investigators that O'Neill indicated "that he wanted to perform a solo flight that night."

The instructor told investigators he warned O'Neill about the change in air traffic patterns at Los Angeles International Airport, the report said.

✉ **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**
■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

STATE BRIEFS

LOS ANGELES

City bus kills woman crossing street

Fire officials say a Los Angeles city bus hit and killed a woman this morning as she was crossing a downtown street.

Los Angeles City Fire Department spokeswoman d'Lisa Davies says a Metropolitan Transportation Authority bus struck the woman at about 5:30 as it was turning. It is unclear if the woman was crossing at a light.

Davies says the woman was pinned under a front wheel of the bus and had to be pried out using tools and air bags. The woman, whose name has not been released, died at the scene.

Authorities are investigating.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PISMO BEACH

Pilot lands safely on beach after engine quit

The pilot of a disabled small plane landed safely on the beach at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area.

Pilot Richard Reibel says the engine on his Mooney Mite plane quit over the Pismo Pier minutes after takeoff Monday afternoon from the Oceano airport and he was forced to pick a spot on the beach.

The 63-year-old Pismo Beach man wasn't hurt and there was no damage to the aircraft.

AP

SAN LUIS OBISPO

Families of earthquake victims win settlement

Jurors decided the families of two women killed when a Paso Robles building collapsed during the 2003 earthquake should get \$2 million.

The two-month wrongful death trial ended with Monday's negligence verdict against the owner of the 111-year-old Acorn Building.

Twenty-year-old Jennifer Myrick and 55-year-old Marilyn Frost-Zafuto were killed while trying to flee the downtown Paso Robles building during the magnitude-6.5 quake.

Jurors decided property owner Mary Mastagni and her family interests were negligent in the building's maintenance and operation.

AP

SAN LUIS OBISPO

Diablo Canyon shuts down reactor for refueling

Operators of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant near San Luis Obispo have shut down one of the two reactors for refueling.

The project also includes replacement of the reactor's four steam generators, which will keep the reactor shut down for two months.

Plant station director Jim Becker says it's the largest refueling outage in the history of the Pacific Gas and Electric Co. nuclear plant.

AP

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REAL ESTATE

What'd they do to our house?

Taking an emotional ride past your old home can be rough

BY MELISSA KOSSLER DUTTON

Associated Press Writer

The current owner of Dawn Friedman's childhood home recently painted the front door red. When Friedman spotted the change during one of her regular detours down her old street, she called her sister to discuss it.

"We approved," said Friedman, of suburban Columbus, Ohio. "We liked that."

Friedman, 38, and her sister, Erica DiPaolo, 40, routinely drive past their old house to relive good memories, check on the neighborhood and see what has changed.

"My sister and I are kind of obsessed with it," Friedman said with a laugh.

So are a lot of people. Many former owners drive by their old dwellings, slowing down to get a better look. Some, unable to move on after moving away, drop in for tours and watch for open houses. Others even write about their experiences on the Internet.

New owners can feel the shadow of former owners. They wonder whether they would approve of changes to the property and feel self-conscious about adding their own touches.

Mary Mars, who now owns Friedman's and DiPaolo's old house, said she was flattered by their attachment to it.

"I think that's wonderful," she said. "I understand that phenomenon."

While the sisters approved of the new door color, other changes, such as the removal of some trees, a fence and a lamp-post, were met with less enthusiasm.

"It pains me," Friedman confessed.

Houses - especially childhood homes - can evoke a lot of curiosity and emotion, said David Klimek, a psychologist who specializes in attachment issues. Seeing an old house can stir up memories of family celebrations, loved ones and the everyday pleasures of times past.

"It's like a temple or shrine of their own life and their own family," Klimek said from his office in Ann Arbor, Mich.

When Jane Porricelli's parents sold their house in Barrington, R.I., around the time she went away to college, she didn't think much about it. But years later, when she moved to a neighboring town, she found herself driving past her childhood home.

"The memories came back," the 27-year-old said. "The nostalgia was there."

Dating an old family friend who had spent countless hours in the house added to her sentimental feelings. In a nod to their past histories there, Porricelli's then-boyfriend got permission from the owners to bring her to the house for a tour.

At the end, he asked her to marry him.

"I thought it was great," said Margaret Vatter, who had bought the house from Jane Porricelli's parents in 1998.

One of the things that had appealed to Vatter about the house was that a family had lived there. "We looked at a bunch of homes here," she said. "When I walked in, I said, 'I'm home.' There were pictures of kids everywhere."

Although the Vatters extensively remodeled the house's interior, they did little to Jane Porricelli's bedroom. That pleased her.

"It's really beautifully done," said Porricelli, who bought her first home, in Cranston, R.I., two years ago.

Porricelli sometimes wonders what that house's former owners, Lenore and Joel Cerel, think of the changes she has made. The Cerels, who lived in the four-bedroom Colonial for 34 years, moved into a nearby apartment building.

"We chopped down a ton of trees," said Porricelli, who sends the older couple a Christmas card every year. "I'm a little bit scared to invite them in."

I JUST WANT TO REMEMBER IT THE WAY I HAD IT. I WAS VERY HAPPY TO HAND OVER THE LOVE OF MY LIFE TO JANE AND STEVE. THEY'RE A LOVELY."

Lenore Cerel
Former homeowner.

Lenore Cerel said she would pass on a tour anyway.

"I just want to remember it the way I had it," she said. "I was very happy to hand over the love of my life to Jane and Steve. They're a lovely couple."

That's not to say she approves of the landscaping changes.

"I could sit and cry," the 70-year-old said. "We liked the look of the house, but it's not our house any more."

Jessica Walliser, a professional horticulturist, had a similar reaction in September when she drove past a house she had sold in 2001.

"Now I'm upset I even looked!" Walliser, of Sewickley, Pa., wrote in her online journal. "They hacked out my garden to put up an 8-foot-high retaining wall that is topped with lots of weedy sumac, ragweed, horseweed and other assorted junk."

Such feelings are natural, said psychologist James Quick, who teaches at the University of Texas at Arlington.

"It's part of our human DNA to connect and attach to places and people," he said. "So when somebody takes out those bushes it tears our heart out."



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NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR A CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENT AT 2323 28TH STREET

The City of Santa Monica has prepared an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the **2323 28th Street Condominium Project**. The City of Santa Monica has prepared this Notice of Intent to provide responsible agencies and other interested parties with information describing the proposal and its potential environmental effects. Environmental factors which would be potentially affected by the project include:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Neighborhood Effects
- Construction Effects
- Transportation/Traffic
- Noise
- Shadows
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

PROJECT APPLICANT: Danny Shalom

PROJECT LOCATION: 2323 28 Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project involves the construction of a two-story, approximately thirty feet high building, designed to accommodate eight market-rate town home-style condominium units. The total building area would be approximately 11,338 square feet. Each unit would be designed with first floor common areas (living room, dining room, kitchen, and half-bath) and a second floor with two bedrooms and two bathrooms each. Outdoor space would be provided for each unit comprised of ground floor patios and second floor balconies. Each residential unit would include a private exterior spiral staircase which would lead from the second floor balconies to a private deck on the rooftop, providing additional outdoor space. A total of eighteen parking spaces, for residents and visitors, would be provided in a single-level subterranean garage.

AVAILABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION: Copies of the Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration on the proposed project may be reviewed at the following locations:

City Planning Division public counter
Room 111
1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA

Office of the City Clerk
Room 102
1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA

Santa Monica Library
Fairview Branch
2101 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica, CA

Santa Monica Library
Main Branch
601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA

REVIEW PERIOD: As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, a 20-day public review period for the Mitigated Negative Declaration will commence on **February 6, 2008** and end on **February 26, 2008**. The City of Santa Monica welcomes agency and public comments on the document during this period. Any comments on the Mitigated Negative Declaration must be received within the public review period. **Comments may be submitted, in writing, by 5:30 p.m. on February 26, 2008** and addressed to:

Lily Yegazu
City Planning Division
1685 Main Street, Room 212
Santa Monica, CA 90401
Fax: (310) 458-8341
E-mail: lily.yegazu@smgov.net

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de la preparación de un reporte sobre, lo cual puede ser de interes a usted. Para más información, llame a Carmen Gutierrez, al numero (310) 458-8341.

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HOME IMPROVEMENT

Labor-saving tools hit the market

BY EILEEN PUTMAN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON Baby boomers don't get old. They just develop arthritic knees.

When I did, the only device that allowed me to work in the garden without struggling to get up and down was a drab little stool that looked embarrassingly old-ladyish.

But the gardening industry has grown savvy. It's fast producing lawn and garden tools that boomers can use in their graying years — but that don't look so, well, elderly. Cool tools that are efficient, don't harm the environment, and play to the self-mythology of an activist, can-do, forever-youthful generation.

We are a finicky lot, but a powerful market force, 78 million strong. A yearly survey by the nonprofit National Gardening Association found that people 45 and older are the backbone of the industry — accounting for about 64 percent of gardening retail sales.

Many of us, though, don't have much time for working in the yard or tending that backyard patch of tomatoes. And if we're retired, we're probably downsizing our gardens, or at least not starting new ones.

In fact, sales to gardening do-it-yourselfers are down — \$34 billion in 2006, a decline from the previous year and below even 2001's figure of \$37.7 billion, according to the NGA. With the economic downturn, gardening isn't a spending necessity. The industry is hoping the movement toward greening the planet will at least help at the cash register.

Today's tools are colorful — easier for aging eyes to see — and ergonomic — delivering results for less muscle. They're cushion-gripped, streamlined, with a fun factor.

