



Santa Monica Daily Press

PIZZA TOWN
SEE PAGE 3

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE KEEPING IT LOCAL ISSUE

The cost to be the boss

Small businesses in Santa Monica find ways to thrive despite corporate competition and rising rents

story by Kevin Herrera
Page 12

Photos by Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com; Photo illustration by Frances Casareno production@smdp.com

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Calendar

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WEEKEND EDITION, FEBRUARY 9-10, 2008

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

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Santa Monica Daily Press

WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



It's always the year of the rat in L.A.

Cesar Chavez & Broadway, Chinatown, 10 a.m.

It's the rat's turn on the Chinese calendar and New Year festivities are raging in Chinatown all weekend. Chase the dragon today with the Golden Dragon Parade from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

'Noche de Paz y Amor'

2425 Kansas Ave., 3:30 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

Mark your calendars for the 11th Annual Valentine's Day celebration, "Noche de Paz y Amor," at Edison Language Academy in Santa Monica. Attendees can participate in dance lessons for all ages, including salsa, merengue, tango and cumbia. Between dances visit the food booths, test your artistic skills with arts & crafts, and enter raffles.

Eight minutes of ohm ...

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 2:30 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.

Quiet the mind and live life easier with just eight minutes of meditation. This free workshop will be held at the Fairview Branch Library. Call (310) 450-0443 for more information.

Casino Nite

1700 Ocean, 4 p.m. — 8 p.m.

Support Meals on Wheels West with some gambling. The Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel is hosting "Casino Nite at the Beach" with Vegas games, prizes and a silent auction. Tickets are \$75 in advance or \$85 at the door. Dress is California Casual.

Journey to the center of the Milky Way

601 Santa Monica Blvd., 2 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.

Fasten your seat belts for a 26,000 light-year journey to the center of the Milky Way Galaxy with Dr. Susan Stolovy. See the amazing images and learn about the fascinating results from the Spitzer Space Telescope.

VITA: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

2601 Main St., 1 p.m. — 5 p.m.

Volunteers from the UCLA Anderson School of Management will provide free tax assistance to low and middle-income taxpayers; covering answers and filing for both federal and state income tax forms. For more information, call the Ocean Park Branch Library at (310) 392-3804.

'Aging: What to Expect'

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. — 2 p.m.

UCLA's Dr. Linda Nelson will lecture on topics related to aging and memory loss. Sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association.

Sunday, Feb. 10, 2008

May your cocktail work rapidly

424 N. Beverly Dr., B.H., 6:30 p.m. — 10:30 p.m.

Rapid Dating is partying a la Beverly Hills with a pre-Valentine's day "Spread the Love Cocktail, Dance and Social Networking Party." For ticket prices, dress code and age requirements, visit www.rapiddating.com.

The fairest gem of all

1855 Main St., 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.

The finest quality of jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, and more from over 80 global exhibitors will be on site. In addition to sales, classes and demonstrations will be held throughout the weekend. Admission \$5. For details visit www.gemfaire.com, call (503) 252-8300, or e-mail info@gemfaire.com.

Lizzy looks to get laid

10508 W. Pico Blvd., 8 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.

"The Catholic Girls' Guide to Losing Your Virginity" tells the story of Lizzy, a witty and soulful Midwestern girl blossoming in the big city of her dreams, who upon realizing her priest has a better sex life than she does, decides to no longer live her life according to the rules of her religion. Lizzy turns 25 in 25 days and will lose her virginity ... or so she hopes. One problem, with whom? From mixing it up in Vegas to church mixers, Lizzy's looking for sex anywhere and everywhere. Tickets are \$20 and \$17.50 (on Thursdays). For reservations, call (866) 811-4111 or visit www.theatermania.com.

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.



CORRECTION:

In the story "Measure R passes by large margin," page 1, Feb. 7, a quote by Mat Millen should have stated, "They put another regressive tax on the poor and now the tenants and the low income homeowners will have to suffer with it."



Alexis Hawkins news@smdp.com

NICE SLICE: Luis Romo prepares a pizza pie at Wildflour, which was voted the no. 1 Pizza Place in Los Angeles by the L.A. Times.

SEE PIZZA PAGE 10

Slice of the pie

Local pizzerias battle it out to be considered the best

BY MELODY HANATANI | Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN Without a blink, Steven Simeone can automatically offer up his choice of best pizza joint in town. “This is the best place in L.A., without a doubt,” the Santa Monica resident said, taking a bite of a slice from Joe’s Pizza of Bleecker Street as he sat outside of the pizzeria on Friday afternoon. “Everything else is in competition for second place.” Nearly every pizza aficionado has their argument as to which pizzeria tosses the best pie, and in a city like Santa Monica, the perennial contender for the best food destination distinctions in Southern California, it seems only natural that its selection of pizza would be just as good. “The Slice — they have the best pizza,” local resident

Venice performers criticize proposed ordinance

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

VENICE To an audience of Los Angeles city officials and senior police officers, a man donned in paint-stained clothing began banging on a bongo drum, his head swinging wildly as a free-spirited man nearby joins the performance, rhythmically waving a red flag in the air, caught in the trance of the music. It was a short-lived concert on Thursday night, held during a town hall forum on a proposed ordinance regulating street performers and vendors on the famous Venice Beach boardwalk, but it nonetheless provided a flavor of what was to be expected for the rest of the evening. The meeting was meant to get a pulse of the public and its thoughts on the proposed ordinance. It was a town hall forum that seemed to have pulled nearly every single boardwalk mainstay, an eclectic cast of characters, from a self-named “King Solomon” who welcomed meeting-goers with his guitar melodies to a man draped in a long robe, his snow-white beard seemingly never-ending in length.

Given the nature of the subject, an ordinance that tackles the inherent American rights of free speech versus the issue of overcrowding and rampant commercial vending on the boardwalk, it was a contentious meeting at best. “Venice is the last free spot in the world,” King Solomon said. Various versions of the ordinance have been challenged in court since it was first introduced in 2005 and was subsequently litigated against by long-time vendors of Ocean Front Walk, calling the law a violation of first amendment rights. The 2005 iteration was the ordinance that put into effect the controversial lottery system for performers. A second version was enacted in 2006 and was challenged once again on the same grounds. Los Angeles city officials, who have been working with a federal district court judge in the mediation process, formulating a draft ordinance that would meet a middle ground with opponents, hope that the third time will be a charm. “This is an opportunity for the community to interact with leaders up in the city as to where we are and where we’re going,” LA

City Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, who sponsored the town hall meeting and whose 11th district includes Venice, said. The proposed ordinance splits the west side of the boardwalk into so-called “P” and “I” zones, the former dedicated to performers and vendors selling “pure speech” items such as newspapers and leaflets, the latter for the vending of items that are created by the vendor. The “P” zone will be established between 17th and Paloma avenues, offering a minimum of 120 spaces, most of which will be about 10 feet by 8 feet. About 10 unassigned spaces in the performers zone will be allocated on a first-come first serve basis. The “I” zone, which will be located in Windward Plaza, will have at least 100 spaces that are considerably smaller than the performer’s plots, about 6 feet by 6 feet. Another 75 spaces that are slightly larger — 6 feet by 8 feet — will be located between Paloma Avenue and Navy Court. While “P” zone performers and vendors will only need to show a full permit — one that includes the name, contact information and a statement of the description of goods and services — during the peak season,

those in the “I” zone will have to exhibit the full permit year round. Noise will also be regulated under the proposed ordinance, restricting amplified noise to certain areas and banning it between sunset and 9 a.m. The ordinance also seeks to regulate noise, whether it’s amplified or not, to 75 decibels, measured from a distance of 75 feet, or 96 decibels, measured from a distance of a foot. The restriction of amplified noise was an issue for many of the speakers who questioned how it would be regulated and how the sounds from one performer, meshed in with background noise, could be measured. “The boardwalk is a noisy place,” said Venice resident Paul Carey, who said there are flaws in the noise provision. “How are police officers going to make a judgment where the source of the noise is.” Catherine Townsky, a Venice resident who once performed on the boardwalk, said if the ordinance is going to regulate against

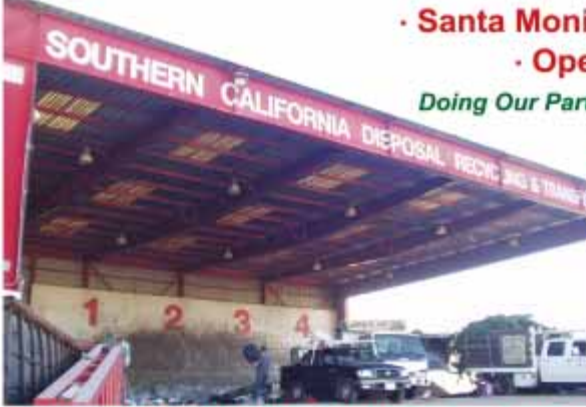
SEE PERFORMERS PAGE 16

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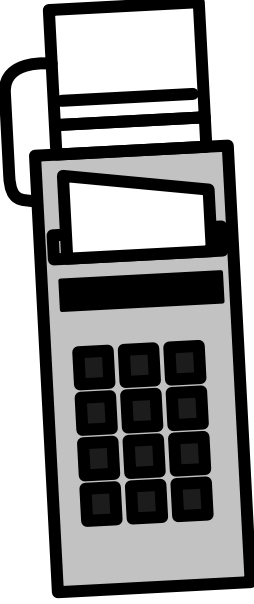
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

They’re working on it

Editor:

Mr. McColgan (“Some tough love is needed,” page 4, Feb. 6) makes some excellent points. I understand his frustration that with all the resources devoted to solving homelessness, the problem ought to go away, and 60 people should be able to get 110 homeless people off the streets. Nevertheless, the wealthiest and most capable nation in the world has been paralyzed by the problem of homelessness for more than thirty years. Why? Because as adults they have the same rights as you and I, and no matter how mentally ill they might be, it is against the law to use force on them. That said, I am happy to report that we are turning the tide by applying the best that we have – powerful research, effective programs and intelligent policies. The surveying that Mr. McClogan decries actually provided powerful data about individuals, and the bigger picture of homelessness in Santa Monica. It allowed us to pinpoint 110 people who suffer the most severe disabilities and are most at risk of dying on the streets. We now know exactly who we need to help, what their problems are, their names and where to find them. The homeless problem has long seemed intractable. But because of initiatives like this, the chronic homeless population actually went down nationally in 2006 for the first time since de-institutionalization. We in Santa Monica hope to make this decrease a trend, until chronic homeless in the United States is no more. I hope Mr. McColgan will join us in celebrating when that day comes.

