

FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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City council doesn't want citizens duped into signing petitions

Council wants more disclosure by candidates seeking elected office

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Fearing residents will be duped into signing candidate petitions, city officials are making sure residents know their rights when it comes to signing on the dotted line.

During election years, both sides of controversial ballot initiatives complain that petitioners use deceptive tactics to get support on their measures. As a result, average citizens sign petitions without really knowing what they are supporting.

The city of Santa Monica enacted a law last August that requires petitioners to hand out sheets detailing residents' rights when it comes to misleading tactics. It requires people trying to gather enough signatures to place initiatives, referendums and recalls on a ballot to give residents a sheet about the petition, what its effects would be and how they can remove their name after signing.

But the current law doesn't apply to city council candidates

seeking a ballot spot, who must solicit at least 100 signatures.

The Santa Monica City Council may extend the current law to require all candidates seeking election to follow the same rules. The proposed ordinance will be voted on at the council's Tuesday meeting.

"There had been some questionable practices in the circulation of initiative petitions and the like, and to be consistent we added an info sheet for candidates also," said Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown, who's term will end this year.

Before each signature, petition seekers would have to disclose what office they are seeking, what the requirements are for the position, which political group they represent and how residents can remove their signatures at a later date.

"It's not going to hurt a candidate running an honest campaign," said Santa Monica City Councilman Herb Katz. "All we're trying to do is help residents know exactly what they are signing onto."

Bad day at the beach



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

A motorist took the wrong path to get to the Santa Monica Beach Sunday. After being confused from the signage on the Pacific Coast Highway, an unidentified man exited too soon and ended up beached near the Santa Monica Pier parking lot. The car was pulled out by a tow truck cable which caused many passersby on the boardwalk to stop and ask, "is that your car?" The man, clearly frustrated and embarrassed, answered with a simple nod while looking at the ground.

McKeown doesn't think the new petition ordinance would cause him any troubles in his re-election bid.

"I'll be out there seeking signatures for my own re-election this year," he said, "and the information sheet will help voters understand how important their signatures really are in our local elections."

Two-week marriage, Mercedes mulled by Santa Monica jury

Persian Jewish culture emerges as key issue in courtroom

BY DAVE DANFORTH
Daily Press Staff Writer

The plate on her Mercedes reads "TIKEH" — Persian for what roughly translates into "hot piece" or "babe."

But Afsaneh Mobasser declared she's since put on 60 pounds since she first drove the car five years ago. She's also frequently depressed, often can't sleep, and doubts she could be intimate with a man.

But when her estranged husband sued for the return of the Mercedes or its value, she struck back in court, opening up a closet with a secret so dark she says she dared not

tell even her mother.

Mobasser's legal tussle with Bahram Anav ended Friday in Santa Monica Superior Court. The two-week jury trial lasted as long as their 1996 marriage. The legal fees appeared to vastly exceed the amounts sought in court from both Mobasser and Anav.

The case ultimately focused on vast cultural differences when a Santa Monica jury was asked to penalize Mobasser for the outspoken materialism both sides said surrounds the courtship and marriage ritual in the close-knit Persian Jewish community.

It wasn't a rape case, although Mobasser, now 36, and her attorney, tried their best to turn it into one. Nor was it merely about a Mercedes and \$26,000 Anav, 42, claimed she took from him in bad faith and kept even after the legal

See TRIAL, page 3

Be ready for next 'Big One,' quake expert says

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — An earthquake preparedness expert warned a conference attended by quake engineers that efforts to prepare California for the next devastating earthquake are lagging.

Charles C. Thiel Jr., founding head of the National Earthquakes Hazards Reduction Program, said it was "astounding" that over the last 20 years government research funding to prepare for quakes has decreased.

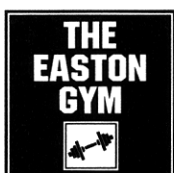
He called for more research to find ways to improve the quake performance of existing buildings. Focus has been concentrated on efforts to study and map fault lines and heavy shaking areas instead of finding ways to strengthen buildings and reduce hazards, he said.

"Ninety-nine percent of the buildings that will collapse in the next big earthquake exist today," Thiel said. "And yet the attention that is going into engineering often is only devoted to future buildings."

Thiel made his remarks Friday during the second day of the three-day meeting of the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute.