Companies like Fiskars, Radius Garden and OXO are known for such tools. The idea is to make it easier for the backyard gardener to sit, plant, water, weed and reap the fruits of relatively modest labor.

Will Raap, who in 1983 founded Gardener's Supply, the big Vermont catalog company, based his business on "enabling" tools for people with physical limitations, mainly the disabled and elderly. But he's seen a resurgence in products like his original Easy Kneeler, which has handles that help people get up and down to garden.

"It's a pretty good example of a product that got a little slow, then when the boomers got a little tired they were interested," said Raap, at 58 a boomer himself. His target customers are people who, like him, "get tired a little easier" but still want the exercise and satisfaction of gardening.

Bruce Butterfield, NGA's market research director, said boomer-friendly tools could boost the industry because gardening "becomes more fun if you're not walking away with aches and pains."

Here's a look at some of the latest tools and trends:

PREPARING SOIL

Plants don't grow well when the soil is compacted, so you need a way to dig and get more air and organic matter into it. For big landscaping projects, like putting in a lawn or vegetable garden, you may need the big

guns — a tiller to turn the soil or a coring machine to poke holes in it.

■ **Tiller:** Traditional gas-powered machines pollute and are heavy. Newer electric tillers produce no carbon emissions and weigh less. A flame-colored electric tiller costs \$249 at Gardener's Supply. See www.gardeners.com.

■ **Digging:** Long-handled shovels with a bigger flat area for the foot allow you to use more leg muscles as you dig. Some handles, like those on shovels made by Fiskars, are shaped like an oversized "D" to make it easier to grip and reduce hand fatigue. Fiskars' signature orange-handled tools are available at many retail stores. See www.fiskars.com.

For smaller jobs, a bright red silicone-handled "soil scoop" selling for \$24.95 at Gardener's Supply has one serrated edge and a pointed tip designed to slice through roots and compacted soil and break up clay. Radius Garden makes a lightweight trowel with a chartreuse-colored handle curved to fit the palm and reduce wrist stress. It's \$12-\$15 online and at stores. See <http://www.life-with-ease.com> or www.radiusgarden.com.

PLANTING

Whether you're planting seeds, bulbs or sod, this task is usually harder than you think it will be. There's a lot of bending and kneeling. One solution is to get a small, lightweight cart or knee aid.

■ **Carts and stools:** Home Depot sells a \$34 Garden Rocker that, despite its name, is not a rocking chair but a contoured, adjustable seat; you can buy a \$15 non-slip matching cushion

with tool pockets. The company also sells a \$39 kneeler aimed at reducing back strain. See www.homedepot.com.

The \$34.95 kneeler at Gardener's Supply becomes a bench when you flip it. Smith & Hawken sells a \$39 foldable kneeler; see www.smithandhawken.com. The Garden Hopper, a rolling stool with an interior storage area, sells for \$19.95 at www.activeforever.com.

Wheelbarrows have moved beyond those old heavy metal contraptions. A big polyethylene cart at NGA's garden shop sells for \$199.95 and has a hinged mechanism that lets you tip the cart or tub for easier unloading. See nga-gardenshop.stores.yahoo.net/index.html.

■ **Bulb planters:** OXO, the "Good Grips" tool company, makes a quick-release bulb planter with a handle wide enough for both hands, to make it easier to dig. A lever replaces the soil after the bulb is planted, and sells for \$12.99 at www.oxo.com.

MAINTENANCE

■ **Hand tools:** Fiskars and OXO make ergonomic pruners, lopper, weeders and more. Several Fiskars pruners and loppers are approved by the Arthritis Foundation's Ease-of-Use program. Check the company's Web site.

■ **Lawnmowers:** Gasoline-powered motors can be difficult to start after a winter hiatus, and are noisy and polluting. Electric mowers have been around for years, but so has the problem of running over those long extension cords. Neuton, a Vermont company, has a battery-powered mower that sells for under \$400.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Real Estate 101

Mike Heayn

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Ownership comes with hidden costs

DO YOU WONDER IF YOU CAN REALLY afford that beautiful home you fell in love with? The real cost of home ownership is more than a mortgage payment. The benefits of home ownership are plentiful, from a tax deduction to having a place to call your own. However, many factors should be considered in the real cost of a home.

A lot of first time home buyers assume that the only cost of a home is the mortgage, not realizing what else is involved in a monthly payment. A mortgage payment will often times consist of the principal and interest, along with the property taxes and property insurance. Many first time homebuyers forget to include the cost of property taxes and property insurance when figuring out what they can afford. For example, if you had a monthly mortgage budget of \$3,500, you would be able to afford a loan of approximately \$615,000 on a 30-year fixed loan at 5.50 percent if you did not have to consider any thing else. If the \$615,000 represented a 95 percent loan to value ratio, the purchase price would be \$647,368. However, property taxes and insurance need to be used when calculating what can be afforded.

In the above example, backing into the numbers, using property taxes and insurance, you would be able to afford a property costing approximately \$526,315. Here is how the numbers breakdown: On a \$526,315 purchase price, a 95 percent loan to value would equal \$500,000. If you took a 30-year fixed loan at 5.50 percent, the principal and interest payments on \$500,000 would come to \$2,839. At a tax rate of 1.20 percent based on the \$526,315 purchase price, the property taxes come to \$6,316 annually or \$526 a month. Once you add in property insurance of \$1,600 a year or \$133 a month, the total payment comes to \$3,498. The difference between \$647,368 and \$526,315 is over \$100,000, which is significant to many first time homebuyers. That is

why it is important to know what you can really afford before looking at properties outside of your budget.

Lenders, such as banks, take the property taxes and property insurance into consideration before qualifying someone for a loan. However, there are other actual expenses that should be calculated as well. If you are purchasing a condo, you will have monthly condo fees, such as home owners association or HOA fees, which will run anywhere from \$150 to \$850, with the majority running between \$300 and \$500 a year. A bank will include these condo fees in the mortgage payment. In the above example, if condo fees ran \$350 a month the loan would be reduced by approximately \$60,000, which would reduce your purchase price to about \$460,000. Of course, the condo fees take care of the maintenance on the property. However, if you own a house, you will have to pay for upkeep.

Most home owners do not have the time to mow the grass, paint the property or clean the house. All of these tasks cost money. Hiring a gardener and housekeeper is a recurring expense that can add up. Unless you own a brand new home, things are going to go wrong — plumbing, electrical or a new roof can end up costing thousands of dollars. These are items to think about before purchasing a property.

When doing a budget before purchasing a new home, keep real costs in mind. The last thing you want to do is spend time and money constantly working on your property, unless that was your plan. Owning a property you can afford is a great decision to make and there is nothing like calling a place home, just remember to keep the real expenses in mind.

MIKE HEAYN is a Washington Mutual multi-family loan consultant. He can be reached at (310) 428-1342, or e-mailed at michael.heayn@wamu.net.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Tips for using outdoor lights

By the Associated Press

Aside from simply throwing the “off” switch, homeowners can make a few common-sense changes to ease or eliminate light pollution:

■ Redirect outdoor lights. Add “fully shielded” fixtures to aim light beams downward rather than into neighbors windows or needlessly overhead.

■ Use solar lamps or lights requiring less wattage. Mercury vapor lights often are illu-

mination overkill, producing a blinding glare and washing out the night. Try 13-watt compact fluorescent bulbs, which provide plenty of intensity yet extinguish most ambient light.

■ Place lights only where absolutely needed, and use no more than necessary.

■ Install motion sensors and timers that turn off lights when they’re not needed. That not only reduces extraneous dusk-to-dawn glare but also saves energy costs.

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Market Matters

Brian Hepp

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Investment strategies for those with funds

WHILE THERE ARE MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE plenty of money to invest, more than a few hesitate to do so because they are unsure of exactly how or where to invest their money. And while it may seem a logical conclusion that the more money you have the more complicated your investment picture becomes, that is not necessarily the case. Financial investment strategies can still be broken down into simple, easy-to-understand terms.

Asset Allocation — One of the most important elements of a successful financial strategy is proper asset allocation. This refers to the mix of investments you have in your portfolio, and it's important to keep a good balance of different types of investments — like stocks, bonds and cash, for example — diversified across a range of industry groups or sectors. Your ultimate financial objectives, the amount of time you have to invest and your own risk tolerance should all be taken into consideration as you decide exactly how to divide up your funds and where to invest them.

Equity Investment Strategies — When investing in stocks, a good rule of thumb is to diversify your stock portfolio across a number of sectors; you may also want to overweight industry sectors whose stocks you believe are likely to benefit from the current outlook. Once you have identified these sectors, you can begin to select specific stocks from within them.

You may want to consider stocks that pay dividends, which can give your investment an added boost. Another benefit of these stocks is that you can usually reinvest the dividends you earn directly into the purchase of more stock, and many investment firms even have programs that allow you to do so at no cost.

Another good idea is to select companies that have a solid foundation and have the potential to continue to grow over the long term. While it's not easy to predict the future, the advice of a financial consultant and a little research of your own should enable you to identify companies that have the qualities necessary to meet your long-term objectives.

Fixed-Income Investment Strategies — When you buy a bond, you are usually promised the return of your principal as long as you keep it until maturity. In addition, you earn interest on your money before the bond matures. There are a wide variety of fixed-income products available. Some can be tax-advantaged, and many generally afford you a fixed rate of return.

Estate Planning — Regardless of your age, an estate plan is a valuable tool that can help preserve your estate in the unexpected event of your incapacitation or even death. It can also ensure your assets are properly managed, according to your wishes, for your heirs. Proper estate planning can even help reduce federal estate taxes for your heirs, so they can more fully enjoy the benefits of the money you have left to them.