Julie Rusk
Human Services Manager, City Hall

Props to Rutherford

Editor:

Hello, I had never read “That Rutherford Guy” and was moved by his skill and dedication to deepening our understanding of the legacy of Buddy Holly (“The day the music died a quiet death,” page 4, Feb. 8). Thank you for including John W. Whitehead’s article and providing a way to connect to his thought provoking and inspiring site and foundation. I appreciate your commitment to the Santa Monica Daily Press, providing us with an interesting and informing paper for our neighborhood.

Cassandra Christenson
Santa Monica

Questioning school funding

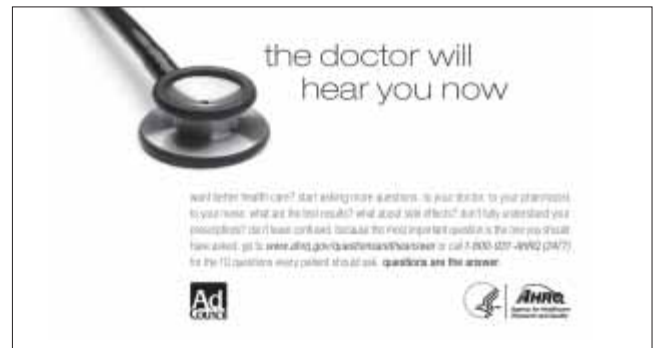
Editor:

I was hoping that citizens of Santa Monica would be more aware of the injustices of Measure R, but it seems that the sheep mentality took them over. The main injustice is renewing the parcel tax. To give an example: A homeowner with (an) 800 square foot condo pays the same amount (as a) homeowner with (a) 3000 square foot home and the owner of (an) apartment building with 50 units. So, basically the poorer individual is screwed again. The owner of a 50 unit apartment building can hypothetically have at least 25 children attending the local schools and pay the same amount tax of an individual with an 800 square foot condo which might have 1 or 2 children. On top of that the owner of an apartment building can offset the tax by passing it on to the renters.

It seems that during every election in the state of California there is some kind of school bond on the ballot. Most of the time they are approved but we have no idea where the money really goes. How about the state lottery? Isn’t that entity supposed to give money to our schools too?

Where does all the money for the schools go?

Al Bondi
Santa Monica



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Modern Times

Lloyd Garver

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Mixed marriages take centerstage

RECENTLY, “MIXED MARRIAGES” AND “blended political families” have been in the news. I’m talking about Democrats and Republicans being married to each other. For example, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger supports U.S. Sen. John McCain, and his wife, Maria Shriver, is for U.S. Sen. Barack Obama. We’ve also seen some famous uncles and cousins supporting opposing candidates. We’re all familiar with the saying, “Politics makes strange bedfellows.” I also think “bedfellows make strange politics.”

Whenever I see the odd couple of political pundits — Mary Matalin and James Carville — on TV, I can’t help thinking, “What’s going on with the two of them?” I realize it’s not that uncommon for spouses to disagree about politics. I’m sure there are Republicans married to Democrats. There are bound to be families in which one spouse is for U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton and the other for McCain or, maybe, one is for former Gov. Mike Huckabee and the other is for Obama. I might have gone too far with that last example. In fact, if there are any couples reading this who are Huckabee/Obama supporters, I’d love to hear from them.

My point is that when Mr. and Mrs. Citizen disagree politically, it’s just a healthy aspect of our democracy. But Matalin and Carville are professional politicians. They don’t just disagree. When each of them describes the other’s party, they describe evil. They attack each other’s basic values. How can they be married? How does it work? “I hate everything you stand for. Could you pass the salt please, honey?”

And how did Arnold handle Maria coming out for Obama just days after the governor endorsed McCain? Again, it’s not the same as the husband and wife down the street who support different candidates. To those who are (incredibly) claiming that McCain is “too liberal,” how does it look for the wife of his muscle-bound endorser to be campaigning for Obama? I’m sure Gov. Schwarzenegger took it in stride. He probably said something like, “This is America, and this is California. So, in this greatest land in the world, you can support whoever you want, Maria. I’m not angry. Now I’m just going to go work out and bench press our Hummer.”

We’ve also witnessed the race for Kennedy endorsements. Caroline and Ted endorsed Obama, and then quickly Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Kathleen Kennedy Townsend and Kerry Kennedy endorsed Clinton. Then, Ted’s son Patrick and RFK’s widow, Ethel Kennedy, endorsed Obama. I worry about how they’re all going to get along at their next Thanksgiving dinner or touch football game.

This whole idea of political endorsements has gotten out of hand. On the Democratic side, both candidates will now try to get anybody with

any connection to the Kennedys. Look for an announcement like: “Man Who Once Sold JFK Pack Of Gum Backs Hillary.”

Any of the Republicans would be happy to have the headline, “Ronald Reagan’s Brother Makes Endorsement.” Then if we bothered to read the rest of the article, it would be something like: “Fred Reagan, the brother of master plumber, Ronald Reagan, of Omaha, Nebraska, has endorsed ...”

THIS WHOLE IDEA OF POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS HAS GOTTEN OUT OF HAND. ON THE DEMOCRATIC SIDE, BOTH CANDIDATES WILL NOW TRY TO GET ANYBODY WITH ANY CONNECTION TO THE KENNEDYS. LOOK FOR AN ANNOUNCEMENT LIKE: ‘MAN WHO ONCE SOLD JFK PACK OF GUM BACKS HILLARY.’

Recently, McCain was so anxious to get rid of the non-endorsement of Rush Limbaugh, that Bob Dole sent Limbaugh a letter praising McCain. How unseemly was that? The former Senate majority leader courting a radio host? What’s next? Is a presidential candidate going to celebrate the endorsement of TV’s Oprah Winfrey? Oh, yeah, I forgot.

Endorsements are vastly over-rated. The concept presumes that we can’t and don’t think for ourselves. Is the union member really going to vote for somebody the union officially supports if he or she doesn’t like that candidate? How many people are going to change their minds because a karate guy/actor endorses someone?

If Matalin and Carville are so smart, if Arnold and Maria have so much influence, how come they can’t even convince their own spouses?

Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from “Sesame Street” to “Family Ties” to “Home Improvement” to “Frasier.” He has also read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes online for “The Huffington Post,” and can be reached at lloydgarver@gmail.com

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A newspaper with issues

410 Broadway, Suite B
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OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913

Visit us online at smdp.com



The Santa Monica Daily Press is published six days a week, Monday through Saturday.

19,000 daily circulation, 46,450 daily readership. Circulation is audited and verified by Circulation Verification Council, 2006. Serving the City of Santa Monica, and the communities of Venice Beach, Brentwood, West L.A. Members of CNPA, AFCP, CVC, Associated Press, IFPA, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce.

Published by Newlon Rouge, LLC

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STRAY talk

A CENTER-CUT, NO-FAT REVIEW OF WHAT WAS SAID THIS PAST WEEK BY FOLKS THE WORLD OVER AND RIGHT AT HOME

“When I look back on this last year, it’s like, what was I thinking?”
— Actress Lindsay Lohan on her active year which included multiple rehab stays

“To the extent that I was neither funny nor articulate, I do apologize.”
— SMDP columnist, Jack Newirth responding to a critical e-mail about his description of J. Edgar Hoover in a past column

“If you’re a big Nirvana fan, a big Hole fan, then I understand why you would want to get to know me, but I’m not my parents.”
— Frances Bean Cobain, daughter of Kurt Cobain and Courtney Love, on being creeped out by the constant speculation surrounding her due to her famous parents

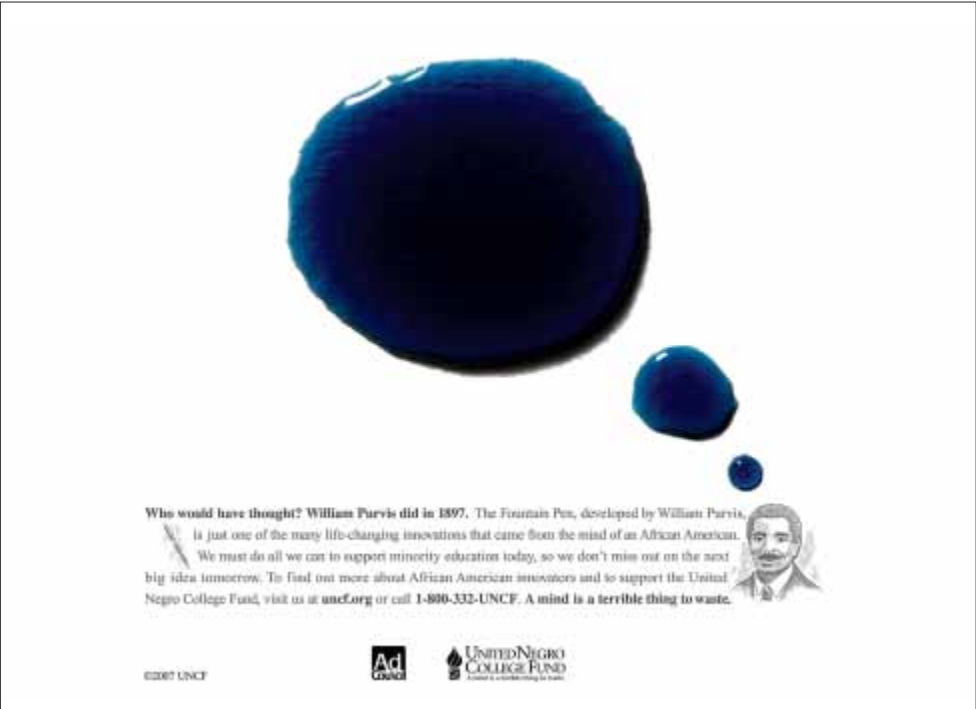
“So I say I am not a traitor. I’m just following my own truth and that truth has led me to Barack Obama.”
— DOprah, speaking to an audience of Obama supporters in California this week about being called a traitor to her gender because she failed to support Hillary Clinton

“I’m going to hope that now the election passed they keep their word and move forward.”
— Malibu City Councilmember Andy Stern on the passing of Measure R, which will continue the annual flow of more than \$10 million into the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

“I guess she seemed like a nice enough chick, but I don’t really know.”
— Singer Joss Stone, on meeting first lady Laura Bush

“Who are you wearing?”
— TV personality Ryan Seacrest, interviewing celebrities on the red carpet before the Super Bowl

Quotations captured and compiled with care by CYNTHIA VAZQUEZ.



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Attention Beachgoers

As part of the Annenberg Community Beach House construction project, Back on the Beach Café (445 Pacific Coast Highway) will close for renovation beginning February 4th.

Beach Parking Lot 10 North will be closed February 7th through May 20th. Until the lot reopens, beach visitors are advised to use the beach bike path, or Beach Lot 9, just south of Lot 10.