Conference participants spent most of the first day

See EARTHQUAKES, page 3



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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Keep up the good work, as something is about to get in your way. You have a strong sense of direction and know what you want. With your extra push, good news greets you. Curb a tendency to be overly sensitive. Know what you want. Tonight: Schedule an important meeting.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Stay on top of work with full knowledge of your limits and long-term desires. Take charge in your immediate circle. Act on your instincts rather than holding back. You naturally make the correct choices. Network. Your star is rising. Tonight: Where your friends are.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Reach out for others. Seek out someone for his or her opinion. Friends as well as associates push very hard to get what they want. Mobilize this energy and turn these people into your supporters. A boss might be quite impressed with your focus. Tonight: Rent a movie.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Your ability to empathize with others helps you understand someone's decision. Still, you might want to take charge and make a decision, especially after a conference or meeting. You don't need to explain yourself. Tonight: Quality time with a loved one.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Allow someone to play a more significant role in your life. Fiery impulsiveness still manages to come out, but you can trust your enthusiasm. Others adore this quality in you, especially a key associate. A romance could play a role in a decision. Tonight: Go along with a partner's plans.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Head into work and take charge. You have a lot to get done, which you will. Still, curb a tendency to let your mind drift to home and a problem revolving around this area. Your value of someone or a partner grows in the next few weeks. Tonight: Work and more work.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Ever playful and full of fun, you're ready for nearly anything, which proves fortunate. Express your ability to adjust and adapt to different styles of communication. Let others make a choice. Be firm and direct with an associate. Tonight: Play the night away.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Listen carefully to someone who shares a lot with you. You're basically anchored. Your expenditures could soar out of control if you're too impulsive with an investment. A risk might feel more and more appealing. Tonight: Happy at home.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Reverse direction quickly if you don't like what's going on. Your fiery, impulsive ways will lead you. Your imagination knows no limits. Your understanding leads you in a new direction. Do something special for a roommate. Tonight: Visit with a friend on the phone.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Expenses take you in the reverse direction. Your fiery decision involving a family member could come home to roost. Be careful with spending. A soft approach wins many friends. Tonight: Your treat.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Others listen. Seize center stage. The unexpected occurs with communication. You or someone else might say something impulsively, which might later be regretted. Think carefully about what you want. Tonight: Treat someone to dinner.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Take your time when making a decision. Mull it over as long as you need. Thoughts need to be shared rather than acted on. Venus moves into your sign, adding to your happiness and potential this evening. Time is on your side. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep.



WEATHER

Today ...	Mostly Sunny	High—72°F	Low—45°F
Tomorrow ...	Partly Cloudy	High—71°F	Low—47°F
Wednesday ...	Partly Cloudy	High—65°F	Low—46°F



QUOTE of the DAY

"God helps those who do not help themselves."

— Wilson Mizner (1876-1933)

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Marriage in Persian culture unfolds in courtroom

TRIAL, from page 1

ties, whatever they were, became annulled in 1997.

Anav filed the case in 1999 in pursuit of the \$17,171 he put down on the car and some \$19,000-plus in cash gifts. Mobasser's attorney then threw in the legal equivalent of everything but the kitchen sink at Anav, countersuing for the anguish of a long-suppressed rape and loss of earnings Mobasser said she endured, despite her training as an electrical engineer at Santa Monica College and UCLA.

Anav claimed the gifts were given in contemplation of a loving marriage which never really happened, alleging Mobasser had spurned him before legally "converting" his cash and the car he'd bought. She replied that they were gifts, and that the marriage ended in the blink of an eye because he had courted her, raped her, and then left, filing for divorce. She also claimed that Anav gave her a case of HPV — common genital warts, and that she'd paid over \$42,000 to keep the Mercedes.

But most poignantly, Mobasser claimed she felt forced against her will to marry Anav because the options in her culture left her with little choice after he took her virginity at age 31.

"Miserable as I was, I did not want this divorce," she told the jury. "He told me, 'I've done this to you but I will be a good husband ... a faithful husband.'"

Mobasser said she had never been physically attracted to Anav but gave him repeated reprieves after he showered her with flowers and cards.

Anav told a different story, insisting the affair was a love story. Portraying Mobasser as a sexual aggressor, he blamed her mother for the break up, suggesting that the mother felt Anav wasn't wealthy enough for her. He also suggested that the mother, who arrived from Tehran in 1996 12 years after her daughter, was competing with him for her affections.

"I was in love with her ... I never loved anyone the way I loved her," he

told the jury.

Anav said the two had made love about a month and a half into their relationship — an event Mobasser characterized as a rape. They married 24 days after the Oct. 24, 1996 encounter.

In Persian custom, the groom stages the ceremony, which Mobasser said shocked her as far beneath her dream of a large celebration. The marriage was over by the end of November, shortly after a week-long Hawaiian trip Anav characterized as a honeymoon while Mobasser said was marked

repeatedly by sexual abuse.

In his final summation to the jury, Louis Dell, Anav's attorney, chose the risky strategy of portraying Mobasser as a cold materialist in quest of his client's money. "Ladies and gentlemen, that is absolutely wrong in this world," he declared.

Mobasser's lawyer, Derek Tabone, placed her wedding portrait — in her "TIKEH" days — on the witness stand. Motioning towards it, he asked the jury to consider "what turned that person into the woman you see here?"

LETTERS

Santa Monica lacking leadership, common sense

Editor:

(This letter was originally addressed to Barbara Tenzer, a commercial real estate broker, in response to her guest commentary in the Feb. 7 edition of the Santa Monica Daily Press).

Great guest commentary in the SMDP. You hit the nail right on the head. The city's responsibility is to provide a safe and convenient experience on the Promenade.

However, when it comes to panhandlers and vagrants, disgusting, smelly alleys with no signage, unsightly and annoying parking garages and traffic mismanagement, (including the transit mall and all the road construction going on), an over-supply of tacky shopping carts and way too many overly loud performers competing for too little space, the city has f**ked it up beyond belief.

Keep in mind that many of these same people thought that a Target Store was a bad idea, so that gives us all an insight into their real mindset.

Not content to just tell the hospitality industry how to manage their business affairs, the city also wants to micromanage Third Street businesses even down to telling landlords who they can rent to. What is so sad is that the city council, (city planning director) Suzanne Frick and the others whose job it is to know better are deliberately ignoring what is obviously so wrong with the Promenade and refusing to fix it.

While you give "thumbs up" to Kathleen Rawson, and the Bayside District Corporation, I lay some of the blame at their feet for not being loud, persistent or forceful enough to grab some councilmen and city administrators by the ears and shake some sense into them.