While this is just a simple overview of some of the many financial opportunities available to you, it's important to begin your financial strategy right away. Talk to a financial consultant to find out more about the ways you can tailor your asset management strategies to help you enjoy your money now and in the future.

BRIAN HEPP is a financial consultant and can be reached at (310) 453-0077 or at brian.hepp@agedwards.com.

TECHNOLOGY

Yahoo examines alternatives to Microsoft's \$41 billion bid

BY MICHAEL LIEDTKE | AP Business Writer

SAN FRANCISCO Microsoft Corp.'s \$41 billion takeover bid appears to have backed Yahoo Inc. into a corner, leaving the struggling Internet pioneer with the unpleasant choice of selling to a detested rival or pursuing other agonizing alternatives likely to require the help of an even fiercer foe, Google Inc.

At least that appeared to be the consensus emerging among analysts Monday as Wall Street awaited Yahoo's response to last week's unsolicited offer from Microsoft.

Yahoo says its board is going to take its time reviewing Microsoft's bid along with other options that could keep the Sunnyvale-based company independent.

"At the end of the day, I don't think they are going to be able to turn down Microsoft," predicted technology investment banker Peter Falvey of Revolution Partners, echoing a widely held sentiment.

But if Yahoo spurns Microsoft, analysts believe it probably will have to swallow its pride and forge an advertising partnership with Google if the alliance could win antitrust clearance.

Under this scenario, Yahoo would rely on Google to run its search engine while joining thousands of other Web sites that depend on the Internet search leader for a steady stream of ad revenue generated from text-based links that produce commissions with every click.

But getting Google's advertising help probably wouldn't be enough to trump Microsoft's offer by itself. To placate shareholders, Yahoo probably would have to line up enough money to pay a special dividend or perhaps even take the company private in a leveraged buyout.

Going private might be even more painful for Yahoo's 14,300 employees than a sale to Microsoft.

To help repay the more than \$20 billion debt that would be incurred in a leveraged buyout, Yahoo would likely have to fire about 4,500 employees, or 31 percent of its work force, Stifel Nicolaus analyst George Askew estimated Monday. Yahoo also probably would have to sell about \$12.5 billion worth of investments in several promising Internet companies, including Alibaba.com and Yahoo Japan.

Like most analysts, Askew still believes Yahoo will wind up in Microsoft's clutches because the world's largest software maker appears to be a determined bidder with more financial firepower than just about every other conceivable suitor.

The list of so-called "white knights" willing to come to Yahoo's rescue appears to be dwindling. Several of the most logical candidates, including News Corp., AT&T Inc. and Comcast Corp., reportedly have no interest in trying to top Microsoft's bid.

Should Yahoo resist, Microsoft could still turn up the pressure by drawing upon its \$21 billion in cash and lofty market value of \$285 billion to raise the bid.

Despite its vast resources, Microsoft expects to finance part of the Yahoo takeover with debt, the company's chief financial officer, Chris Liddell, said at a Monday investment conference. It will mark the first time that Microsoft has had to borrow money to finance an acquisition.

Some analysts believe Microsoft could end up paying as much as \$35 per share — a huge premium from Yahoo's stock price of \$19.18 before the saga began.

Yahoo shares rose 95 cents to close Monday at \$29.33 while Microsoft's shares fell 26 cents to \$30.19, leaving the value of its cash-and-stock offer at \$41.3 billion, or \$28.71 per share, down from \$44.6 billion, or \$31 per share, when it was first made.

The threat posed by a Microsoft-Yahoo combination continued to hurt Google's shares, which fell \$20.47 to finish at \$495.43. The decline left Google's stock price 34 percent below its peak of \$747.24 reached three months ago.

Merrill Lynch analyst Justin Post believes Yahoo should dangle the prospect of a Google partnership to persuade Microsoft to raise its bid and then accept the higher offer.

While a Google partnership could boost Yahoo's revenue by \$500 million to \$600 million annually, Post said Yahoo's brand will be better off with Microsoft. "It seems

to us Google has its, not Yahoo's, best interests in mind," Post said.

Google already is attacking Microsoft's proposed takeover as a bad deal for consumers, arguing it could limit choice on the Internet.

Microsoft contends consumers and advertisers would be better off if it buys Yahoo because the combined company would pose a more formidable threat to Google's huge advantage in the Internet search and advertising markets.

Google Chief Executive Eric Schmidt reportedly has already contacted his Yahoo counterpart, Jerry Yang, to broach the possibility of an ad partnership — an alliance that some analysts had been advocating even before Microsoft made its bid.

Turning over search and a big chunk of advertising would be a humbling step for Yahoo. The company has invested more than \$2 billion to develop its own search technology and adjoining advertising system during the past five years in a largely fruitless attempt to catch Google, whose success is one of the reasons that Yahoo's profits have declined for five straight quarters.



SOONER OR LATER, I SUSPECT THIS IS GOING TO BE TAKEN DIRECTLY TO YAHOO SHAREHOLDERS. AND THOSE SHAREHOLDERS ARE VERY DISAPPOINTED WITH MANAGEMENT'S EXECUTION AND THE COMPANY'S FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE."

Scott Kessler, Standard & Poor's equity analyst

Yahoo gave Google one of its first big breaks in 2000 when it hired the Mountain View-based company to power its search engine. That partnership, which ended in 2004, didn't involve selling ads on Yahoo's site.

Even if Yahoo decided to work with Google again, the partnership probably would face a tough antitrust review, given that the two companies together control nearly 80 percent of the U.S. search market.

Microsoft, with just an 8 percent share of the U.S. search market, almost certainly would raise antitrust alarms if Google took over Yahoo's search engine, just as Google is already pushing regulators to take a hard look at Microsoft's takeover plans.

Google almost certainly can't try to buy Yahoo outright because of antitrust laws, but it might be able to make a small investment like the 5 percent stake that it bought in Time Warner Inc.'s AOL for \$1 billion in 2005.

Yahoo's board conceivably could even turn down Microsoft on the grounds that the current offer grossly undervalues the company, given its stock traded as high as \$34.08 in late October.

If Yahoo assumes that stance, it might provoke a show-down at its annual meeting in a few months. Microsoft has until March 13 to nominate its own slate of directors if it tries to seize control of Yahoo's board.

Yahoo also possesses an antitakeover provision, known as a "poison pill," that could be used to issue millions of new shares to make an acquisition prohibitively expensive. Triggering the poison pill almost certainly would infuriate already testy shareholders.

"Sooner or later, I suspect this is going to be taken directly to Yahoo shareholders," Standard & Poor's equity analyst Scott Kessler predicted. "And those shareholders are very disappointed with management's execution and the company's financial performance."

✉ **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Getting carried away in the garden

BY MELISSA KOSSLER DUTTON

Associated Press Writer

When Winthrop Baum wanted to improve the output of his beloved fruit trees, he became a beekeeper.

He began with two hives in 1991 to pollinate his apple, peach, pear, nectarine and plum trees in Fairfield, Conn. Today, bees from 45 hives buzz among the trees and produce about 2,000 pounds of honey annually.

An over-the-top solution? The 53-year-old says that's characteristic of him.

"I've been known to take things a little far," Baum says.

Some people just can't help getting carried away in the garden. A relaxing pastime becomes an obsession, turning them into compulsive weeder, fanatic plant collectors or prolific growers. They find themselves devoting large amounts of time and resources to their green pursuits.

"For many gardeners, once they get established in gardening, they find the thing that really affects them," says Doug Oster, co-host of a radio show, "The Organic Gardeners," and co-author of "Grow Organic" (St. Lynn's Press, 2007), both with Jessica Walliser. "It really does become an obsession."

People may be attracted to plants for various reasons, says Charlie Nardozzi, senior horticulturist with the National Gardening Association in South Burlington, Vt. Some like the science of growing them. Others

appreciate their beauty.

Jeremy Wayne Lucas has sacrificed food, sleep and the company of loved ones for the sake of plants. A longtime gardener, he started to suspect that his hobby was taking over his life when his fiancée, Christina Anderson, accused him of loving his plants more than her.



FOR MANY GARDENERS, ONCE THEY GET ESTABLISHED IN GARDENING, THEY FIND THE THING THAT REALLY AFFECTS THEM."

Doug Oster, Co-host of a radio show, "The Organic Gardeners"

Lucas, of Jacksonville, Fla., had started buying racks of near-dead, discounted plants from a big-box store and taking them home to nurse back to health. He would normally pay \$10 for a rack of 600 to 1,000 sick plants.

Over the course of a year, he estimates, he brought home more than 100,000 plants. At times, his entire yard was covered with plant containers. Several times a week, he would make the 45-minute trek to the store, spend several hours loading his van with plants and then drive 45 minutes home to unload.

"I just got totally addicted," the 57-year-old says. "Some of my friends were saying they

couldn't stand to watch me go totally crazy."

Lucas gave plants to friends, children, senior citizens and strangers. He would invite fellow gardeners over and offer them their pick.

Even giving the plants away was addicting.

"It was always fun to see people acting as if they were the kid in the candy shop," he says.

When the store changed its policy about selling sickly plants, Lucas' buying binge came to a halt. He redirected his energies into an intensive gardening class and found a part-time job on the horticultural staff of the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens. But if the big-box store ever calls back, "I would do it again," he says.

Joy Scott of Pittsburgh indulges her plant obsession every spring, pulling most of the dishes out of lighted display cupboards in the kitchen and filling them with flats of seedlings. The tiny plants thrive under the lights designed to spotlight tableware, she says.