Questions? Contact Voneelya Simmons, Project Manager, 310-458-8721. For more information on the project, please visit 415pch.smgov.net.

The Annenberg Community Beach House project is made possible by a generous gift from the Annenberg Foundation at the recommendation of Wallis Annenberg, in partnership with the City of Santa Monica and California State Parks.



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The QLine

STANDING WITH THE BAN

This past week, Q-line asked:

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"IF MY FAVORITE RESTAURANT DOESN'T comply with the sign ordinance, doesn't comply with the smoking ordinance so why should it comply with the Styrofoam ordinance?"

"NO, I WOULDN'T STOP GOING TO MY favorite eateries like Campos Burritos or Carl's Jr. I'd say let the other guys suffer."

"WHAT THEY COULD DO IS HAVE THE restaurants use reusable containers. They could make them out of glass or steel or something. Two-inch thick steel containers for to-go orders so that way they have to return them. Either that or shut down every restaurant in Santa Monica because it doesn't care about businesses any way."

"THERE IS ONLY ONE ANSWER and that answer is one word: Yes."

"LIKE EDUCATION, 85 PERCENT OF environmental issues are just steer manure. Banning Styrofoam containers is mostly about city government control. Like not smoking in parks, it expands to your home. Like not washing your car, it expands to not watering your lawn. Not driving in the downtown area, it expands to not being able to drive your car within city limits. Let the market place determine Styrofoam's fate. If you support green containers then pay \$4.50 for a drink at Starbucks. City mandates

eventually result in the higher cost to the consumer. The only groups that benefit are the parasitic green groups slurping at the public's trough."

"I BELIEVE THAT THE RESTAURANTS will change if people change. Myself and my daughter have been requesting alternatives to Styrofoam for the past few years and proudly tell them that we are no longer going to be their customers if they do not comply with ordinances. We the people are the problem if we don't demand change."

"NO, NOT GOING TO STOP GOING. These token politically correct feel good exercises are useless. Decrease the per-capita pollution by 10 percent and then you increase the population by 10 percent and you are back where you started. Up the same old dirty creek."

"OUR POWER MAD CITY COUNCIL WANTS to outlaw everything and tax everything else. They want to outlaw Styrofoam and plastic bags even though they have another law that says we have to carry plastic bags for dog poop. If they outlaw plastic bags, they should repeal the doggy bag law. Newspaper works better for doggy poop anyway."

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50-plus charged in massive scam

BY LINDA DEUTSCH
AP Special Correspondent

LOS ANGELES More than 50 people have been charged in a massive child care fraud ring operated in part by a federal prison inmate and his wife that bilked taxpayers out of at least \$3 million and preyed on welfare recipients, prosecutors said Thursday.

Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley identified the ringleader as Demetrius Eugene, 36, of Palmdale, an employee of the California Department of Corporations, who is accused of establishing six bogus child care facilities under the name Home Sweet Home Daycare Inc.

Other groups, including one named Grandma and Grandpa Family Child Care, were set up and received licenses from state agencies, authorities said.

The convict who was serving a federal sentence for narcotics trafficking was identified by authorities as Kmond Day, 32, of Los Angeles.

He received a child care license from Community Childcare Licensing, a state agency that employed his wife, Darneicea Day, 28, who operated the phony child care facility while he was in prison, according to prosecutors.

She was charged with making child care applications for herself, collecting money for care of her own children, and being a co-conspirator in the operation, which received more than \$400,000.

The accused were charged in Los Angeles

County Superior Court over the past week and felony arrest warrants were served Thursday. Attorneys for the accused were not immediately identified.

Messages left at numbers listed for Eugene and Home Sweet Home Daycare were not immediately returned.

Kmond and Darneicea Day and Grandma and Grandpa Family Childcare could not be reached for comment.

James Baker, assistant head deputy district attorney in the welfare fraud division, said such scams are widespread and have been uncovered in other parts of the country.

"Hundreds of millions, if not billions, have been lost here in Los Angeles County," he said.

In the current case, he said the scam was launched after Eugene inherited one Home Sweet Home Day Care Center from his mother and began to expand the operation.

Authorities said defendants hired people to find welfare recipients and offer them monetary kickbacks to apply for subsidized child care.

They approached people on the street with children or went to domestic violence centers to find likely prospects. In some cases, children listed as being cared for by Home Sweet Home did not even live in California, authorities said.

Some parents are suspected of signing attendance sheets for their children and receiving kickback checks for the care of each child.

STATE BRIEFS

SANTA ANA

OC agrees to pay \$600,000 to father of dead inmate

Orange County is paying \$600,000 to the father of an Orange County jail inmate beaten to death by six inmates.

George Chamberlain had filed a \$60 million wrongful death lawsuit against the county last year alleging jailers provoked the attack by spreading rumors his 41-year-old son John was a child molester.

Fellow prisoners tortured and killed John Chamberlain on Oct. 5, 2006, while Theo Lacy jailers watched TV nearby. The younger Chamberlain was in jail for alleged possession of child pornography.

The 81-year-old father's lawyer Jerry Steering says his client accepted the county offer out of concern that a jury would react negatively toward his son because of the pornography allegation.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHINO

Slaughterhouse previously cited for electric prodding

A Chino slaughterhouse shut down this week by federal officials for allegedly mistreating cattle was previously cited for using electric prods on animals.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture cited Westland/Hallmark Meat Co. in 2005 for "too much electric prodding" of cattle and other violations of federal humane slaughter policies at the Westland plant in Chino.

Westland Meat Co. voluntarily suspended operations last week after the release of undercover video taken by a Humane Society of the United States was released. The video showed, among other things, ramming of downed cattle with forklifts.

The Agriculture Department then suspended Westland operations.

AP

SAN DIMAS

Motorist dead inside submerged SUV in reservoir

The body of a motorist was found in his submerged sport utility vehicle a short time after he drove up to the San Dimas Reservoir area to release a skunk he trapped in his backyard.

Los Angeles County sheriff's investigators say 60-year-old Frank Wykofka captured and released the skunk Thursday, then his SUV went off San Dimas Canyon Road and plunged into the reservoir.

Daughter Theresa Loose says her father would often come up into the area to release captured skunks so they wouldn't get run over by cars in the city.

The SUV with Wykofka's body was pulled from the reservoir Thursday afternoon.

AP

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Friday just got a whole lot more entertaining

New pizzerias continue to spring up

FROM PIZZA PAGE 3

Mike Ewing said en route to lunch with a friend on Friday.

The already large pizzeria population in Santa Monica is about to get more crowded, with the possible additions of a Mulberry Street pizza in Downtown Santa Monica and a new organic pizza parlor called "Pizza Fusion," part of a growing national franchise.

So is Santa Monica becoming known as a food city? Probably not, according to pizza lovers, who believe that the beachside city, though it offers a good selection of pie, can't hold a candle to traditional pizza cities like New York, Chicago and even Boston.

But what makes pizza popular in Santa Monica is the same reason that makes it popular elsewhere — it's a relatable dish, according to Lesley Balla, the editor and writer of Eater LA, an online gossip blog following restaurants and nightlife in Los Angeles.

"It's that food group everyone appreciates," Balla said. "I think pizza is every man's food."

It is for that reason, coupled with the tourist attraction nature and walkability of the city, that makes Santa Monica a desirable and target location for pizzerias, Balla added.

"Because of its local demographic and all the tourist traffic, it does make a lot of sense," she said.

The city has to offer various types of pizza, from New York style at Joe's, which opened in November on Broadway near Ocean Avenue, to California-style at California Pizza Kitchen, to what Simeone calls "New

Jersey" style pizza at The Slice, which has two locations in Santa Monica — on Wilshire and Ocean Park boulevards.

The opening of Joe's Pizza caused a lot of buzz among the New York transplants that now live or work in the Los Angeles area, flocking to the long-time Greenwich Village neighborhood fixture. The owner, Joe Vitale, said at the time of the opening that he wanted to open in Santa Monica, hoping to add more variety in Italian pie offerings in the Los Angeles area.

New York style pizza seems to be a favorite among Santa Monicans. More than a year ago, Gary Wallack, who owns the Bookmark Cafe in the Santa Monica Public Library and has run Bud's Deli on Ocean Park Boulevard the past 27 years, opened a pizzeria adjacent to the deli.

Wallack said he uses the most expensive imported cheese and dough purchased from New York. The proud pizzeria owner claims that many of his customers from New York City rave that the pizza is better than in their hometown.

"Every owner says they have the best and the great pizza," Wallack said. "I let the customers decide for themselves."

Wallack doesn't believe there isn't anything unique about the abundance of pizzerias in Santa Monica, pointing out that in New York City, there are pizzerias on every corner.

One of the newest kids on the pizza block will be Pizza Fusion this summer, though local franchise owner David Whitworth has yet to secure a location in the city.

With the motto, "Saving the Earth: One pizza at a time," Pizza Fusion will incorporate environmentally friendly practices in both its food, which will use locally

grown organic materials, to its restaurant, which Whitworth anticipates will be certified in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), a designation for green businesses granted by the U.S. Green Building Council. The green theme will be extended down to the delivery vehicles, which will be hybrid cars.

Whitworth believes it will be a sound business plan in a community like Santa Monica where the residents are environmentally aware.

"I know the type of clientele in that area and the need for something of this sort in the area," Whitworth, who has lived on the Westside for the past 15 years, said.

Pizza Fusion will be joining some establishments that have been part of the community for decades.

Steve Trager opened Main Street's Wildflower Pizza, housed in a recognizable yellow cottage, about 35 years ago. The restaurant's pizza has won several honors in the past few years, including "The Best Thin Pizza" distinction by the Los Angeles Times and the gold medal at the California State Fair.

The recipe to success is in the dough, baked fresh daily, the pricey thick pizza sauce made from real Italian tomatoes, and natural white cheddar, according to Trager.

"I can open a can and toss it at you and not drop of sauce would get on the clothing," Trager said, adding that the sauce needs to be diluted with water.

The pizza scene in Santa Monica was vastly different 35 years ago than it is today, Trager said. It was a pizza scene that consisted of Wildflower and about two or three other pizzerias, he said.

"I'm from Boston and I could not find a good tasting pizza in Southern California," Trager said. "I went back and learned the business and brought it back to California."

Not everyone is that impressed with the pizza selection in Santa Monica.

Lily Sanchez, who works at Hostelling International's tourist store in Downtown Santa Monica, said she and her co-workers will head to Johnny's Pizza on the Third Street Promenade. She's tried other locations like Classic Pizza on Pico Boulevard and Buca di Beppo, but none compared to Johnny's.

"Their tomato sauce is good and that's what makes it taste better," Sanchez said.