Unless somebody starts showing some common sense and leadership, for most of us it will continue to be "Good-bye, Santa Monica. Hello, Westwood and Century City."

Bill Bauer
Santa Monica

Rollin' around



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

A pick-up game of roller hockey got heated between two teams Sunday afternoon just south of the pier — and it wasn't just weather related. Two opponents battled out it verbally over a foul just after the game began.

Building codes may need review

EARTHQUAKES, from page 1

reviewing the consequences of the Long Beach earthquake of March 10, 1933. The 6.4-magnitude quake caused 120 deaths and prompted state officials to pass new laws changing building codes. Severe damage to 70 schools led the state Legislature to pass the Field Act to assure safer school construction after just a single day of debate.

By contrast, after the 1994 Northridge quake members of the Los Angeles City Council backed off requiring retrofitting

of the types of building that suffered the most damage, said Terry Dooley of Morley Construction.

State officials, however, embarked on a substantial bridge retrofit effort after the magnitude-6.7 Northridge quake, said Egill Hauksson, a seismologist at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. Problems with steel-frame buildings also have been the subject of corrective studies funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Hauksson said.

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STATE

STATE BRIEFS

Napa's grape sales growing strong

By The Associated Press

SONOMA — Sonoma, Marin and Napa counties received the highest prices per ton of wine grapes in the state during last year's crush, according to a preliminary report by the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

However, the state's 2001 crush of wine, table and raisin grapes totaled 3.37 million tons, down 15 percent from the record crush of 3.9 million tons in 2000, according to the report released Friday.

Napa County's grapes received an average of \$2,838 a ton, the highest price in the state, and 15 percent higher than in 2000.

Sonoma and Marin counties grapes received the second-highest average price per ton, \$2,155 or 6 percent more than in 2000.

Sonoma County, with 56,000 acres of vineyards, produced \$374 million in grapes; Napa County, with 40,000 acres, produced grapes worth \$359 million.

Wine industry experts say sales have been slow and there are ample inventories, but consumers have been buying higher priced wines.

The final report on the 2001 crush is due March 8.

Fishermen claim intimidation

By The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The operator and crew of a fishing boat have sued several Bay Area crabbing associations claiming they were intimidated and their equipment was vandalized during a strike last year.

The suit was filed Thursday in federal court in San Francisco.

John Dooley, who runs the Caitlin Ann, and four crew members, say they were blacklisted. Hundreds of their crab pot lines were cut while many crab fishermen held out for a better price for Dungeness crab.

In early December, Bay Area crabbers ended a three-week strike that had for the most part kept crab pots out of the water. Crab fishermen had initially wanted \$2.50 a pound, but eventually accepted a price of \$1.88 per pound.

The Caitlin Ann was one of the few Bay Area boats to go crabbing when the season opened in mid-November.

Billboard industry to be taxed

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The City Council took aim at illegal billboards by approving an annual fee to pay for an inventory and inspection program.

Councilman Jack Weiss wrote the law that will make the billboard industry pay for enforcement of building codes against the 40 percent of billboards believed to be out of compliance.

The council launched the program even as some civic activists called for banning all new billboards. Industry officials fear the fee will drive away business.

Council members were shocked last year when city Building and Safety Department officials said they did not have an inventory of all existing billboards and could not say with certainty how many are illegal.

Part of the problem was that the city did not dedicate the resources needed to inventory billboards and inspect each one.

Angry bees swarm Garden Grove strip mall

By The Associated Press

GARDEN GROVE — One person was hospitalized and five others were injured when a swarm of angry bees attacked people at a strip mall, authorities said.

The bee attack occurred Saturday at 1:49 p.m. in the 14100 block of Brookhurst Street after a hive was disturbed, a fire dispatch supervisor said.

Pedestrians ran to their cars as a police officer on a bullhorn told the public to stay indoors.

"My daughter was outside in front screaming and also yelling that the bees were attacking her," witness Andy Pham told KABC-TV in Los Angeles. "I saw her head filled with many bees inside her hair and she tried to get them off."

One victim was taken Garden Grove Hospital for treatment of bee stings.

It was not immediately known if the swarm consisted of Africanized honey bees, which are known for furious attacks.

Record temperatures in Southern California

By The Associated Press

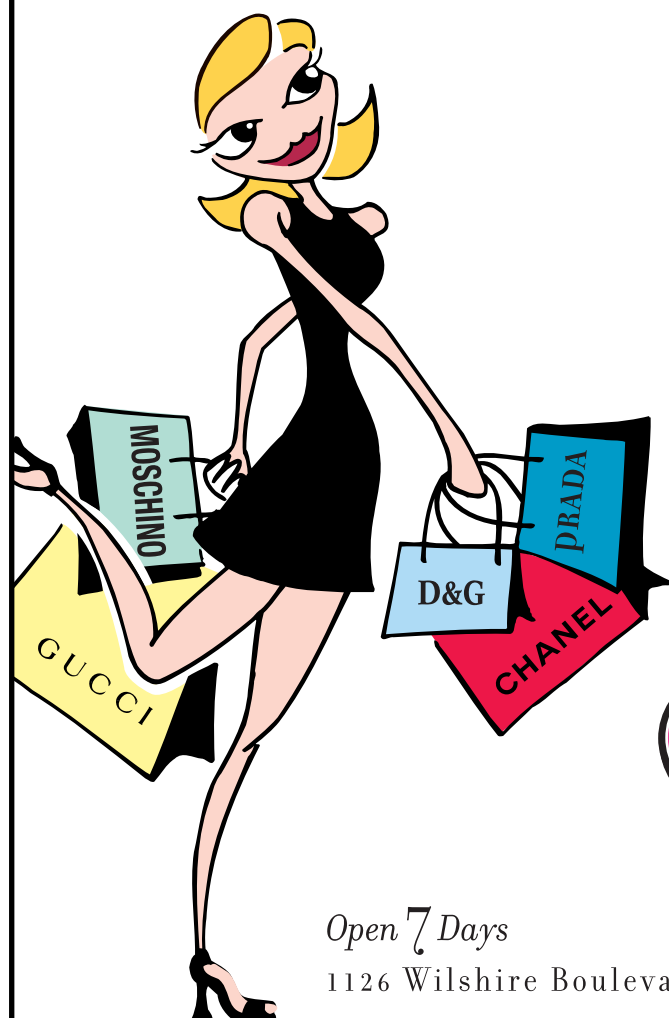
NEWPORT BEACH — Warm temperatures hit this Orange County city Saturday, with the 77-degree mark beating a record that stood for more than half a century, according to the National Weather Service.