"Pretty soon I'm going to be able to convince my husband to put in a greenhouse," she says.

Scott's winter contribution to her garden is mulching her neighbors' discarded Christmas trees, which she pulls from their garbage. Under the cover of darkness, she cruises the neighborhood looking for trees and loading one or two into her trunk. This year, she made about a dozen trips and snagged 15 trees that she chopped up in her wood chipper.

"I don't want my neighbors to know I'm stealing their Christmas trees," she explains. "I'm getting nice free mulch."

Ralph Gale's gardening passion has taken him well beyond his neighborhood outside Topeka, Kan. Gale routinely travels to other states on behalf of his beloved day lilies. He attends seminars, swaps growing tips with other enthusiasts and checks out new varieties.

"I keep purchasing more and more," says the 71-year-old. "I have about 200 different varieties."

During the warmer months, he and his wife, Mary, spend about five hours a day working on their 5-acre lot, which includes two ponds, a vegetable garden, flower beds and prairie grass.

Gale says he always attends the regional meetings of the American Hemerocallis Society and gets to the national conventions as often as he can.

Sometimes, family obligations come between him and his plants.

"We have children all over the country, so we have to go and visit them every once in a while," he says.

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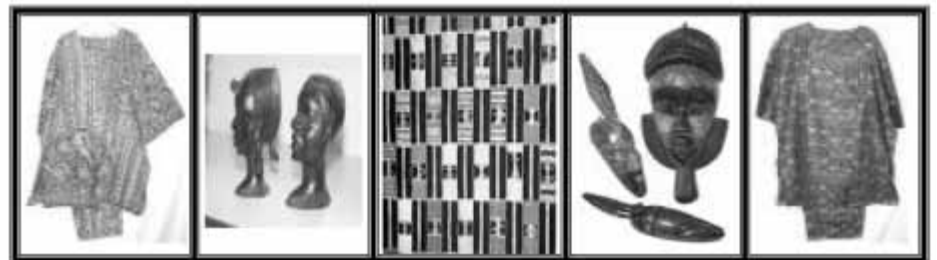
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CLOSE ENCOUNTER: A plane flies over a neighborhood off of Bundy Drive. City officials recently traveled to Washington D.C. to discuss safety issues at Santa Monica Airport with key members of congress.

City officials describe meeting as 'fruitful'

FROM AIRPORT PAGE 1

reading, leaving residents in limbo. The ban would affect only those aircraft with approach speeds of more than 121 knots, which represent only 7 percent of total jet operations at the airport, city officials said. Other jets and piston-powered aircraft traveling at lesser speeds would still be allowed to use the airport.

City officials are hoping that the meeting with Oberstar, Waxman and Harman will lead to a permanent solution that protects residents. The FAA gave no indication during that meeting that they are going to change course and propose a new runway safety plan. The FAA's current proposal has been deemed inadequate by city officials.

Officials with the FAA said they support installing 165-feet of collapsible concrete proven to stop jets traveling at certain speeds from going off the runway, but do not support any safety measures or policies that would limit the types of aircraft that

are currently using the airport, which is considered by the FAA to be a reliever site for LAX.

In a sternly-worded letter from Kirk Shaffer, FAA's associate administrator of airports, it is suggested that the ban is illegal and that the council should instead focus its efforts on working with the FAA to install safety enhancements and possibly purchase homes around the airport to create runway protection zones.

City Hall is the operator of the airport, however, it is limited in what it can do because of a 1984 agreement with the FAA that arose out of litigation. City attorneys believe the 1984 agreement and FAA orders allow City Hall to prohibit or limit any type of aircraft in the interest of public safety.

Ewell said Chairman Oberstar is taking a closer look at the airport and is planning to come back soon with a list of recommendations.

"The congress members all expressed their commitment to working toward a solution," Ewell said. "We want to take advantage of all three congresspersons assisting, but I think conversely, the council wants to know there is a specific time frame ... and not keep this open ended. It's been over five years now and everyone is frustrated."

Residents in Sunset Park and Mar Vista said City Hall shouldn't wait any longer and instead move forward with the second reading of the jet ban.

"I knew they were having the meeting. I wasn't holding my breath," Susan Hartley, a



Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

TAKING IT TO THE TOP: Safety at Santa Monica Airport has long been a issue for residents.

Santa Monica Airport Commissioner and a resident of Sunset Park, said on Tuesday. "I really don't know what's been accomplished. The day to day operation of the airport remains the same. I'm for the city doing the second reading and getting on with things.

"Every time I heard a jet land, I wonder if this is going to be the one, and I'm not exaggerating," Hartley said.

Ewell said the issue has never received the type of attention that it is now getting from legislators in Washington and he believes

City Hall's efforts to arrange the meeting are "indicative of the fact that the city takes this very seriously and we understand the concerns of our community and the Mar Vista community as well."

"We are being very aggressive and (want to) reach a reasonable conclusion," Ewell said.

kevinh@smdp.com

✉ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

**I KNEW THEY
WERE HAVING
THE MEETING. I WASN'T
HOLDING MY BREATH."**

Susan Hartley

Santa Monica Airport Commissioner and a resident of Sunset Park

Obama and Clinton fight for delegates

FROM ELECTION PAGE 3

Delaware, Utah and his home state of Illinois. He also prevailed in North Dakota, the first of seven caucus states to report votes.

After an early series of low-delegate, single-state contests, Super Tuesday was anything but small — its primaries and caucuses were spread across nearly half the country in the most wide-open presidential campaign in memory.

The result was a double-barreled set of

races, Obama and Clinton fighting for delegates as well as bragging rights in individual states, the Republicans doing the same.

Polling place interviews with voters suggested subtle shifts in the political landscape, potentially significant as the races push on through the campaign calendar.

McCain held a small edge among voters calling themselves Republicans, a group he had not won in any of the earlier primaries or caucuses. As usual, he was running strongly among independents. Romney was getting the votes of about four in 10

people who described themselves as conservative. McCain was winning about one-third of that group, and Huckabee about one in five.

Overall, Clinton was winning only a slight edge among women and white voters, groups that she had won handily in earlier contests, according to preliminary results from interviews with voters in 16 states leaving polling places. Obama was collecting the overwhelming majority of votes cast by blacks.

Clinton was gaining the votes of roughly

six in 10 Hispanics, and she hoped the edge would serve her well as the race turned west to Arizona, New Mexico and California, the biggest prize with 370 delegates.

The allocation of delegates lagged the vote count by hours. That was particularly true for the Democrats, who divided theirs roughly in proportion to the popular vote.

Nine of the Republican contests were winner take all, and that was where McCain piled up his lead.

Overall, he had 300 delegates to 93 for Romney and 61 for Huckabee.



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CASTING VOTES: Santa Monica High School students line up to vote at the mock election in front of Byrum Hall on Tuesday. Samohi students picked Sen. Barack Obama in the election.

Students pick Obama

FROM SAMOHI PAGE 1

advancing youth involvement in entrepreneurship and community service, co-sponsored the mock elections on Tuesday, an event that coincided with similar elections staged at more than 200 high schools statewide, all a part of a program offered by the Secretary of State's office to encourage young adults to be more civic minded.

Altogether more than 450 high schools were expected to have held Presidential Primary mock elections over the past two weeks, half of which held their simulations last week, according to Kate Folmar, spokeswoman for Secretary of State Debra Bowen's office.

"The idea here is to get teenagers and young adults hooked on democracy so they register and vote as soon as they turn 18," Folmar said on Tuesday.

The number of schools that participate in mock elections has gradually declined since the program was initially offered for the 2004 presidential election, but the number of overall voters has actually increased. In 2004, 647 high schools staged mock elections but only 209,000 students participated. This year, about 241,000 students are predicted to have voted.

"This is such an exciting year in elections and Secretary Bowen wants to make sure young adults are also able to share in that election excitement," Folmar said.

In the days leading up to Super Tuesday, students in the Samohi government courses discussed the pros and cons of each presidential candidate, simulating caucus-style debates, according to Anita Kemp, a SAGE advisor.

In order to carefully mimic the actual voting experience, the Santa Monica League of Women Voters schooled the students on how to operate polls, everything from check-

ing in voters, abiding by the honor system in respecting students' privacy, and counting the ballots after the polls closed, which in Samohi's case was 1:10 p.m. when the lunch period ended.

"It's important for schools to get students involved in civic activities, for students to be well-informed," Kemp said.

Blake Rosado, a member of SAGE and one of the organizers of the mock election, said the classroom debates were meant to help students make informed decisions, focusing their attention on the issues rather than name recognition.

"We want to make sure that we get everyone involved and they know the issues going on," Rosado said. "It's not about who is famous."

While the mock election was meant to reflect the real-world voting process that the students would soon experience as adults, there was one obvious discrepancy — the students cast their votes to a near deafening music blaring through the PA system, an eclectic soundtrack of some soft rock and hip hop. But regardless, it was an atmosphere that impressed on students that being engaged in politics can be cool.

Chaneini Gauer, the publicity chair for ASB, said today's youth need to work on making their voices heard, pointing to a statistic that the 18-25 year-old demographic is one that is least likely to vote.

"I think we don't make ourselves heard loud enough," Gauer said.

The students hope that their generation will signal a shift in current voting trends amongst young Americans.

"It's really time for the youth to take a stand," said Nicholas Borenstein, a senior and co-chair of the committee that organized the mock election.