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MAINSTAY: Managers Veronica Portillo and Joseph Hunter (top) look out the small windows of the Busy Bee Hardware store on Santa Monica Boulevard at their employees Matthew De Mendoza (bottom right) and Enrique Gozales (bottom left). Busy Bee has served Santa Monica since the '60s.

Keeping it all

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Editor in Chief

SM BLVD Since 1914, Busy Bee Hardware has been helping Santa Monicans fix leaks, repair roofs and build tree houses in backyards. It's the epitome of the classic neighborhood hardware store. And just as residents have relied on them to help them keep their homes and apartments in shape, Busy Bee has relied on its customers to help stay in business.

But with rising rents, a sluggish economy and competition from corporate chains such as Home Depot and Lowe's Hardware, Busy Bee, like many other local, family-owned businesses, are a little nervous about what the future may hold.

"Our customer base is helping us to stay in business," said Veronica Portillo, a manager at the hardware store for the last nine years. "Without them, we'd probably be in a deep hole. It's hard to stay competitive because Home Depot is much bigger and can give better deals. We are well established and have good connections with the community.

"They want to keep us here," Portillo added. "If they start going (to Home Depot or other major chains), we'd disappear."

Santa Monica, like many other cities across the country, was once home to many mom and pop businesses that performed tune-ups, cut hair, put cuffs in new pants, did taxes and sold shoes.

Over the years, some of these stores watched as customers flocked to chain stores that could offer lower prices and wider selections. Soon, places like Third Street became littered with corporate chains, eroding what many feel is the charm of old Santa Monica.

Today, family-run businesses are still in operation, but it has become more difficult to turn a profit and it looks as if times will get tougher as the dollar decreases in value, utility costs and health insurance premiums continue to rise and consumers look for value instead of quality.

"At this point, a lot of shops are just making enough to eke by," said Louis Galper, sales manager at McCabe's guitar shop, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary in Santa Monica. "It hasn't been as bad as this ... we're competing with the Internet and the big boys down the street ... The walls [of the shop] look busy, but there's less stuff than normally."

CITY HALL: FRIEND OR FOE?

Competition from corporate chains is just one challenge smaller, family-owned businesses must face. Another is overcoming the ill effects of certain city rules and regulations that make it difficult to attract and retain customers and make decent profits.

Business owners voiced their frustrations with the ordinance limiting the size and shape of signs and banners, which hurts advertising and street presence. Others complained about the smoking restrictions and a ban on using Styrofoam, forcing restaurants to purchase slightly more expensive recyclable products.

Factor in traffic congestion and the lack of parking, as well as business taxes — which are some of the highest in Los Angeles County — and it becomes clear that small businesses face an uphill struggle to remain open. Last year Santa Monica was named the costliest city to do business in the county by

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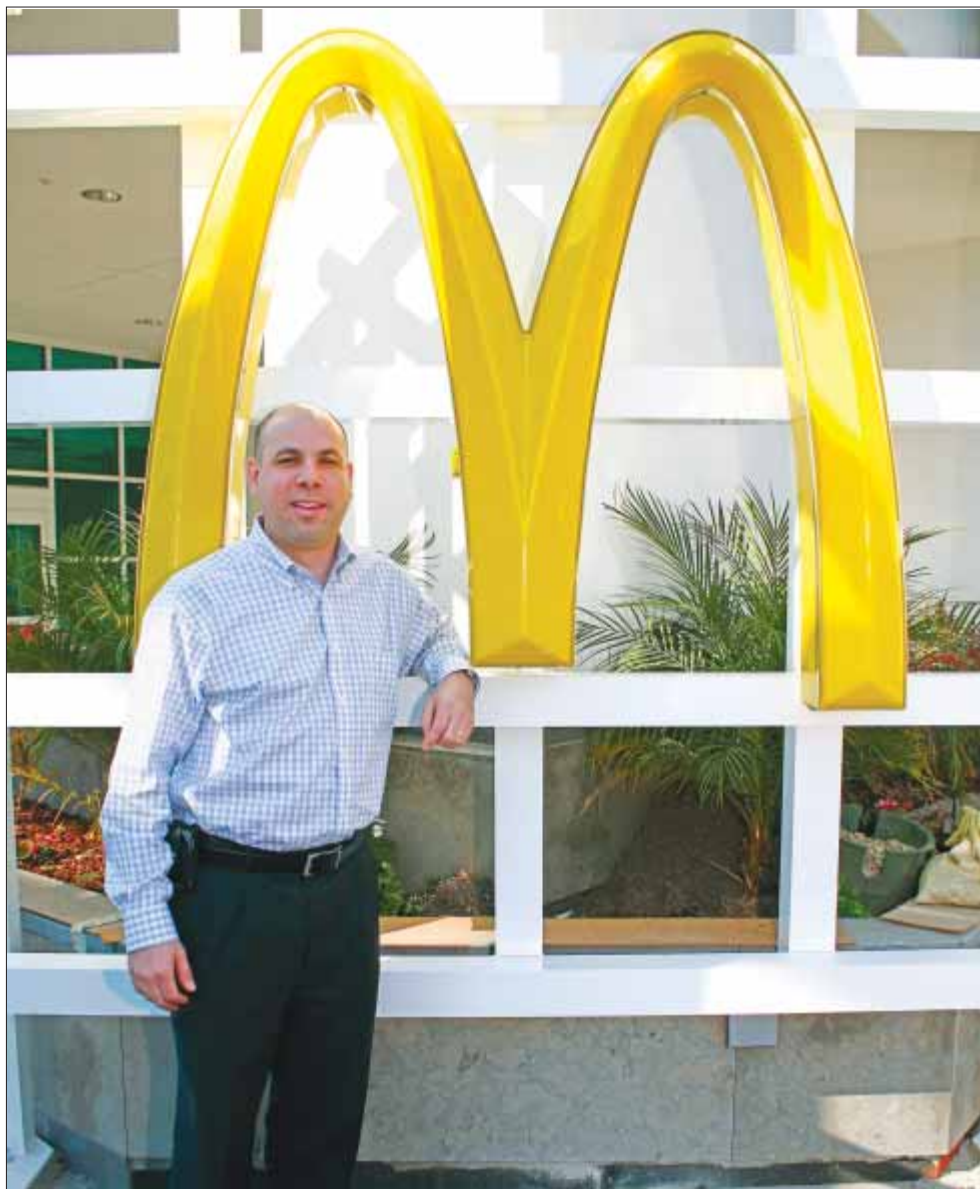


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PROUD OWNER: Tony Lardas, owner of the McDonald's on Colorado Avenue and Second Street, stands underneath the 'Golden Arches' on Friday. Lardas chose to purchase a McDonald's franchise instead of opening his own restaurant, preferring to have the backing of a major brand.

in the family

the Kosmont-Rose Institute, a Los-Angeles-based economic development firm.

The firm looked at more than 400 cities in California and across the nation and examined factors like business tax rates, utility taxes, sales tax, property taxes and state corporate income taxes. Santa Monica's cost of doing business has continued to escalate, thanks in part to one of the higher utility tax rates in the county at 10 percent.

Also, over the years, various sectors of the city's business community have been targeted for mandates and regulations, including an ultimately futile attempt six years ago to impose a coastal zone living wage — aimed at the big beachfront hotels — and increased regulations on auto-related businesses.

"The city has done everything they can to make it difficult for small businesses," said Mike Howell, owner of Santa Monica Lock & Safe Co., which has been a fixture in the Pico Neighborhood since 1967. "By making us take some of our signage down, it's hard for a store like mine [that is setback from the street] to be seen by people driving by. Streets have been made narrower, creating more traffic and parking is a mess ... They are just not business friendly."

In addition to the rules and regulations are the assessments to help pay for street cleaning and other improvements. Moe Taherian, president of Santa Monica Tobacco on Fourth Street in downtown, is concerned about discussions around creating a new business district that would include higher assessments. The added cost means Taherian and his business partner may have to pass along the increase to customers, something he does not want to do because customer sat-

isfaction is crucial to survival.

"Our biggest challenge is overhead, keeping our costs low," said Taherian, who recently opened a smoking lounge at his tobacco store for customers to relax and enjoy their cigars while watching a big screen television. "We work ourselves instead of hiring employees to keep our costs down. We try to put everything on our shoulders and not pass along the costs, but it is difficult."

Paying assessments is hard to justify especially when a business owner does not see the benefits. Taherian said Fourth Street is often dirty, whereas the Third Street Promenade gets cleaned daily. But if Taherian were to move away from the promenade area, he would certainly see his sales drop.

"If we were two blocks down (on Second Street) our business would be cut by half," he said.

City officials sympathize and have made attempts to make it easier for small businesses to set up shop and remain open. City Council members have often said that these types of businesses are the backbone of the community and contribute to Santa Monica's charm.

"These [businesses] are landmarks in the community," said Councilmember Pam O'Connor, who works as an independent consultant working on historical preservation, and is herself a small business owner. "These businesses serve as inspiration for those who may have a great idea but are hesitant. It shows the younger generation that if you have an idea, you can start a business, watch it grow and have a thriving career."

SEE LOCAL BUSINESSES PAGE 14

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Family-owned businesses defy the odds

FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES PAGE 13

City officials defend the city's costs, noting that Santa Monica has a burgeoning local economy. In 2005, the council voted to exempt small businesses from having to pay a business license tax.

When it comes to leasing property the city owns, oftentimes local businesses are given a preference over larger chains, said Miriam Mack, economic development director for City Hall.

"Small businesses are a big priority for the City Council," Mack said. "We have reviewed how we frame [requests for proposals] to make it easier or understandable so that it is not so difficult and costly to respond."

City Hall also has a strong partnership with the Small Business Development Center at Santa Monica College, which provides advice to independently-owned businesses to assure the success of local new businesses and entrepreneurs.

"When compared to other cities, unfortunately the taxes here are higher than some of our neighbors, but in actuality, what business people have to pay in fees to the city is really a small part of their decision to remain in a community when they decide to locate in a community," Mack said. "What's more important is the market, the competition from other businesses and real estate. What the city charges is offset by the community and the economics in this area."

Eileen Fogarty, the director of planning and community development at City Hall, said current discussions about the completion of a new Land Use and Circulation Element will include how planning decisions



Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

KEEPING UP WITH THE BIG GUYS: Manager Angela Matano (left) and employee Ryan Marker work on the company computer at Vidiots video store on Pico Boulevard. Vidiots has managed to stay in business by offering a unique product, in this case VHS tapes for rental.

affect local businesses. She said changes can be made to streets to help mom and pops draw traffic to their stores. Sidewalks can be widened and bike lanes added to make the area more pedestrian friendly.

That said, she admitted that there is a delicate balance that must be reached so that traffic does not back up and people become so frustrated that they decide not to come back to a particular part of town.