"Santa Ana conditions brought very dry and warm temperatures, especially along the coast," said NWS forecaster Brad Doyle. The warmest Feb. 9 in Newport Beach had been a 75-degree day in 1945.

Farther south in San Diego County, the Oceanside marina hit 80 degrees, besting the 79 degrees reached in 1974.

In Los Angeles County, Burbank hit a non-record 78 degrees, while the Los Angeles Airport hit 77 degrees, the weather service said.

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STATE



SoCal fire injures 11, destroys expensive homes in Fallbrook

BY SETH HETTENA

Associated Press Writer

FALLBROOK — Santa Ana winds pushed flames that began near an area where people had burned trash through a community of \$1 million homes Sunday, injuring 11 people and destroying or damaging 16 houses.

The San Diego County fire was first spotted about noon Sunday and consumed 2,000 acres, also destroying a sheriff's patrol car and two fire engines. Homes affected were estimated to be worth \$500,000 to \$1 million.

It wasn't known when the flames would be contained.

Peter Lissaman, 70, who moved into his home two months ago, said he watched the fire break out in an area where several people had been burning trash on Friday. Lissaman said the blaze started with a small plume of smoke and about an hour later flames came roaring up the hill below him.

The fire moved rapidly westward, fed by sustained winds of 25 mph to 30 mph and spread to the a U.S. Naval Weapons Station, marching within 500 yards of officers' housing. The area had been evacuated, according to station spokesman Gregg Smith. Fewer than 20

"It just came so fast ... It was just a big pop and a solid wall of fire."

— **RALPH COX**
Fallbrook resident

people live in those quarters.

Ammunition and other weapons stores on the base are protected inside structures that can withstand fire, he said. "There is no immediate concern over the potential of an explosion," he said.

Officials at Marine Corps Base Camp Joseph H. Pendleton, west of the Navy station, said units of the base fire department have been dispatched to the Gavlin fire, which is moving toward the camp. There was no immediate threat to the camp, said Marine Corps spokesman Lt. Greg Scott.

Eleven people were taken to the hospital for smoke inhalation, hypothermia, and one broken ankle; 10 were treated and released. Six people suffered hypothermia and possible smoke inhalation when they took shelter in a swimming pool while fire raged over them,

said North County fire Capt. Rick Mann. Four other people had smoke inhalation, Mann said.

Mann added that Santa Ana winds are usually more active in the fall, not winter. "This is very unusual for this time of year," he said, adding that 15-foot-tall brush in the dry Santa Margarita Riverbed hasn't burned in 25 years.

Three helicopters, nine bulldozers and more than 500 firefighters and 100 engines were assigned to the fire, Mann said.

Smoke towered over and permeated the avocado groves and ranch homes in Fallbrook about 60 miles north of San Diego.

"It just came so fast," said Ralph Cox, 51, who was trapped in his adobe house when fire raced up a hillside covered with manzanita scrub and citrus trees. He said he heard an explosion before

flames surrounded his home.

"It was just a big pop and a solid wall of fire," said Cox, who was rescued by firefighters who made an escape path out of the house.

The fire drove out Pete Jespersen, who stood red-eyed on the street, soot covering his face and arms, clutching an American flag.

Jespersen, 37, sprayed water on his in-laws' house, but had to leave because the flames were approaching so quickly.

"I tried to save the house, but it was no use," he said. He grabbed the flag from the house and breathed through it as he escaped the heavy smoke.

American Red Cross officials, who were setting up a shelter at a nearby high school, said about 100 people had been displaced by the fire.

Firefighters around Southern California fought several other brush fires Sunday, including a 1,400-acre blaze near Anaheim Hills that was fueled by winds gusting as high as 80 mph.

More than 1,000 firefighters were tackling the blaze, which was about 20 percent contained, said Kymbra Fleming of the Orange County Fire Authority.

The fire broke out about 9 p.m. Saturday. No homes were immediately threatened, although some residents became worried when high winds carried smoke over their neighborhood, Fleming said.

Smoke from the fire was expected to reduce visibility in some areas to below a quarter of a mile, according to the National Weather Service.

Counterculture icon Timothy Leary's wife Rosemary Leary, dies at age 66

By The Associated Press

APTOS — Rosemary Woodruff Leary, third wife of counterculture icon Timothy Leary, has died of congestive heart failure. She was 66.