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WHALE OF A TIME

Geoffrey Dunn news@smdp.com

Gloria Ortiz, 8, of Santa Monica colors whales during Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Aquarium's 'Whale of a Weekend' on Saturday. The two-day event celebrated the annual migration of the Pacific gray whale and featured activities for children including arts and crafts, naturalists' presentations on whales, and film screenings. A wildlife observation station was also set up at the west end of the Santa Monica Pier where visitors could use binoculars and field guides to search for whales and other local wildlife. Observation of underwater marine life was possible with the aquarium's Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), which broadcasted live video of life beneath the waves.

Spears' family calls Lufti a bad influence

BY LINDA DEUTSCH

AP Special Correspondent

LOS ANGELES A restraining order against the man who's been at Britney Spears' side during her downward spiral portrays him as a Svengali like figure who held her a virtual hostage in her home, drugged her, took over her finances and controlled the ravenous paparazzi "like a general."

The order against Sam Lufti was based on a lengthy declaration from Spears' mother, Lynne, who says Spears met the 33-year-old in October 2007 and he "essentially moved into Britney's home and has purported to take control of her life, home and finances."

Her account of a long chaotic night at Spears' home depicted a drugged and confused pop star being led around by Lufti, who was setting up pictures for the paparazzi even as Spears was spinning out of control.

The documents released by the court Tuesday ordered Lufti to stay away from Spears, her homes, her parents and siblings' homes and the hospital where she is confined.

Lynne Spears said that Lufti "drugged Britney, he has cut Britney's home phone lines and removed her cell phone chargers. He yells at her. He claims to control everything — Britney's business manager, her attorneys and the security guards at the gate."

Much of the 6-page declaration centers on the night of Jan. 28, just a few days before she was whisked by police and ambulance to a hospital psychiatric ward. She outlined increasingly bizarre behavior through the night and said her daughter asked at one point, "When do I get to see my babies?" to which Lufti answered, "Wednesday."

Spears has been involved in a protracted court fight with her ex-husband Kevin Federline over custody of their two small children, 1-year-old Jayden James and 2-year-old Sean Preston.

Spears, 26, lost custody of the boys to Federline following an incident last month when she refused to return the children after a visit. In recent weeks she has arrived

at the courthouse but refused to enter for custody hearings. Last week, a judge appointed her father as her conservator and a lawyer who interviewed Britney at the hospital said she doesn't understand the importance of legal proceedings in the case.

Lynne Spears described a harrowing night that stretched into the wee hours when she, her husband and a friend went to Britney's home because they'd heard on the news she had a fight with Lufti and Britney was crying.

Once inside, Lynne Spears said she was told by Lufti that her daughter didn't want anyone but her in the house and she was afraid to see her father.

Lynne Spears also said there were several paparazzi inside the house.

"The paparazzi reported to Sam and addressed him with great respect. They treated him like a general."

She said during the evening, "Sam had told Britney she was an unfit mother, a piece of trash and a whore, that she cares more about Adnan, her current boyfriend, than she cares about her kids and that she does not deserve her kids."

It was unclear how Lynne Spears knew details of the fight.

Lynne Spears said Britney was not home when she first arrived and she understood Lufti had disabled all of her daughter's cars to keep her from leaving. She said he ordered one of the photographers to take her away when he found out her parents were on their way to intervene.

Eventually, she said, "Britney returned and became very agitated and could not stop moving. She cleaned the house. She changed her clothes many times. She also changed her three dogs' clothes many times. Britney spoke to me in a tone and a level of understanding of a very young girl. Britney then picked up a bottle of pills and read the label and asked us, 'What does insomnia mean?'"

Lynne Spears said at one point, Lufti told her, "You'd better learn that I control everything," and said he was the one giving Britney her medications and, "he told me if he weren't in the house to give Britney her medicine, she would kill herself."

She also alleged that Lufti threatened her.

Local UPS store tops in Southern California area

FROM BUSINESS PAGE 3

presents, graduation gifts and other important packages she's needed to ship to loved ones.

She also relies on the location for making copies and sending faxes. She is the epitome of the loyal customer and one of the reasons why the franchise does so well.

"I'm not surprised," McNamara said when she heard about the franchise's success. "I see people coming in and out of here all the time. I think it has a lot to do with the (employees) here. They're so friendly and they really know how to take care of you."

Throughout the years, customers have asked Quay and her staff to ship a lot of strange things, including large Tiffany lampshades valued at over \$7,000.

"I've had people want to send In-N-Out Burger to New York, or fruit trees to

Pakistan," Assistant Manager Robert Tomlinson said as he finished bubble wrapping a gold Hannah Montana record. "We've even had someone send a cake."

While making a profit is nice, Quay, who worked for Vons for 22 years before going into business for herself, said the best thing about her franchise is the people she meets. She is able to work with her daughter, who manages the books at home, and has established strong relationships with her repeat customers.

"You get to know your neighbors and you become a part of the neighborhood," Quay said. "About 90 percent of our customers are repeat customers. You get to know these people, their families and watch their kids grow up."

"You become a part of their lives, and they become a part of yours."

kevinh@smdp.com



Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

FAMILIAR FACES: Sherry Quay (left) assists long-time customers Joan and Eugene McNamara at the UPS store on Wilshire Boulevard on Monday. Her store is the busiest in Southern California.



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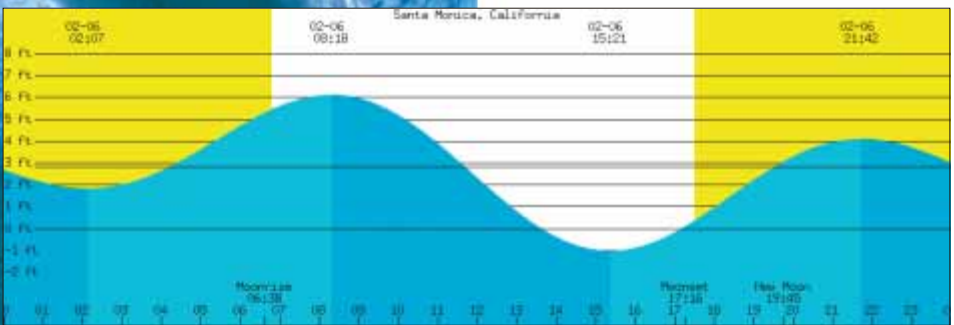
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WATER TEMP: 56°

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Today ooks smaller, although a small swath of NW ground swell is expected from 305 degrees with 14-second periods -- a remnant of recent Gulf activity. West facing breaks are looking at waist to chest high sets when the tide is right, which will be an issue, swinging widely once again. South facing breaks will of course be smaller as only trace amounts of southern hemi stick around for knee to waist high surf.

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02-06 02:07
02-06 08:18
02-06 15:21
02-06 21:42

8 Ft.
7 Ft.
6 Ft.
5 Ft.
4 Ft.
3 Ft.
2 Ft.
1 Ft.
0 Ft.
-1 Ft.
-2 Ft.

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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 29, 2008**

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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 -- 15

Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 29 / 10

Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 13 / 33

The Beach Report Card is made possible by a grant from 

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
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth (leocarrillo)	A+	B
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	F
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Aliso creeks	A+	A+
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	F
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	D	F
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	C	D
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	F
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach	A+	F
Puerto State Beach at creek mouth	B	F
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerto Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	A+	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	F
Surfrider Beach (beach location)- daily	F	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	B	F
Carlton Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	F
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	B
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	F	D
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	C	F
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	C	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)	B	F

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**

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.

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MLS Beckham just wants ‘to win something’

By the Associated Press

CARSON After an exasperating summer, David Beckham has one expectation for his first full season with the Los Angeles Galaxy.

“To win something,” he said as the Galaxy opened training for the Major League Soccer season Monday.

Los Angeles finished fifth in the six-team Western Conference last season and missed the playoffs after losing to Chicago on the last day of the season.

“We can’t afford to be in the position we were in, where we ended up chasing it,” Beckham said. “That’s not good for the players or for a team. We’ve got to get it right from the first game and carry on right through the season.”

Beckham also experienced personal frustration. He arrived in Los Angeles in July with a sprained left ankle, then sprained his right knee about six weeks later.

He played in just eight MLS and tournament games, made four starts and finished with one goal and three assists.

“Hopefully, I’ll stay a lot more fit than I was last year,” said Beckham, who trained with Arsenal in London last month. “I’m just looking forward to this season. It’s a fresh start for us; it’s exciting.”

The fresh start includes new coach Ruud Gullit, a former star player for AC Milan and the Dutch national team who coached in England and the Netherlands. He replaced Frank Yallop, who resigned to join the San Jose Earthquakes.

SOCCER

’Super fan’ Nash looks to bring attention to league

BY JOSH DUBOW
AP Sports Writer

SAN FRANCISCO All-Star Steve Nash is known on the basketball court for peerless vision that allows him to see plays before they develop.

Off the court, Nash is visualizing the success of the Women’s Professional Soccer league more than a year before it starts. He’s becoming an investor and part owner of the new venture.

“I look at my childhood and realize how many athletes I had to look up to,” Nash said in a phone interview. “I look at the opportunity to put some of these wonderfully talented athletes who are dedicated and committed and put them in a setting to inspire a whole generation below them.”

The deal to bring on Nash and Jeff Mallett, a former president and chief operating officer at Yahoo Inc., as investors for the eight-team league was to be formally announced Tuesday by the San Francisco-based league.

Before Nash became a two-time NBA MVP, he won the British Columbia soccer MVP award while in high school. His college days were spent at longtime women’s soccer power Santa Clara.

“I think it will have ripple effects for a long time,” Nash said. “I’m looking forward

“Ruud brings an ability to deal with players in an equal way and get the most out of them, whether it’s a young draft pick or the most famous player in the world,” Galaxy general manager Alexi Lalas said.