A good example of that is the recent restriping of Ocean Park Boulevard. City planners removed two lanes of traffic and

created a left turn lane to force people to slow down and not swerve around those waiting to make a left turn, which has been the cause of several accidents involving pedestrians.

Some have complained that the restriping has increased traffic congestion, while others have praised the change, saying more pedestrians feel safe walking the streets and drivers are now able to park safely without having someone behind them honking their horns.

"The optimal speed [for retail] is 25 mph," Fogarty said. "Not 40 or 60 mph. It gives people a chance to see what businesses

are there and then if there is a parking space. We are looking at our retail streets and identifying speeds you have streets that are much more friendly to retail businesses."

Another issue that is being examined is parking.

"The biggest issue in some locations in the city, particularly along Pico, is that they can't expand because of parking requirements," Fogarty said. "We are looking at identifying areas where we can put together some kind of parking district or shared parking program so that we can really help small businesses if they want to expand."

When looking at the challenges mom and pops face, it is important to remember that City Hall only has so much control over the economy and real estate prices, Mack said. While City Hall can give preference to a local mom and pop when leasing its own property, it has no say over private property.

MAKING THE RENT

Rent seems to be one of the major concerns of local business owners. Rents for office and retail space have jumped dramatically over the last few years, especially in popular shopping districts such as the promenade, Main Street and Montana Avenue.

Santa Monica is home to some of the highest office lease rates in the county. In the first quarter of '07, the asking rent for Class A office space in Santa Monica was \$5.17 per square foot, up from \$3.94 per square foot a year earlier, according to Grubb & Ellis Co. By comparison, lease rates in downtown L.A. were \$2.89 per square foot in the first quarter.

Peet's Coffee & Tea in the Edgemar Center recently renewed a lease, signing on

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"We have our fears, especially with the rent rising," said Jamie Rusche, a barista at the UnUrban Coffee House at the eastern end of Pico Boulevard. "Business is still kind of the same, but we've noticed that a lot of people have gone out of business. On this street it's the record store, the pharmacy, the party supplies store."

Rusche, who has worked at the coffee house/community center for the last two years, said the owner has had to cut back on certain things like an alarm system to keep prices low in light of rising rents.

"Eventually the quality of service has to go down," she said. "That's the only thing we can do. We figure people just understand you might have to wait a few extra minutes ... We had to raise our prices a little, although we're still cheaper than other places. The owner didn't want to, but we had to."

When the economy is sluggish, as it is now, that makes matters worse for independent businesses. People aren't moving products as often as they used to, forcing them to cut back on orders and hours for employees.

Gary Gordon, executive director of the Main Street Merchants Association, said the word around town is "soft," meaning the economy is not as robust as it once was, making some merchants nervous.

On top of that is the rent.

"It seems that landlords just took whatever the rent was and multiplied it by three," Gordon said. "It's crazy."

Property owners said they are just trying to make a living like anyone else and said demand is what is driving up rents, not them. If a business can no longer afford to remain in a certain area, then it is best for them to close up shop and locate to another area where their services are more in demand, enabling them to afford the rent, said Russ Barnard, a property owner on Main Street who also operates Rusty's Surf Ranch on the Santa Monica Pier.

"I own properties and I've paid rents and I never found that rents have been a dramatic problem because it's an open market," Barnard said. "There's always somebody else with property with a different price. You are not stuck with having your business on a particular block or street so rents are typically a reflection of the business atmosphere."

Barnard said landlords aren't evil. The good ones will work with their tenants to make sure both are successful.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Speaking of success, with all the obstacles facing small businesses, why are there some that have been able to remain in the community for decades while others have folded? What are their secrets to success?

"It's simple — loyal customers," said Rich Braaksma of the Talking Stick coffee house on Ocean Park Boulevard. "We have a lot of faithful customers who keep coming back for their coffee fix. A latte is easy to justify. Even during a recession, people want simpler pleasures. I would say 30 percent of our customers come specifically because we're not corporate."

"I think versus Starbucks, we try to make it more of a living room, the coffee house equivalent to Cheer's."

Customer service is key and so is a business' reputation. Offering a quality product or service keeps customers coming back even though they may be able to get a similar product or service elsewhere at a lower price.

"So much of it is service," said Carla Barrett of Barrett's Appliances Inc., a community staple for 62 years. "People come in here and get acknowledged. I had a woman who came in and said she couldn't get help at Sears."

Barrett's is a classic example of a business that is threatened by chain stores like Best Buy, which sell appliances and have the abil-

ity to offer products at a lower price because they can buy in bulk. To remain competitive, Barrett's is part of a national appliance buyers group that has more partners than Sears and Best Buy combined, said Pat Barrett, Carla's husband and business partner.

"By being a part of the buyers group it not only gives us purchasing power, it also gives us inventory and retail finance programs so we can compete eye-to-eye and toe-to-toe with Lowe's or Home Depot," Pat Barrett said. "We not only offer customers discount prices, but we offer them local service. Here you can actually talk with the person who sold you your appliance. We answer our own phones, make appointments and take care of problems ourselves. Almost no other appliance store can do that."

Another way to remain competitive is to offer something unique. At Vidiots, customers can find films on VHS, something that is hard to do in the age of the DVD and Blu-ray.

"If you carry VHS, you stand out," Ryan Marker, a clerk at Vidiots, said. "That keeps people in the store."

Tony Lardas has chosen a different route. Coming from a family with a long history of running their own restaurants, Lardas decided to buy a McDonald's franchise instead of opening up "Tony's Burgers." By partnering with an established brand like McDonald's, an entrepreneur gets financial backing and name recognition. For a relatively small fee, you also participate in national advertising campaigns. McDonald's also invests money in product development, coming up with new products that the franchisee doesn't have to invest in.

"It makes it easier," Lardas said as he sat in the patio of his McDonald's restaurant at the corner of Second Street and Colorado Avenue, which is currently under construction. McDonald's provided some of the cash to rebuild the restaurant, which was demolished after a developer wanted to create a mixed-used development with restaurants, retail and office space.

"Franchises really increase in value faster than a traditional mom and pop business and at the end of the day what you want to do is build up equity," said Lardas, whose family also owns the McDonald's on the promenade. "This gives me a chance to get a good return on my investment."

But again, owning a franchise requires one to work a lot of hours.

"Freezers still break at three in the morning," Lardas said.

RISK VERSUS REWARD

With all that's at stake for a small business owner, why bother? Wouldn't it be easier to work for an established company with some financial stability and security? Perhaps, but those who have taken a leap of faith by opening up shop say there is no greater feeling than the one you get from being your own boss.

"Once you are your own boss, it's tough to be someone else's employee," said Howell, who works with his son at the safe and lock company. "For us it's always been a family deal. I get to work with my son every day and how many people can say that? You also get to meet so many people in the community and really get to know them, almost to the point where they become family, too. It's those relationships that you build that I think you can't do if you were working for a large corporation."

For Taherian, it's all about pride.

"There's a certain amount of pride that comes along with owning your own store," he said as he leaned over his glass counter filled with tobacco pipes. "I've never wanted to work for somebody else. But on the other hand, there are those challenges that you face."

Natalie Edwards contributed to this report.

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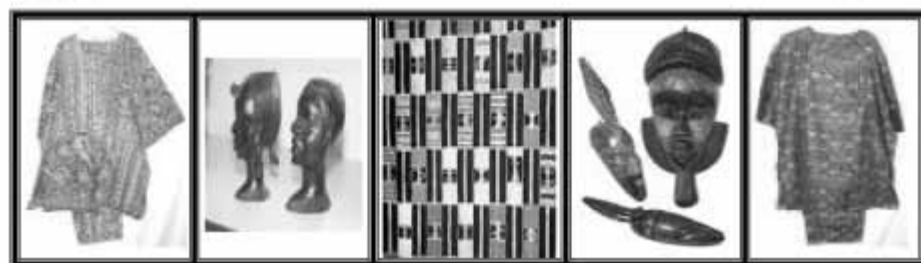


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Performers in Venice Beach fight proposal

FROM PERFORMERS PAGE 3

amplified sound, it should also restrict the businesses on the boardwalk.

Some residents who live near or on Ocean Front Walk spoke in favor of the noise regulation, arguing that noise on the boardwalk has gotten excessive in the past few years.

Lisa Smith, who has lived in Venice since 1980 and on Ocean Front Walk since 1984, said the noise travels up her block and into her home, even when the windows and doors are shut.

The Venice resident added that she has a hard time taking naps during the weekends because of the level of noise.

"I can hear the music inside my bedroom, inside my bathroom, all weekend," Smith said.

Smith added that some of the performers disregard the residents, mentioning that she had approached an unnamed performer on several occasions, asking they turn down the noise just to receive a disrespectful response.

"I didn't need to 10 years ago because it was a peaceful place," Smith said. "It's gotten out of hand."

Some performers and vendors criticized city officials for what they believe was a lack of citizen participation in the drafting of the ordinance. Some called for Venice to secede from the city of Los Angeles.

"This is a perfect example of why we need a city of Venice again," Venice resident Jim Smith said. "A lot of people in power don't understand that process is as important as the product."

melodyh@smdp.com



A NEW BAG

Ruth Tooker shops at the Barneys New York sale on Friday at the Barker Hanger at the Santa Monica Airport. Shoppers were able to purchase shoes and clothing at prices widely considered to be well below their actual retail value.

Alexis Hawkins news@smdp.com

Santa Monica Daily Press

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'Vincent' a vibrant tale

BY GREGORY WEINKAUF

Special to the Daily Press

Perceptions of the life and work of Vincent Van Gogh vary widely, from the masterful melodrama of films ("Lust for Life," "Vincent and Theo") to dreamy folk-songs ("Vincent" by Don McLean) to affectionate pop-song hilarity ("Vincent Van Gogh" by Jonathan Richman, featuring the lines: "He loved life so bad; His paintings had twice the color other paintings had!") However, to experience the complexity of Van Gogh's art and relationships on an intimate stage is a rare treat indeed – a treat available at the Miles Memorial Playhouse in Santa Monica.

The play is "Vincent," by Leonard Nimoy (yes, that Leonard Nimoy), which the actor-director based on Phillip Stephens' play "Van Gogh," transforming it into his own one-man show in the late 1970s. While there is no guarantee of a Spock sighting, those attending the play at the Miles will be afforded a stunning view into the lives of brothers Theodorus and Vincent Van Gogh, both performed with terrific gusto by Sam Lovett. In presence and appearance, the actor presents such an authentic-feeling representation that within moments the audience slips into a collective reverie upon one of the world's greatest – and most misunderstood – artists.