Rosemary Leary died Thursday at her home in Aptos, about 80 miles south of San Francisco.

She met Timothy Leary at an art exhibition opening in New York City in 1965. She was working as a model at the time.

The couple married in 1967, and were arrested repeatedly for marijuana possession.

Timothy Leary was sent to a state prison in San Luis Obispo County in 1970, but his wife and others helped him escape. The two fled the country to Algeria, then to Switzerland.

They separated in 1971, and two years later Timothy

Leary was caught trying to enter Afghanistan and was returned to the United States. He was released from prison in 1976, the year the two divorced.

Rosemary Leary stayed underground, living in Afghanistan, Sicily and Central and South America. She snuck back into the United States in 1980 and lived under the name Sarah Woodruff.

She and Timothy Leary became close friends, and in 1993, Rosemary Leary had her record cleared of fugitive charges.

She wrote freelance articles and managed the trust that administered her ex-husband's copyrights and archives. She also lectured college students about the psychedelic era.

Timothy Leary died in 1996. Rosemary Leary was working on a final draft of her memoirs when she died.

She is survived by her brother.

Gas prices rise by less than half cent

By The Associated Press

CAMARILLO — Gas prices rose less than half a cent per gallon over the past two weeks as supplies of crude oil and refined gasoline remained steady.

Prices Friday at about 8,000 gas stations nationwide averaged \$1.11 a gallon for self-serve regular, essentially unchanged from two weeks ago, analyst Trilby Lundberg said Sunday.

The weighted price per gallon for all grades and taxes was \$1.14, up 0.41 cents per gallon from Jan. 27, the date of the last Lundberg survey.

Gasoline prices are still historically low and will likely remain so despite an agreement by oil producing nations to decrease production, Lundberg said.

Gas prices remain 41.9 cents below what they were shortly before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and 37.9 cents below what they were one year ago.

"Although prices are up nearly half a cent on average, I don't see any big price surge on the near horizon," Lundberg said Sunday. "There's still plenty of oil and gasoline in the world and in the U.S. and we use less gasoline this time of year than we will require later on."

The national weighted average price of gasoline,

including taxes, at self-serve pumps Friday was about \$1.21 per gallon for mid-grade and \$1.30 for premium.

SuperLotto Plus grows to \$115 million

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — No one matched all six SuperLotto Plus numbers in the California Lottery drawing on Saturday.

That means the prize pot has grown to \$115 million, the third-largest top prize in the 16-year history of the state lottery.

The next chance to win is Wednesday.

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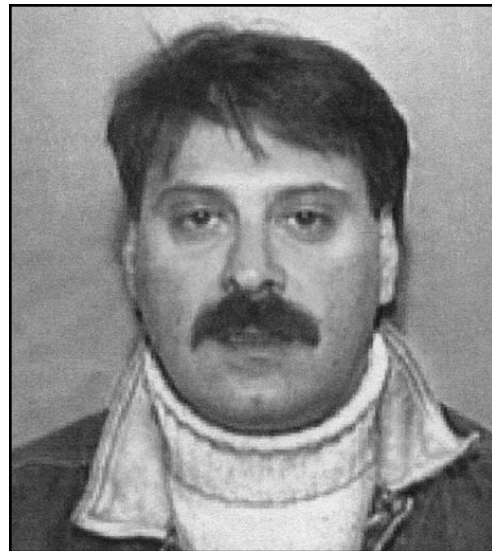
NATIONAL

Broker sought in investigation of missing funds surrenders

BY JOE MILICIA
Associated Press Writer

CLEVELAND — An investment broker who disappeared after he prompted the FBI to investigate \$300 million missing from his clients' accounts turned himself in Saturday.

Frank Gruttadauria, manager of a Cleveland office of Lehman Brothers, sur-



Associated Press file photo
Frank D. Gruttadauria, of Gates Mills, Ohio, is seen in this undated photo. Gruttadauria, who was the manager of a Cleveland office of Lehman Brothers, turned himself in on Saturday without incident at the FBI's downtown office in Cleveland, after nearly a month on the run. He will appear before a U.S. magistrate Monday, the FBI said.

rendered at the FBI's downtown office. A federal warrant issued Jan. 25 charges him with making false statements to a financial institution.

Investigators have said they suspect Gruttadauria ran a giant shell game in which his clients' money was transferred into accounts he controlled under fictitious names.

Gruttadauria, 44, disappeared with his passport Jan. 11.

He left a letter for the FBI saying he acted alone and didn't take money for personal use, investigators said. He wrote that lax supervision enabled him to misappropriate money over 15 years.

He also wrote his family after he disappeared, apologizing to his mother for putting her through an ordeal. "I don't know how to live as a fugitive," the letter concluded.

His mother and a lawyer for the family did not immediately return calls seeking comment Saturday.

Gruttadauria is scheduled to appear before a U.S. magistrate Monday, the

FBI said.

The FBI, Securities and Exchange Commission, National Association of Securities Dealers and Gruttadauria's former employers have been investigating since he disappeared.

Investigators have said they suspect Gruttadauria ran a giant shell game in which his clients' money was transferred into accounts he controlled under fictitious names. Whenever a client needed a withdrawal from an account that was empty, money would be transferred from another client.

Among clients who lost money are

businessman Samuel Glazer, a Mr. Coffee co-founder who lost about \$30 million and George Forbes, head of the local NAACP and a former president of Cleveland City Council, who lost more than \$1 million.