Landon Donovan and Carlos Ruiz are not training with the Galaxy. Donovan is with the U.S. national team, which plays Mexico in Houston on Wednesday. Ruiz is recovering from arthroscopic knee surgery.

“I feel I’m 80 percent,” Ruiz said. “I don’t feel any pain, just a little swelling. The team doctor wants to check me this week and after he checks me, we can decide whether I’m ready or not.”

Los Angeles opened training camp without two of last year’s starters, goalkeeper Joe Cannon and defender Chris Albright, both of whom were traded. Lalas said the team is not finished dealing while trying to remain under the salary cap.

Beckham, Donovan and Ruiz consume nearly half of the team’s cap.

“There’ll probably be some other moves we’ll have to make to become competitive,” Lalas said. “There are some difficult decisions still to be made.”

The Galaxy signed former Newcastle United defender Celestine Babayaro, who trained Monday but will not play until he receives his work visa and his transfer papers clear.

Babayaro, 29, played for Nigeria in the 1998 and 2002 World Cups and in the 1996 and 2000 Olympics. He helped Nigeria win the 1996 Olympic gold medal.

to it getting off the ground. I want to be a big fan and hopefully watch them not only entertain but inspire lots of young girls and kids in general.”

Nash comes from a soccer family. His father, John, played professionally in South Africa, and his sister, Joann, was the captain of the University of Victoria soccer team. His brother, Martin, plays professionally for the USL First Division’s Vancouver Whitecaps.

As the father of 3-year-old twin girls, Nash wants to help the growth of women’s soccer in his adopted country. The investment from Nash and Mallett will fund the ongoing development of the league and is specifically earmarked for new media ventures and initiatives.

“I really just want to be a super fan and watch this league grow,” the Phoenix Suns star said. “If I can help spread the word and help get access to some of my fans and help this women’s league take off in this country, I’d be happy to do that.”

Women’s Professional Soccer plans to debut in spring 2009 with teams expected in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New Jersey/New York, St. Louis and Washington. The league looks to add an eighth team before the launch, with possibilities including the San Francisco Bay area, Cary, N.C., Philadelphia and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Kicking it 50 Cent feels 'like a normal person' when hanging out with De Niro

It's not every day that you see **ROBERT DE NIRO** on the cover of *Vibe* – with 50 Cent. They posed for the magazine's March issue to promote their new crime drama, "Righteous Kill,"

FERGUSON GETS BIG GIG

Less than a week after being sworn in as a U.S. citizen, **CRAIG FERGUSON** learned he'll be telling jokes to President Bush. The CBS "Late Late Show" host revealed Tuesday that he's been booked as the entertainer at the annual White House correspondents' dinner in Washington. Don Imus and Stephen Colbert both provoked some criticism for their pointed political jokes. "There are 2,800 journalists in attendance, there (are) congressmen, senators there, military brass, the Cabinet and I sit at the top table with the president and the first lady," Ferguson said.

AP

co-starring Al Pacino and Brian Dennehy. 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, says he'd "hang out with Robert on Thursdays and Fridays" if he could. "His celebrity is so

strong that I get a chance to feel like a normal person for a little bit," the 31-year-old rapper tells *Vibe*. "People get nervous around him. We had a table read, and it was amazing because there were people who came in who

were like, all recognizable faces ... and Robert comes in and Al comes in and it's almost like, their knees are going shaky under the table. It's great." 50, who has sold millions of records, launched

his film career with the autobiographical tale "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" in 2005. De Niro won an Oscar for portraying a mob boss in "The Godfather: Part II."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hatcher wins court ruling in lawsuit; case headed for arbitration settlement

TERI HATCHER has won a ruling in a feud between rival lip plumpers worthy of *Wisteria Lane*. A judge ruled Monday that a \$2 million lawsuit against the 43-year-old "Desperate Housewives" star should be moved out of court and into arbitration. The lawsuit from cosmetics company Hydroderm, filed late last year in Superior Court, claims that a 2005 endorsement agreement with Hatcher's production company stipulated that she would not pitch competing products. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Helen I. Bendix ruled that both

sides are bound by a prior agreement to arbitrate all of Hydroderm's claims rather than litigate them in court. The two sides signed the agreement Nov. 30, according to Hatcher's lawyers, who filed the motion to move to arbitration. According to the lawsuit, the company learned Hatcher was also pushing CityLips, a lip plumper made by City Cosmetics, which competes with Hydroderm's Volumizing Lip Serum. "Hatcher's name, image and likeness have been linked to so many competitors' products," the lawsuit said, "that it is

anyone's guess as to what product keeps her skin and lips youthful." Hatcher's attorney Alan Wertheimer has called the lawsuit an "unjustified and public assault on Teri Hatcher's good name, reputation and celebrity." Wertheimer has said that the deal with Hydroderm did not affect Hatcher's previous deal with CityLips.

AP



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

Let your hair down, Libra

Happy Birthday!

This year could be far more significant than you realize. You are likely to either make major changes to your professional status and personal life, or there could be transformations that might be unanticipated. Nevertheless, you cannot fight city hall. Learn to relax, as what is happening is going to lead to a much more dynamic and creative life in the next few years. Remain confident.



Born Today

Singer Bob Marley (1945)
Singer Natalie Cole (1950)
Singer Fabian (1943)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>
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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ A lot of tension surrounds goals, communication and life in general. One would be well advised to back off some and not push. The ensuing explosion simply might not be worth it. Tonight: Watch the eclipse with a friend.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★ You mean well, and no matter which way you push or what you try to accomplish, you'll hit a blockage. Let go and don't worry. Get into a project just for you where interference might be less likely. Tonight: Meet friends for dinner.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Look beyond the present commotion and consider what you might want to do. If you are thinking about travel or perhaps signing up for a seminar in the near future, hold back for several days, if not longer. Tonight: Get into a fun mind game.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Examine possibilities in the near future. You might be much more happy if you relax and honor a partner's ideas. Sometimes you might not agree, but letting this person play out could be important. Tonight: Make togetherness the theme.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Sometimes you feel overwhelmed or like you cannot get different elements under control. You can and you will, but perhaps not today! Stay even and open while others could be reactive. Tonight: Work on your listening skills.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ You could be taken aback by what someone shares. If you have a lot on your mind, write it down rather than demand an audience. Reactions could be off for the next few days. Tonight: If you're tired, take a nap or call it an early night.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Everyone seems to be acting out or a little strange. Lie back and relax. Use your sense of humor in viewing present events, and you will be far happier as a result. Avoid personalizing any comments. Tonight: Let your hair down.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Remain contained, and don't push any buttons just yet. You could be overwhelmed by news from a family member. On the other hand, someone's reaction could feel off. Communication is not strong today. Tonight: Turn on a favorite TV show.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ How you deal with a changing situation marks others' minds. Today Murphy's law rules. You might be delighted and surprised by what occurs. Still, hold back a touch, as much might not be revealed. Tonight: Hang out with a favorite friend.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Don't take any financial agreement or decision for granted. Don't formalize any new ideas for several days. What might not be obvious now could become evident soon. Listen to news with a touch of cynicism. Tonight: Watch the eclipse, if you can.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Today's eclipse in your sign could spell changes in the near future, especially if you are born within a few days either way of this date. Though you might have more than your share of energy, still try not to upset the apple cart. Tonight: Be creative but not too wild.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★ If you can take a day off, do. You need not push so hard or insist on sticking to your plans. Lie back if you can, as today's eclipse might deplete your energy. Don't push anything. Opt not to trigger as well. Tonight: Curl up with a good book.

MOVIEGUIDE

AERO THEATRE
1328 Montana Avenue
(310) 260.1528

Check theatre for showtimes
7:30

AMC LOEWS BROADWAY 4
1441 3rd Street
(310) 458-1506

Atonement (R)
1:15, 4:05, 7:00, 9:50
National Treasure: Book of Secrets (PG)
1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 10:00
Over Her Dead Body (PG-13)
1:35, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00
Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (R)
1:30, 4:35, 7:15, 9:55

AMC 7 SANTA MONICA
1310 3rd Street
(310) 289-4262

27 Dresses (PG-13)
1:25, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50
Charlie Wilson's War (R)
1:50, 4:35, 7:15, 10:00
Cloverfield (PG-13)
1:15, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:15
The Eye (PG-13)
1:30, 4:05, 7:10, 9:40
Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert Disney Digital 3D (G)
1:00, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45
There Will Be Blood (R)
2:55, 6:30, 10:05
Untraceable (R)
2:20, 5:00, 7:35, 10:10

LAEMMLE'S MONICA
FOURPLEX
1332 2nd Street
(310) 394-9741

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly (Le Scaphandre et le papillon) (PG-13)
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 9:55
Juno (PG-13)
12:45, 3:05, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15
No Country for Old Men (R)
1:15, 4:05, 7:00, 9:55
Persepolis (PG-13)
12:55, 3:15, 5:35, 8:00, 10:15

MANN'S CRITERION
THEATRE
1313 3rd Street
(310) 395-1599

The Bucket List (PG-13)
11:50am, 2:10, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
Cassandra's Dream (PG-13)
11:40am, 5:20, 10:30
Mad Money (PG-13)
2:40, 7:50
Meet the Spartans (PG-13)
12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
Michael Clayton (R)
1:10, 4:20, 7:10, 10:20
Rambo (R)
12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
Strange Wilderness (R)
12:10, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40, 10:10

Janric Classic 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 Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

Difficulty
GOLD

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

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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