The play begins as eulogy, in Paris,

August, 1890, with Theo taking the podium to lament the premature passing of his late, ostensibly mad-genius brother. From the get-go, the clichés surrounding the visionary painter are shattered, and soon the many scintillating flashbacks reveal a robust life of visionary highs and devastating lows. In candid conversation with Lovett after the first performance, the actor explained: "A lot of people have these very basic presumptions about Van Gogh – you know, 'he cut off his ear' and 'he was crazy' and all that – but there is much more to the story!" Indeed, after one receives the initial jolt of Lovett's uncanny resemblance to the artist, the story that unfolds is as illuminating and visionary as Vincent's own intense and tragic tale.

The play covers most of Vincent's adult life, with Theo acting as a sort of narrator while Vincent's hundreds of real-life letters to his brother provide much of the dialogue (it's only one actor, yes – but definitely dialogue). Spanning from Vincent's decision – at the age of 27 – to become an artist, though his many struggles until his very awkward suicide at 37, the array of issues (passion, inspiration, addiction, self-sacrifice bordering on masochism) and locations (his native Netherlands, Brussels, The Hague, Paris, Saint-Rémy, Auvers-sur-Oise) packs into a decade more than many pack into a lifetime. Also of particular

dramatic note are Vincent's early years of near-total self-deprivation, working as a missionary in a poverty-stricken mining colony in Belgium, and, later, the devastating deterioration of his friendship with Paul Gauguin – fellow artist, arguing partner extraordinaire, and, by this telling, apparently a very bad influence.

Do note, although "Vincent" is quite entertaining, it would be impossible to approach its subject without courting alcoholism, religious fervor, psychological enablement (Theo tirelessly paid for Vincent's "process"), whoring, disease and terrible spiritual confusion. To hear Lovett (as Theo) begging of his brother, "For god's sake, when will you learn to love yourself?" is powerful on its own; but coupled with Lovett (as Vincent) declaring, "I am a stranger on the Earth!" is doubly moving.

Which leads us to Lovett's performance. Awesome. For one man dressed more or less like David Bowie on his last tour to hold the attention of an audience for 75 minutes on the subject of a weird dead artist guy is one thing – but to make the performance a one-man symphony is quite another. From the whispers of a frequently crushed soul to the bombast of Vincent's credo of "Life! Beauty! God! One must love!" Lovett treads a high wire in high style. What could have dissolved into a schizoid mess instead achieves a powerful elegance.

And once the visuals kick in, about two thirds of the way through, the climax – with its attendant questioning of the definition of madness – is an aesthetic and intellectual feast.

Much credit is due to director Cynthia Parks, who clearly understands the challenge of representing two distinct but intricately related characters via a single actor.

Rather than resorting to costume changes or fancy tricks, she guides the action via subtle shifts in light, and adjustments of Lovett's energy. Not once is the line between the brothers vague, but simultaneously, the immensity of their shared vision (Theo died just months after Vincent) becomes a psychological dual portrait that will ensure hearty conversation and debate long after the curtain call.

You know the works: "The Potato Eaters," "The Starry Night," all those sunflowers, etc. Now the Theatre for a Small Space presents an ideal opportunity to understand the man. Nimoy's play, directed and performed here with grace and skill, proves captivating in its subject, and staggering in its implications.

"Vincent" will be presented for the last time tonight at 8 p.m. at Theatre for a Small Space at the Miles Memorial Playhouse.

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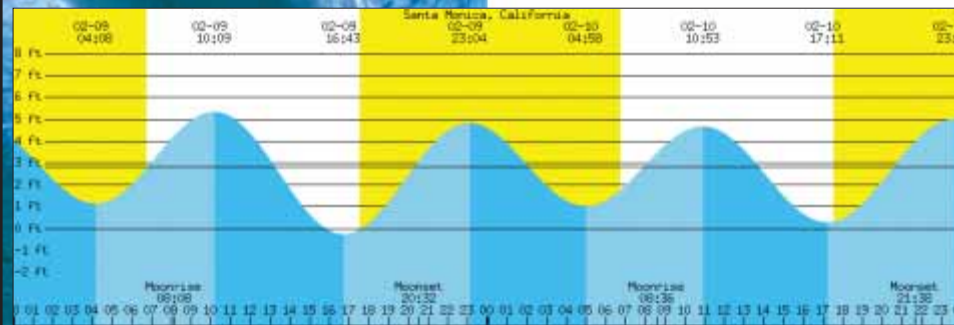
SURF CONDITIONS**WATER TEMP: 54°**

SWELL FORECAST (1-2 FT)

Saturday into Monday is when our next NW swell is due. This should build on Saturday, and then peak on Sunday into Monday. This is from that storm I mentioned in my earlier reports this week forming in the Western Pacific traveling into the Gulf.

LONG RANGE SYANOPSIS

NW GROUND SWELL BUILDS SATURDAY, MORE SUNDAY...
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TIDE FORECAST FOR TODAY IN SANTA MONICA



NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of

February 6, 2008

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QUICK STATS
(for the last 28 days)

Number of sewage spills -- 1

Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 2

Number of wet days -- 14

Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 37 / 13

Number of H.C.D.F. grades for dry/wet weather -- 8 / 31

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sepul Creek mouth (Jocarrilla)	A+	C
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	B
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachase and Las Alitas creeks	A+	A+
Escorial Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Bread 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 Rancho Canyon Creek mouth	B	F
Escandido Creek, just east of Escandido State Beach	A+	C
Lafita Canyon Creek mouth	A+	C
Selkirk Canyon at San Blasco County Beach	A+	C
Puerto State Beach at creek mouth	B	F
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerto Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	A+	C
Sunridge Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	C
Sunridge Beach (beach location)- daily	F	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	B	F
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	C
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	A
Big Rock Beach at 19949 PCH stairs	F	B
Pine Creek at Los Tunes County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	A+
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	A	C
Cashrock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	D
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	m	F
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	D

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	A+	D
Will Rogers State Beach at Palms Canyon storm drain	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain	A+	C
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauque)	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	A+	F
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	A+	F
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	C	F
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Venice storm drain	F	D
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restaurants)	A+	F
Goose Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A+	A
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	C
Venice Beach at Brinkley Ave. drain	A+	D
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A+	A+
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	C
Venice Beach-projection of Topical St.	A+	D
Marino del Rey, Mothers' Beach- Wriggall tower	A	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	F	B
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A+	A+
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach	A+	A
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of GWW jetty)	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	B
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A+	A
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	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

m -- no sample taken



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

MLB Steroids dealer wants probation

BY PAUL ELIAS
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO Almost immediately after federal agents raided Kirk Radomski's house, the former New York Mets clubhouse attendant agreed to cooperate with government investigators and baseball officials.

Radomski implicated dozens of current and former major leaguers in the use of performance-enhancing drugs and led investigators to Brian McNamee, the former Yankees strength coach who claimed he injected Roger Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone at least 16 times from 1998 to 2001, an allegation the pitcher vehemently denies.

Radomski and his lawyer will ask a federal judge on Friday for a sentence of probation rather than prison following his guilty plea to felony charges of distributing steroids and laundering money.

In April, Radomski admitted selling speed, steroids and HGH to dozens of players from 1995 until Dec. 14, 2005, when agents raided his Long Island home.

Barry Bonds, who has pleaded not guilty to four counts of perjury and one count of obstruction for allegedly lying to a grand jury about steroid use, also had a hearing scheduled for Friday. Bonds' session was rescheduled for Feb. 29, when his attorneys are scheduled to argue for that the government's case should be tossed out. Bonds' attorneys filed court papers last month arguing that Bonds was asked confusing and repetitive questions during his appearance before the grand jury and should have his case dismissed.

Radomski was required to cooperate with baseball investigator George Mitchell as part

of his plea bargain and spoke with the Boston Red Sox director four times, with federal prosecutors attending meetings. If prosecutors feel that Radomski's cooperation is significant, they could ask the judge to mete out a lenient sentence.

"If the government does file that motion, it will show that he substantially assisted the investigation," said Thomas Buchanan, a Washington lawyer who assisted on baseball's 1989 Pete Rose investigation. "He also appears to have cooperated extensively with the Mitchell report."

Given his lack of prior offenses and his extensive cooperation, Radomski faces no more than six months in prison. His lawyer John Reilly, in court papers filed Wednesday, asked U.S. District Judge Susan Illston to sentence Radomski to probation.

"Mr. Radomski has very seriously tried to redeem himself and his redemption started on day one when he met with the federal authorities, admitted his guilt and agreed to cooperate," the filing stated. "Mr. Radomski's cooperation with the government may in some way assist in changing the face of major league baseball as it exists today."

According to the filing, Radomski took out a mortgage on his Long Island home to open the Pro Touch Detail Center in St. James, N.Y. His lawyer argued that Radomski needs to stay out of prison to operate the business and support his wife and 8-year-old daughter, Paige.

"She is my family's heart and soul, and I am extremely concerned about how this may affect her," Radomski's sister-in-law Nicole Gaskill wrote the judge in January, pleading for probation. "Ultimately, I am afraid of what removing him from her life would do to her."

MLB Doctor says only surgery can save Schilling's career

BY HOWARD ULMAN
AP Sports Writer

FORT MYERS, Fla. The doctor who claims he knows Curt Schilling's shoulder "better than anybody who breathes on this planet" insists surgery is the only way the 20-year veteran can pitch again.

But Boston's team physician disagrees. He believes rehabilitation is the best way for Schilling to play this year.

Caught in the middle are Schilling and his \$8 million contract.

"I think his chance of coming back to pitching with rehab or a conservative approach is zero," Dr. Craig Morgan said Friday in telephone interview with The Associated Press. "He might not come back after surgery, either. However, if the surgery is successful, he should be fully rehabbed by about All-Star break."

Schilling wrote on his blog, 38pitches.com, on Thursday night that he has agreed to the club's request to rely on rest and rehabilitation.

He didn't have much choice if he wanted to avoid having the Red Sox invalidate his contract, Morgan said.

"On our conference call on Wednesday it was their strong recommendation that he go with the conservative approach," Morgan said, "and, furthermore, it was their strong, how do I say this, they would not approve him having surgery. Basically, according to the collective bargaining agreement, if they don't approve it, they don't have to pay him. His contract's null and void."

Morgan operated on Schilling's right shoulder in 1995 and 1999. In his blog Thursday night, Schilling praised Morgan.

Morgan said among those on the call were Red Sox team physician Dr. Thomas Gill, general manager Theo Epstein, manager Terry Francona, Schilling, Schilling's lawyer and New York Mets medical director Dr. David Altchek.

Altchek was brought in for a third opinion after Morgan and Gill disagreed on a course of treatment.