Gruttadauria had worked at Lehman Brothers since October 2000, when the company bought his then-employer, SG Cowen Securities Corp. He worked for Hambrecht & Quist in Chicago from 1987-89.

Gruttadauria is no longer an employee of Lehman, company spokesman William Ahearn said Wednesday.

Couple returns money that spewed from cash machine

By The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — A couple who made off with more than \$35,000 when a cash machine began spewing \$100 bills called police and returned some of the money, but more than half was still missing, police said.

Authorities said they would consider theft charges against Willie and Tawanda Anderson, who told police they went on a spending spree, gave cash to friends and bought gifts for their five children.

Police found bottles of champagne and cases of beer when they went to the house of Willie Anderson's mother to retrieve some of the money from under a mattress.

On Friday, the couple took their \$2,200 IRS refund check to H&R Block, which operates a machine that cashes refund checks prepared by the company.

Instead of dispensing \$2,200, the machine spit out \$100 bills until an employee shut off the power, \$72,000 later. Police said the Andersons scooped up wads of bills and took off with about \$35,500.

The Andersons' phone number was not listed and they could not be reached for comment Sunday.

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SPORTS

U.S. wins Olympic gold in women's halfpipe

BY LARRY MCSHANE

Associated Press Writer

SALT LAKE CITY — Old school, meet the new school.

Snowboarder Kelly Clark, in an Olympic event that's all of 4 years old, soared above the halfpipe course to win America's first Winter Games gold on a day when other countries snapped decades-old winless streaks in more traditional sports.

Clark nailed her final run on Sunday to give the United States its first victory in its first hometown Winter Olympics since 1980 — three years before the 18-year-old snowboarder was born.

She was cheered wildly by the partisan crowd, which included three barechested men in the freezing weather, the letters "U-S-A" painted across their chests. Guns 'n Roses' "Welcome to the Jungle" blared as she launched her high-flying, dominating performance.

Doriane Vidal of France won the silver and Fabienne Reuteler of Switzerland won the bronze.

The halfpipe debuted as an Olympic event at Nagano in 1998, where America's Shannon Dunn took a bronze medal.

In two days in Salt Lake City, the Americans — who hope to capture 20 medals, the most ever for a U.S. winter team — had one gold and two silver medals.

Earlier, Swiss skier Simon Ammann returned from injury and soared to victory in the 90-meter ski jump — the first Swiss ski jumping medal since 1972.

That was hardly much of a streak compared to the 54-year stretch of Finnish futility that Samppa Lajunen ended with his gold medal in the Nordic combined.

The nine gold medals awarded so far have gone to nine different countries, an Olympic sharing of the wealth. Austria, with five total medals, was atop the medals chart.

MEN'S DOWNHILL: In one of the games' traditionally glamour events, tradition was served as Austrian Fritz Strobl — long overshadowed by more illustrious Austrian teammates — swept to the gold medal.

He became the sixth Austrian to win the downhill in the 15 races since Alpine skiing debuted in 1948, although the first in a decade.

"It's sensational," said Strobl, a 29-year-old police officer who had never won a medal in a major competition. "I didn't expect it. I was just thinking of racing down the course, not of winning."

Pre-race favorite Stephan Eberharter, one of the Austrians who typically trumps Strobl, finished third to take the bronze. Lasse Kjus of Norway finished second to win his fourth Olympic medal.

American medal hopeful Daron Rahlves, fifth in the downhill at last year's world championships and the reigning world champion in super giant slalom, finished 16th.

"It's a tough one to swallow," Rahlves said.

NORDIC COMBINED: Waving a Finnish flag and slowing down as he approached the finish line, Samppa Lajunen relished the moments as he skied to a gold medal in the Nordic combined — his country's first individual gold in the discipline since 1948.

It wasn't as easy as it looked, he said.

"It is hard work to be 23 years old and win an Olympic medal," said Lajunen, who finished ahead of silver medal-winning teammate Jaakko Talluse. Felix Gottwald of Austria won the bronze.

U.S. medal hopeful Todd Lodwick wound up seventh, the highest finish for an American in the sport's Olympic history. "It's a little bit disappointing, because I had expectations of moving up," said Lodwick.

Americans Matt Dayton and Bill Demong were 18th and 19th, respectively. Rolf Monsen's ninth-place showing in 1932 was the previous best finish for a U.S. athlete.

SKI JUMPING: When he was sitting out weeks of the World Cup season with injuries to his back and head, an Olympic gold medal seemed an impossibility for Switzerland's Simon Ammann.

On Sunday, the impossible happened.

With a clutch, final jump on the 90-meter hill, Ammann earned the first Swiss medal in ski jumping since the 1972 Sapporo Games. After nailing his 323-foot



Laura Rauch/Associated Press

USA's Kelly Clark competes during the women's halfpipe qualifying competition on Sunday in Park City, Utah.

jump, the 5-foot-8, 120-pound Ammann peered anxiously at the giant scoreboard — and learned he was the winner.

"He came out of nowhere," said America's Alan Albarn, who had hoped to end a 78-year medal drought for the U.S. team but finished 11th.

Favorite Sven Hannawald of Germany took the silver, and Adam Malysz of Poland the bronze.

SPEEDSKATING: Another race, another record.

Germany's Claudia Pechstein, skating on the lightning-fast ice of the Utah Olympic Oval, set a world record in the 3,000 meters to win the gold while upstaging her teammate and rival, Anni Friesinger.