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

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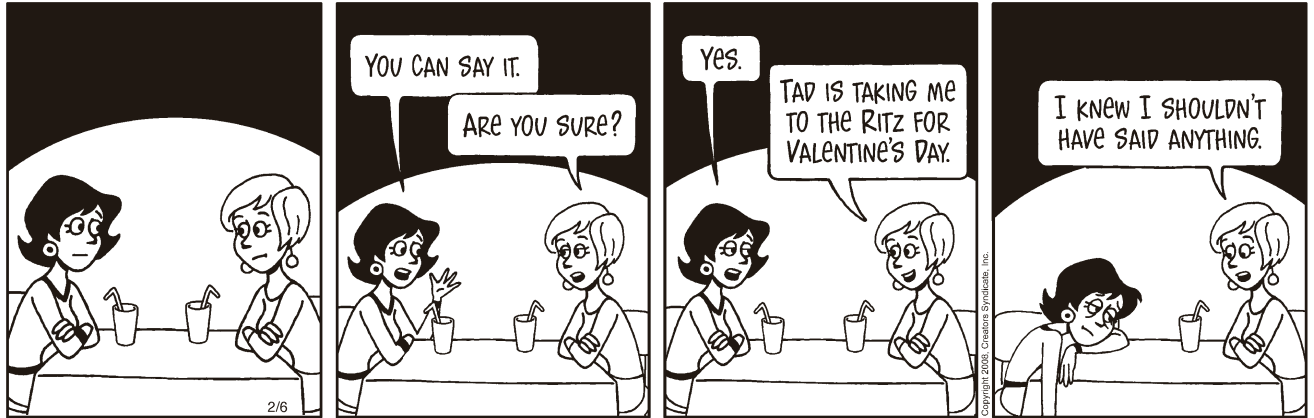
Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



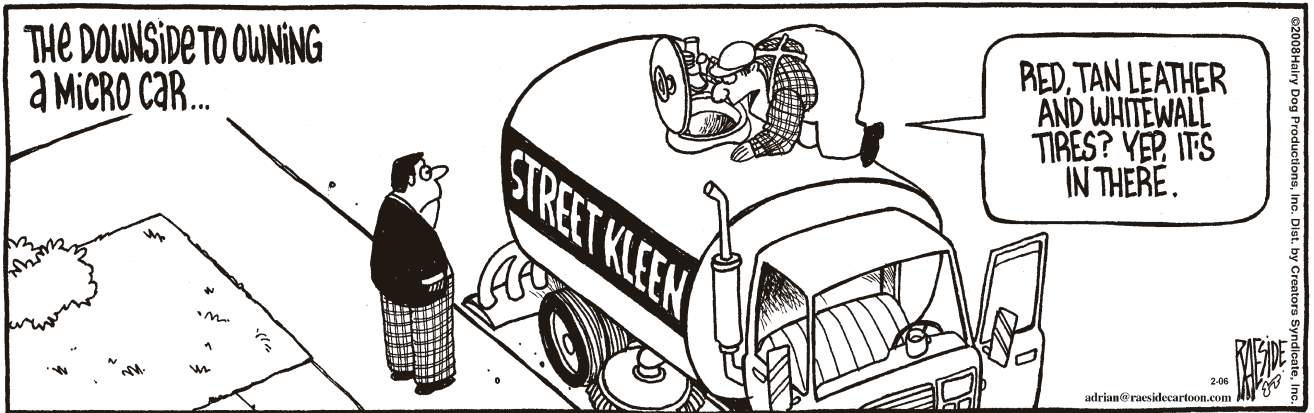
The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



The Other Coast

By Adrian Raeside



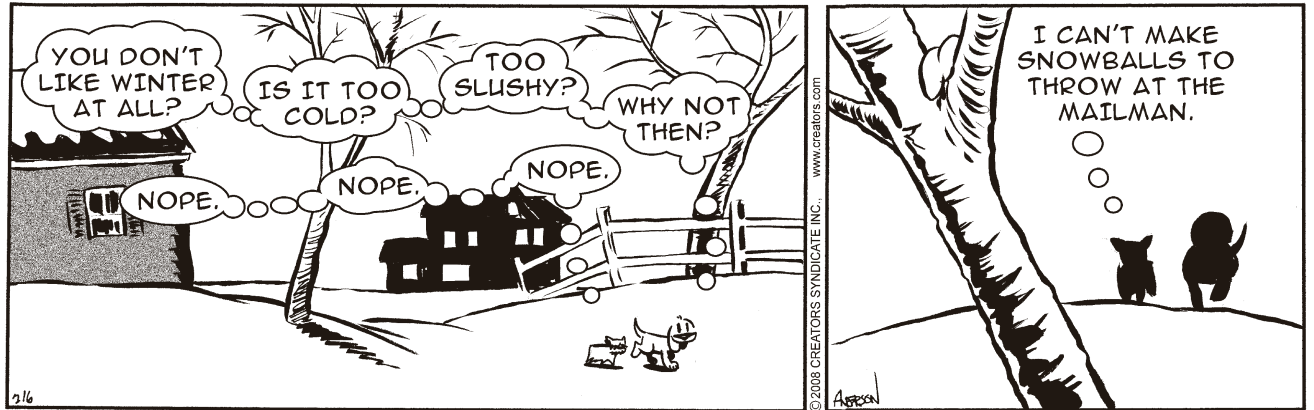
Garfield

By Jim Davis

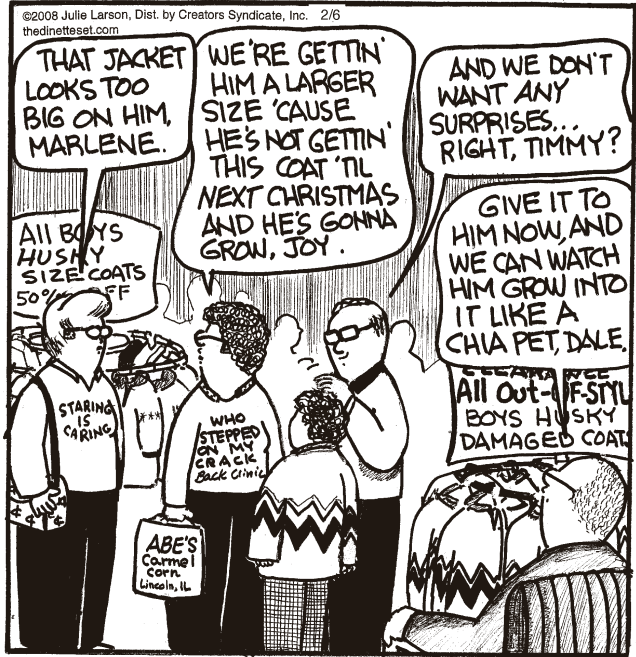


Dog eat Doug

By Brian Anderson



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Strange Brew

By John Deering



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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MYSTERY PHOTO

Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

The first one to identify where this shot was taken wins a prize from the Daily Press. Send answers to editor@smdp.com.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 46 Prison worker
1 Light lunches
7 Surgery memento

DOWN 1 Plop down

11 Michener book
12 Some-what, in music
13 Wyoming range

14 Aware of
15 Tiled art
17 Print measure
20 New cadet
23 Old card game
24 Fumes
26 Writer Beattie
27 Go astray
28 Carp
29 Cage of film
31 Before, to Byron
32 Public outburst
33 Casino figure
34 Get some sleep
37 Finish a hole
39 Euphoric
43 Fresh
44 Anger
45 Ninny

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

Yesterday's answer

18 Column style
19 United
21 Goatee, e.g.
22 Borders
24 1992 U.S. Open champ
25 Important time
30 Boxing combo
33 Swirly posters
35 Abound
36 Arm bone
37 Jotting site
38 Dos preceder
40 Sea dog
41 Big head
42 Home in the wild

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1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11							12			
13							14			
			15			16				
17	18	19				20			21	22
23				24	25					
26				27				28		
29			30					31		
32							33			
		34			35	36				
37	38				39			40	41	42
43					44					
45					46					

Comics & Stuff

DAILY LOTTERY



3 14 30 44 56
Meganumber: 5
Jackpot: \$102M



10 11 16 35 43
Meganumber: 9
Jackpot: \$60M



3 12 29 30 34



MIDDAY: 7 5 2
EVENING: 5 3 9



1st: 01 Gold Rush
2nd: 08 Gorgeous George
3rd: 05 California Classic
RACE TIME: 1.43.84