In a statement Thursday, the Red Sox said: "Curt Schilling was examined by Red Sox doctors in January after he reported feeling right shoulder discomfort. Curt has started a program of rest, rehabilitation and shoulder strengthening in an attempt to return to pitching."

Big giver

Cornwell donating \$1 million for crime scene investigation academy in NYC

PATRICIA CORNWELL is donating \$1 million to a top criminal justice college for a new academy to teach CSI techniques. The best-selling novelist said she's taking action because she's

appalled by what she's seen at crime scene investigations. "I've seen cops walk through blood. I've seen them leave their own fingerprints on a window," Cornwell said in an interview

Friday. "I've seen bloody clothing put in a plastic bag, instead of a paper bag, so it decomposes." Her funding will help start the Crime Scene Academy at New York's John Jay College of

Criminal Justice, set to open this fall with training in DNA typing, fingerprint enhancement techniques, ballistics and forensic psychology. The 51-year-old author has written more than a

dozen books featuring Dr. Kay Scarpetta, a medical examiner. Her latest is "Book of the Dead." Cornwell blames television and movies for misleading the public.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOEL MAKES THE LAST PLAY

BILLY JOEL will make "The Last Play at Shea" in a final concert at Shea Stadium on July 16.

The Piano Man will perform the night after baseball's All-Star game at Yankee Stadium, the Mets announced Thursday.

"It's an honor to help throw Shea the ultimate concert farewell party," said Joel, 58. "As a sports fan and a music lover, I will always have a place for Shea Stadium in my heart. I thank the Mets for giving me and my fans a chance to rock Shea Stadium one last time for the ages."

A new stadium, Citi Field, is to open for the 2009 season.

AP

Former Brown trustees testify

An attorney for five of **JAMES BROWN'S** children questioned the late soul singer's ex-trustees during a court hearing on whether they hid one of Brown's earlier wills.

The former trustees dismissed the allegation Thursday, saying the only valid will was the one filed in 2000, which left clothes, jewelry, boats and automobiles for Brown's six adult children.

The children were largely left out of the financial portion of that will, which leaves the bulk of the soul singer's money to charitable trusts.

Attorneys for the children argue that earlier wills drafted by their father cast doubt on whether he truly wanted to leave his estate to charity.

Ex-trustee Alford Bradley, who spent years handling Brown's financial affairs, said the singer changed his will several

times.

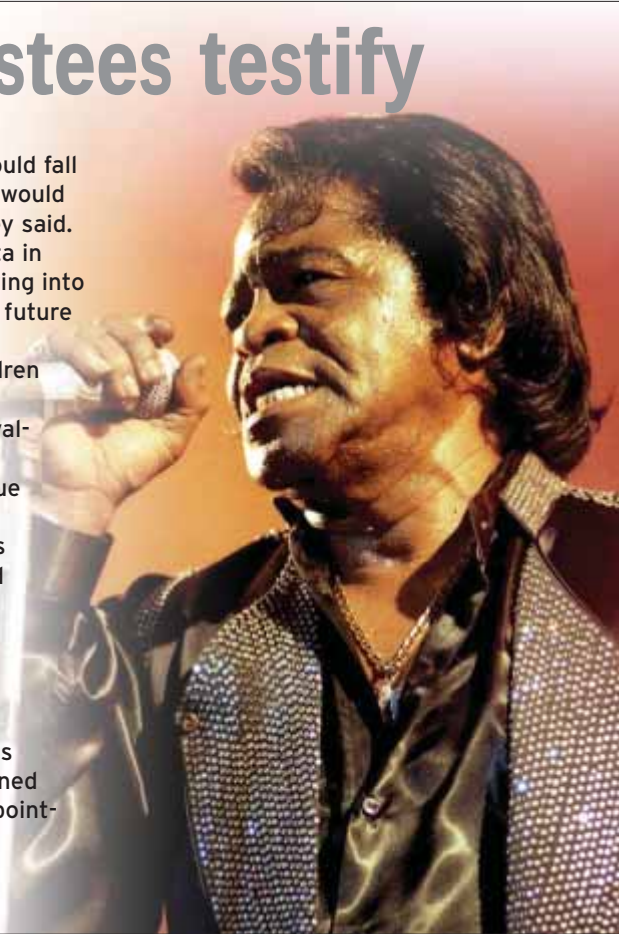
"When Mr. Brown would fall out with somebody, he would change his will," Bradley said.

Brown died in Atlanta in December 2006, throwing into turmoil his will and the future of his trust.

Five of Brown's children say their late father's 2000 will should be invalidated because his former advisers used undue influence to get him to create charitable trusts that the advisers would profit from.

Judge Jack Early, who has been overseeing the dispute over Brown's contested fortune, asked the trustees why they never mentioned a 1999 will to court-appointed representatives of Brown's estate.

AP



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

TOMMY'S 10th B-DAY PARTY!

Happy Birthday!

This year, you pull the wild card financially, never knowing what might hit next. Having a reserve is smart and possibly necessary. Know, on the other hand, that you could hit the lottery. If you are single, use care with new people. If you are attached, schedule several romantic getaways together. Work on cementing your bond. PISCES could cost you money, without even meaning to.



Born Today

Actress Mia Farrow (1945)
Broadcaster Roger Mudd (1928)
Singer Travis Tritt (1963)

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

★★★ Your efforts seem to get stalemated no matter how well thought out they are. Refuse to get upset. Go off and do something you enjoy to the max. You don't always have to be out and about. Check in with an older relative. Tonight: Only do what you must.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ The best intentions could fall to the wayside. A friend or loved one might want to treat you to a very special happening. Don't allow frustration to mount. No one can always control every situation and every person. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Others have "great expectations," which you might fear you cannot meet. Let go and relax. Travel, long-distance communication and an unexpected sharing play roles in what is going on. Tonight: Try to call it an early night.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Reach out to others, knowing what you want. You might be instrumental in melting down someone's cold exterior. Still, you will need a lot of patience. Watch how another person expresses his or her feelings. Tonight: Movie time.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ Predictability is not a commodity that you will easily come by right now. Know that the only stability that exists is perpetual change. Be more forthright about your feelings with a loved one, especially if this person is a roommate. Tonight: Say yes.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ You could be irritated by what is happening with a friend or loved one. Remember, each person chooses his or her own fate, and this person could change what is going on. Step away, though remain nurturing. Tonight: Don't let anyone pressure you. Say no.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Easy does it. You might feel as if you have pushed and pushed. Exhaustion earmarks your decisions and reactions. Slow down and start taking better care of yourself. Others will appreciate you more if you do! Tonight: Ask, and you will receive.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Listen to feedback. Use your imagination, perhaps to make logic of what does not make sense. Your creativity emerges when dealing with others, but also even when relaxing, like just seeing a movie. Enjoy. Tonight: Follow your instincts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Clearly you cannot change others, but you can adapt and change your mood and perspective. How you deal with someone could change considerably with a touch more insight and detachment. Tonight: Your home is your castle.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ You have the right words and mannerisms to soothe others' frayed nerves. Your popularity could explode as a result. If you think a problem needs to be dealt with directly, do just that. Tonight: Hang out with a friend.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Sometimes you don't have the control you desire. You might be pressured beyond what you can tolerate. If you are pushed, you will come up with a great idea to make peace or work through an issue. Tonight: Remember, there is a tomorrow.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Others look to you, and indeed a friend might be gooe-eyed when thinking of or speaking to you. Use care, knowing what you want from this person. Your sensitivity now could be more important than you realize. Tonight: Chat up a storm.

MOVIEGUIDE

AERO THEATRE
1328 Montana Avenue
(310) 260.1528

Winter Kills (NR)
7:30

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

Atonement (R)
11:05am, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:25

National Treasure: Book of Secrets (PG)
11:10am, 1:55, 4:50, 7:45, 10:35

Over Her Dead Body (PG-13)
11:00am, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15

Untraceable (R)
11:20am, 2:05, 4:30, 7:15, 9:50

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

27 Dresses (PG-13)

1:20, 4:00, 6:50, 9:30

Cloverfield (PG-13)
10:40am, 1:00, 3:15, 5:35, 7:55, 10:10

The Eye (PG-13)
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:15

Fool's Gold (PG-13)
10:45am, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50

Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert Disney Digital 3D (G)

10:30am, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45

There Will Be Blood (R)
11:15am, 2:45, 6:30, 10:00

Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins (PG-13)
11:00am, 1:45, 4:30, 7:20, 10:20

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

The Reflecting Pool (NR)
11:00am

War/Dance (PG-13)
11:00am

Yiddish Theater: A Love Story (NR)
11:00am

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

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)
2:20, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40, 10:10

Vince Vaughn's Wild West Comedy Show: 30 Days & 30 Nights - From Hollywood to the Heartland (R)
12:10, 2:40, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30

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

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

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

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Friday 8:30am-5pm
Saturday 10am-2pm

Frank D. Wilson, Agent
Insurance Lic. #: 0164884
Bus: 310-696-0555
Monday-Friday 8:30am-5pm

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

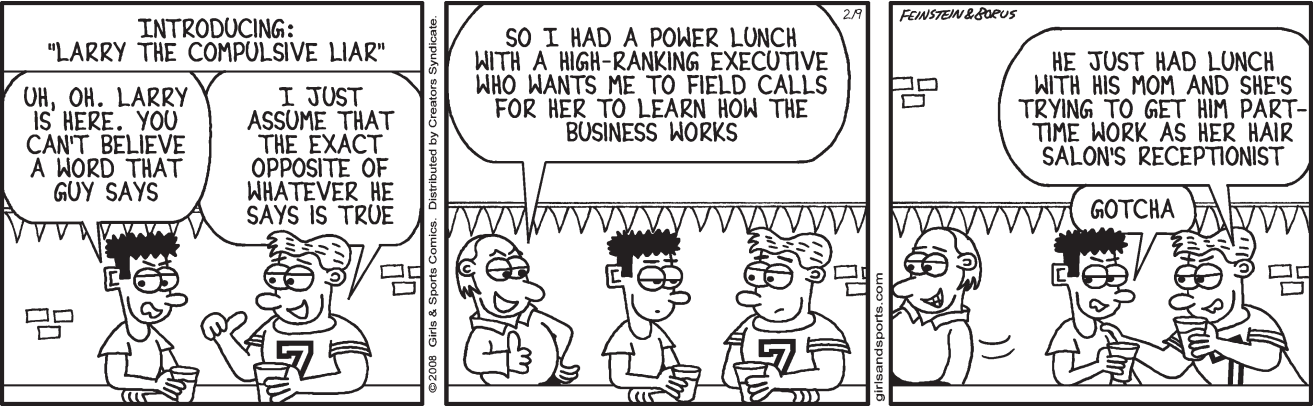
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statefarm.com