Pechstein broke her own record by more than 1 1/2 seconds, finishing in 3 minutes, 57.70 seconds. Renate Groenewold of the Netherlands took silver, while, and Canada's Cindy Klassen won bronze. Friesinger, who was aiming for three gold medals in Salt Lake, was shut out.

It was the second world record in as many speedskating races in Salt Lake City.

American Jennifer Rodriguez finished seventh despite breaking her own national record. The former inline skater from Miami still has three other events to pursue her first Olympic medal.

LUGE: Halfway through the four runs of the luge, Adam Heidt was in position to accomplish what no American has yet pulled off — capture a medal in the men's singles.

Heidt was in fourth place heading into Monday's final two runs, although he was trailing the biggest guns in the sport.

Armin Zoeggeler of Italy, bidding to dethrone three-time Olympic champion Georg Hackl of

Germany, was in first place after setting a track record on both his runs. Austria's Markus Prock, a 10-time World Cup champion, was third.

HOCKEY: The preliminary round — the one without all the NHL stars — continued, with Germany defeating Austria 3-2 for its second straight victory. The loss, its second straight, virtually eliminates Austria from medal contention.



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BUSINESS

United Airlines' new CEO Creighton calm amid crisis

BY DAVE CARPENTER

AP Business Writer

CHICAGO — The new man at the helm of United Airlines has a calm manner and reassuring words for his passengers — employees and the public alike — who are disturbed by the carrier's harrowing and historic descent.

Jack Creighton, mixing doses of Norman Vincent Peale and Mark Twain, has been delivering his message in airports and through communiques — even in brief impromptu speeches during United flights: Rumors of the demise of the world's second-biggest airline have been greatly exaggerated.

"We have time, we have cash, we have assets, we have planes," the head of United's parent UAL Corp. said in an interview just days after the announcement of a \$2.1 billion annual loss — the worst ever by an airline. "We have good hubs, we've got good route structures."

Creighton's message of cautious optimism faces a critical test this week, as does United's progress toward recovery.

The airline's 13,000 mechanics and cleaners vote Tuesday on whether to accept a 37 percent pay raise, their first since 1994, amid concern that anger runs so deep from years of labor strife that they may reject the offer. That would set the clock ticking toward a strike that could begin Feb. 20, unless there is a last-minute settlement or federal intervention.

With United already burning through roughly \$10 million in cash a day, a strike could be devastating, wrecking plans to resurrect the employee-owned airline, in part, by seeking concessions from workers once pending contracts are settled.

Creighton, 69, is reluctant to discuss the prospect of bankruptcy, which was raised publicly by his predecessor last fall. James Goodwin was ousted in October after panicking employees and investors by warning that the airline "will perish" in 2002 if it cannot stem huge losses that worsened dramatically after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks — "a poor choice of words," Creighton says.

But industry analysts see bankruptcy as a distinct possibility if Creighton, who recently passed the 100-day mark as CEO, and UAL aren't able to enact big changes soon.

"I don't think United's in danger of Chapter 11 (bankruptcy) yet, but if he doesn't move quickly it will be," says Helene Becker of the Buckingham Research Group. "He's got to be more aggressive. He's not fast enough."

Denver-based airline consultant Michael Boyd says Creighton has yet to

prove he can restore management's lost credibility with United's 80,000 employees.

"You're going to need some decisive leadership here," Boyd says. "If it's going to be running around and shaking hands and getting a consensus, that's probably not going to work."

Running an airline is a particularly daunting task for someone who never worked for one before UAL's board drafted him for an unspecified short term.

Creighton sought help from both sides, opening the company's books to unions and retaining Goodwin's top managers — President Rono Dutta and Chief Operating Officer Andy Studdert.

"I don't think we need a revolution here, and my approach is not a revolution, it is more evolution," Creighton said in his office at UAL headquarters, the muffled rumble of planes from O'Hare International Airport in the background.

"I think we do have the right raw material in the leadership of this company. ... And I think — this is egotistical — with my leadership we can get where we need to be."

His record backs up his confidence.

At Weyerhaeuser Co., where from 1991-97 he was the first CEO from outside the forest products giant's founding family, Creighton restructured and strengthened operations. His moves sharply boosted productivity, profits and the stock price, which, like UAL's today, was badly lagging.

He won over investors, unions and even environmentalists.

Tom Buffenbarger, president of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, which represents United mechanics, says his union respected Creighton for visiting logging sites and mills and leaving a legacy of concern for workers.

"I think he's got the capability to make tough decisions," says Buffenbarger, who isn't making a recommendation on Tuesday's vote. "We've got to give him a little more time. But he's going to have to move on some of the leftover management he inherited from Jim Goodwin."

Under Goodwin last fall, United laid off 20,000 employees and reduced capacity by 23 percent.

Even though the mechanics' vote could ultimately make or break Creighton's efforts, the low-key CEO doesn't plan a big push to promote a "yes" vote.

"Certainly I hope they vote for the contract. But I can't tell them how to vote," he says. "I just want to give them all the facts I can about it."

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INTERNATIONAL



Fresh Afghan arrivals come to Naval base

BY LISA J. ADAMS
Associated Press Writer

GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba — Marines equipped with machine guns, grenade launchers, pepper spray and batons rushed to greet a transport plane delivering 34 more detainees from Afghanistan on Saturday.

Gearing up for their mission, some of the young members of the Marines' Quick Reaction Force jammed to the hit Queen song "We Will Rock You" as a ferry carried them across the bay toward the airfield at this remote U.S. Navy base.