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

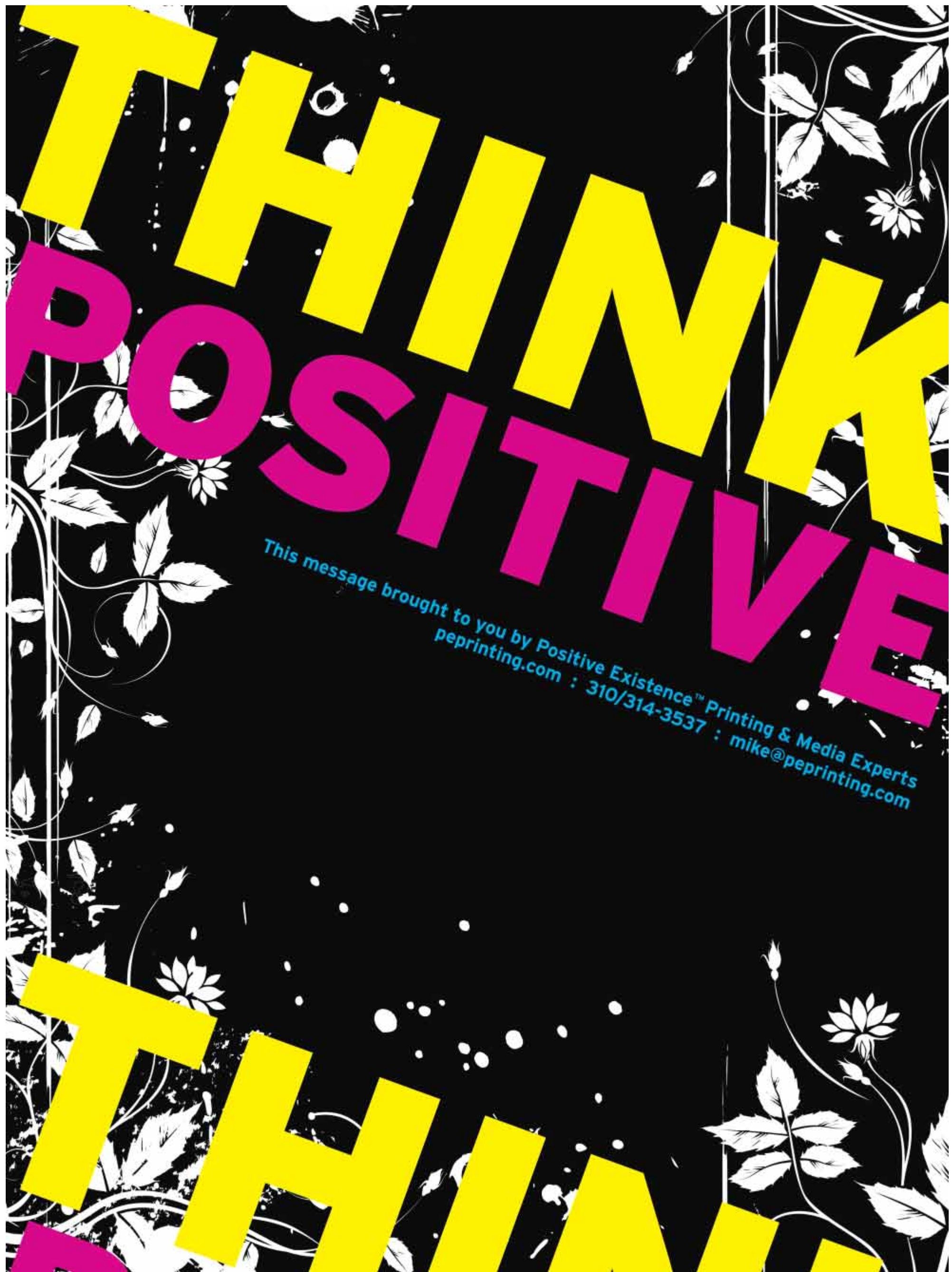
■ People With Too Much Time on Their Hands: (1) According to a report in Britain's Bolton News in December, the House of Lords has recently been discussing the need to reduce the thickness of slices of bread, which Baroness Gardener of Parkes said would help alleviate Britons' alarming levels of obesity. (2) TV's Weather Channel recently released a CD comprising 12 of what it called the most popular jazz selections that play on its "Local on the 8s" weather screens (tunes presumably requested by those who watch the Weather Channel often enough to actually have favorites). ■ A startup Massachusetts dating service has the usual questionnaires about likes and dislikes, but bases compatibility specifically on how one person smells to another (straights and gays accommodated). Eric Holzie's ScientificMatch.com tests each person's "major histocompatibility complex" (MHC) genes, the science behind which dictates how one person will translate the scent of another (with similar-processing people less compatible). (In one famous study, women preferred the smell of T-shirts from men whose MHC was the most different from their own.) Holzie predicts a higher success rate than for ordinary dating agencies, but at a fee of \$1,995 per client.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1911 Ronald Wilson Reagan, the 40th president of the United States, was born in Tampico, Ill.
1756 America's third vice president, Aaron Burr, was born in Newark, N.J.
1778 the United States won official recognition from France with the signing of a Treaty of Alliance in Paris.
1788 Massachusetts became the sixth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.
1899 a peace treaty between the United States and Spain was ratified by the U.S. Senate.
1933 the 20th Amendment to the Constitution, the so-called "lame duck" amendment, was proclaimed in effect by Secretary of State Henry Stimson.
1952 Britain's King George VI died; he was succeeded by his daughter, Elizabeth II.
1959 the United States successfully test-fired for the first time a Titan intercontinental ballistic missile from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

WORD UP!

ineffectual \in-ih-FEK-choo-uhl\, adjective: Not producing the proper effect; without effect; weak; useless; futile; unavailing.



THINK POSITIVE

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Employment



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Employment

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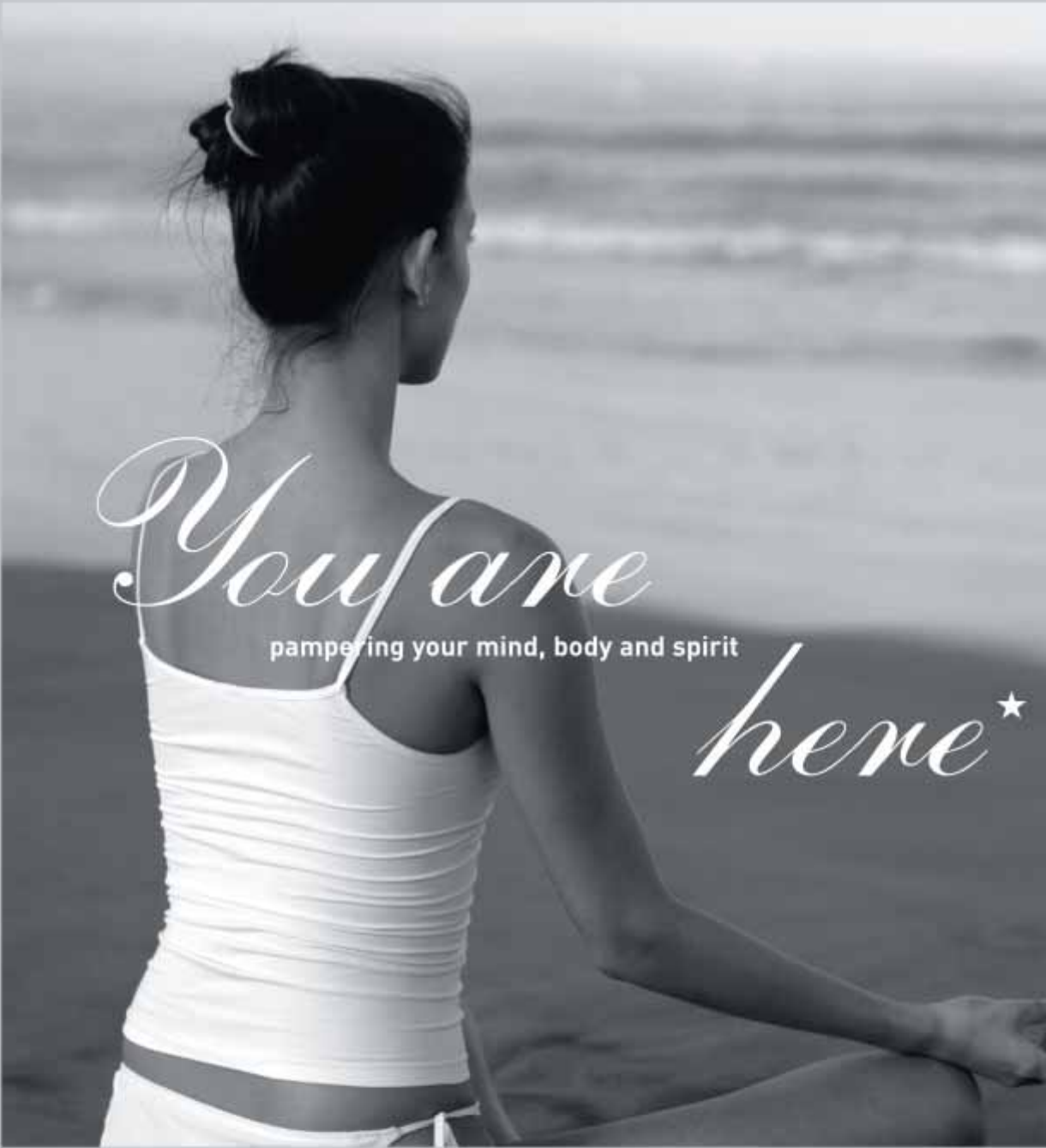
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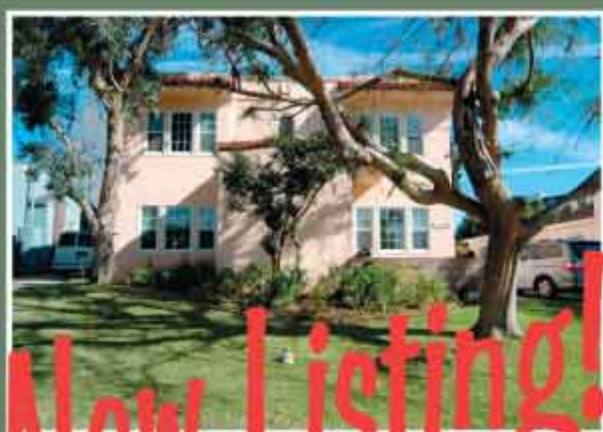
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		<u>Single Family Homes</u>	<u>Condos & Townhomes</u>
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North of Montana	=	\$ 3,447,500	\$ 2,066,286
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	\$ 2,399,500	\$ 935,983
South of Wilshire	=	\$ 1,109,250	\$ 784,736
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