FD383 11/06

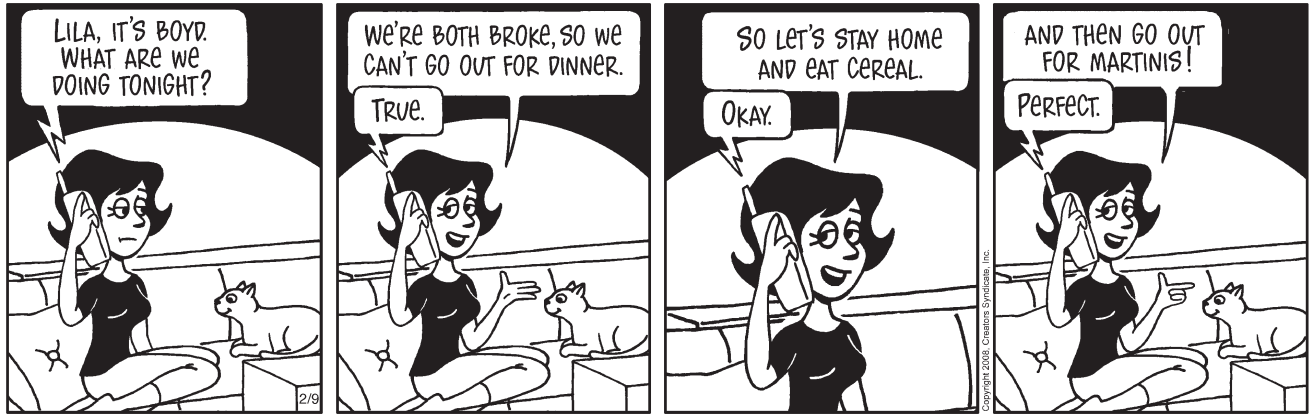
Girls and Sports

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

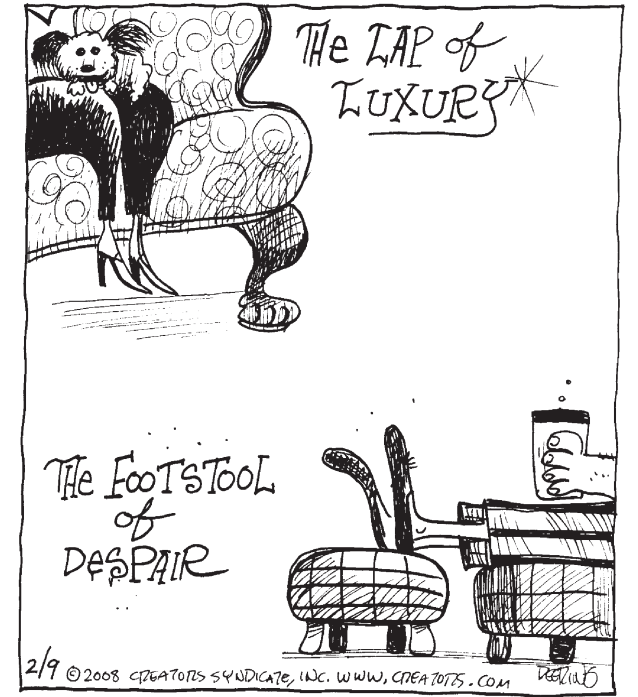
By Brian Anderson



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Strange Brew By John Deering



Speed Bump By Dave Coverly



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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**
- 41 Armistice
 - 42 Starts a hand
 - 43 Goes down
 - 44 Two-somes

- DOWN**
- 1 Feral
 - 2 Patch type
 - 3 Destroy
 - 4 Calms down
 - 5 Acted out
 - 6 Bordeaux
 - 7 Manatee
 - 8 Tex-Mex
 - 9 Degrade
 - 11 Mc-Kinley's
 - 15 Scanner
 - 19 Cut
 - 21 TV
 - 24 Spielberg
 - 25 Nautical
 - 26 Rope
 - 27 City way
 - 29 Crude
 - 30 Wipes off
 - 31 Breaks
 - 33 Harp's
 - 37 Bistro
 - 39 Fall mo.

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

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

	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				

Comics & Stuff

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 21 30 43 46 50
Meganumber: 18
Jackpot: \$122M

Super LOTTO 2 20 30 31 46
Meganumber: 27
Jackpot: \$64M

Fantasy 5 10 20 21 23 35

DAILY 3 MIDDAY: 9 8 7
EVENING: 5 1 0

DAILY DERRY 1st: 06 Whirl Win
2nd: 04 Big Ben
3rd: 08 Gorgeous George
RACE TIME: 1:46.47

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

■ Douglas Hoffman, 61, was sentenced in January to as much as five years in prison for staging a small-scale terror campaign among his neighbors in Henderson, Nev., to mask his own vandalism in destroying over 500 trees to get a better view of the Las Vegas Strip. At first, according to prosecutors, Hoffman cut down just the trees that affected his own view, but to divert attention, he cut down others in the subdivision and then sent threatening notes suggesting that an extremist militia would continue to attack their property, finally promising "chemical, biological and nuclear mass destruction."

■ John Hayes, 46, a Marietta, Ga., middle school coach, was arrested in December and charged as the person who drove a group of his students around at night so they could vandalize various Christmas yard decorations (in one case, leaving reindeer entangled in "sexual positions"). A neighbor whose display was wrecked pursued Hayes' truck, caught up to him, and asked, "Are you crazy?" Hayes responded, allegedly, "It's just a bit of fun."

TODAY IN HISTORY

1773 The ninth president of the United States, William Henry Harrison, was born in Charles City County, Va.

1825 The House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams president after no candidate received a majority of electoral votes.

1861 Jefferson Davis was elected the provisional president of the Confederate States of America.

1807 The U.S. Weather Bureau was established.

1942 Daylight-saving "War Time" went into effect in the United States, with clocks turned one hour forward.

1950 In a speech in Wheeling, W.Va., Sen. Joseph McCarthy, R-Wis., charged the State Department was riddled with Communists.

1964 The Beatles made their first live American television appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" on CBS.

1971 The crew of Apollo 14 returned to Earth after man's third landing on the moon.

1984 Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov died at age 69, less than 15 months after succeeding Leonid Brezhnev; he was succeeded by Konstantin U. Chernenko.

WORD UP!

aberrant \a-BERR-unt; AB-ur-unt\, *adjective*: Markedly different from an accepted norm; Deviating from the ordinary or natural type; abnormal.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Employment	Jewelry	Houses for Rent	Vehicles for Sale	Yard Sales	Psychic
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SANTA MONICA \$1025, single w/ sm. den, 1 bath, no pets, stove, refrigerator, parking, 2535 Kansas ave. #108-B, Open Daily for viewing 9am-7pm. Additional info in unit. Manager in #101

SANTA MONICA, \$1495, 2 Bdrms, 1 Bath, NO Pets, Stove, Refrigerator, Parking. 1935 Cloverfield Blvd. #16, Open Daily for viewing 9am-7pm. Additional info in Unit. Manager in #19

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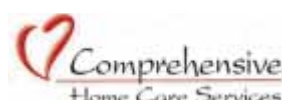
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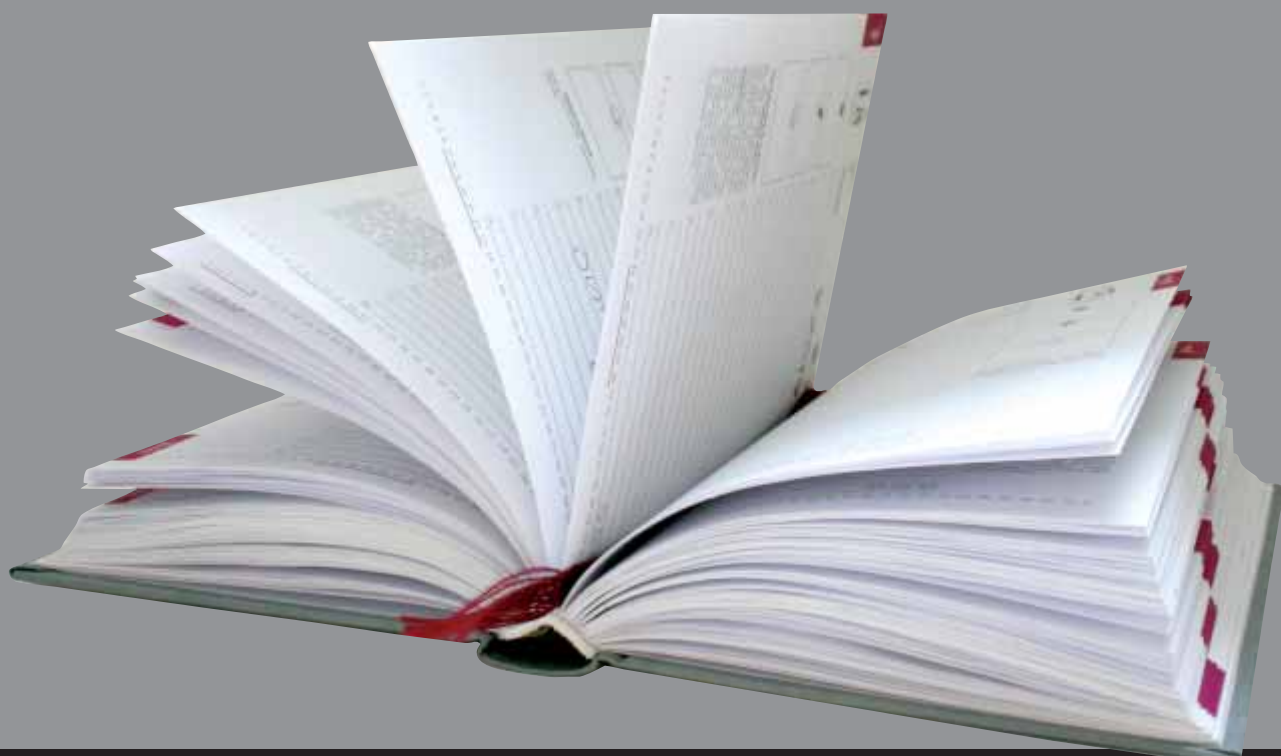
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Open Tuesday, February 12th
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1012 - 7th Street # 7

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Average Price of Properties Listed for Sale As of Mid February 2008

		Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
Santa Monica Canyon	=	\$ 2,305,500	\$ 1,399,000
North of Montana	=	\$ 3,579,923	\$ 2,011,708
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	\$ 3,289,900	\$ 968,471
South of Wilshire	=	\$ 1,047,390	\$ 785,441
Sunset Park	=	\$ 1,297,333	\$ 637,900
Ocean Park	=	\$ 1,876,467	\$ 973,039

Statistics updated every Friday

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