"I enjoy getting my hands on them," said Michael Pfadenhauer, a 22-year-old from Baltimore who was among Marines on

"These are the actual people who are responsible for the destruction in New York and Washington. It feels good to see them inside their little cages. They're where they belong."

— MICHAEL PFADENHAUER
U.S. Marine

guard when the C-141 cargo plane arrived after a 25-hour flight.

"These are the actual people who are responsible for the destruction in New York and Washington. ... It feels good to see them inside their little cages. They're where they belong," he said.

The fresh arrivals came two days after Washington announced that the Geneva Convention — a group of treaties dealing with the treatment of war prisoners — should apply to detainees from the ousted Afghan Taliban regime, but not to detainees of the al-Qaida network.

Regardless of the legal distinction, Brig. Gen. Mike Lehnert, the Marine in charge of the detention mission, said both groups would be treated the same — humanely. He said they may be separated later if Congress gives approval to build a semi-permanent prison.

"We have a group that claims status as Taliban. There is a smaller number that we've confirmed through other sources who are al-Qaida," Lehnert told reporters Saturday. Of the other detainees, "All we can say for certain is that none of them are

on our side."

President Bush's administration refused this week to bow to demands from several countries that the Taliban detainees be given official prisoner-of-war status. However, a U.S. congressman who toured Camp X-Ray said the detainees were being treated fairly under the Geneva Conventions.

"They are getting medical screening and medical care. They are getting 2,600 calories a day. Their spiritual needs are being taken care of," Rep. James Sensenbrenner, a Republican from Wisconsin who is chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives' Judicial Committee, said Friday.

Earlier, the lilting cry of a Muslim Navy cleric had risen over the camp, calling the detainees to midday prayers.

The cleric, Bangladesh -born Lt. Abuhenia Saiful-Islam, has said that some of the detainees have expressed regrets to him about the Sept. 11 attack.

Several countries have demanded that their citizens be returned home to face interrogation or trial. U.S. officials have said the detainees come from 25 countries. On Thursday, a senior Pentagon official who spoke on condition of anonymity said they included about 50 Saudis, 30 Yemenis, 25 Pakistanis, eight Algerians, three Britons and small numbers from Egypt, Australia, France, Russia, Belgium and Sweden.

Some countries, including Britain, welcomed Washington's announcement about the detainees' status. But the International Committee of the Red Cross said it fell short of the requirements of international law.

"The ICRC stands by its position that people in a situation of international conflict are considered to be prisoners of war unless a competent tribunal decides otherwise," spokeswoman Kim Gordon-Bates said.

Such a status would give the detainees greater legal protections, and prevent the United States from trying them in secret military commission empowered to impose the death sentence.

The Geneva Conventions set four conditions for qualification as a POW: to be part of a military hierarchy; to wear uniforms or

Mideast turmoil



Jerome Delay/Associated Press

Israeli police officers check the car used by Palestinian attackers in Beersheba, Israel, on Sunday. A pair of Palestinian gunmen opened fire Sunday on the street outside a large Israeli military base in the southern city of Beersheba, killing two women and seriously wounding five people before they themselves were shot dead.

other distinctive signs; to carry arms openly; and to conduct operations according to the laws and customs of war.

In Washington, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld reiterated Friday that the Taliban did not wear uniforms, insignia or symbols and had no identifiable chains of command.

On his way to meet the latest group of prisoners to arrive at the Guantanamo base during Camp X-Ray's 35 days of operation, Pfadenhauer said Saturday he didn't expect any major problems from the prisoners.

"They do not give us a hard time," he said. "A lot of them we bring off (the plane) are actually pretty scared. They should be."

War on terrorism continues

By The Associated Press

Developments related to the Sept. 11 attacks:

- Port Authority spokesman Greg Trevor announced that the remains of five Port Authority police officers, including a chief and the female head of the agency's training academy, were recovered at the World Trade Center site.

- Bacha Khan, an Afghan warlord who led the worst factional fighting

since the fall of the Taliban, vowed to fight rather than step down as governor of Paktia province in Afghanistan.

- In the northern Afghanistan, warlords agreed to create a "security belt" to keep unauthorized weapons out of Mazar-e-Sharif.

- Iran has closed the offices of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former Afghan warlord who opposes Afghanistan's interim government and the strong U.S. role in Afghanistan, one of his aides said.

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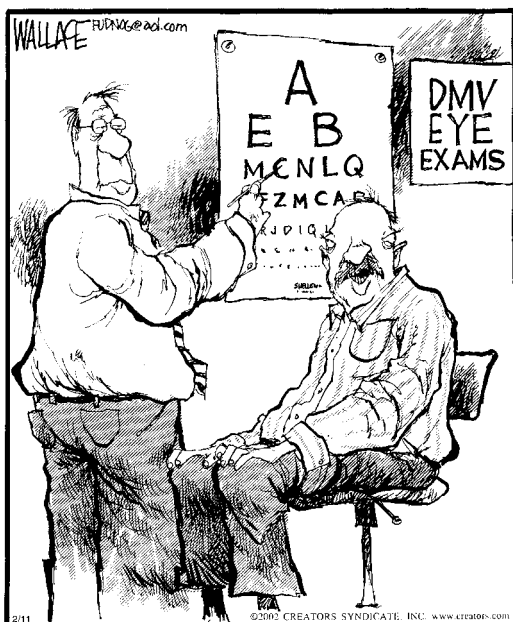


COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



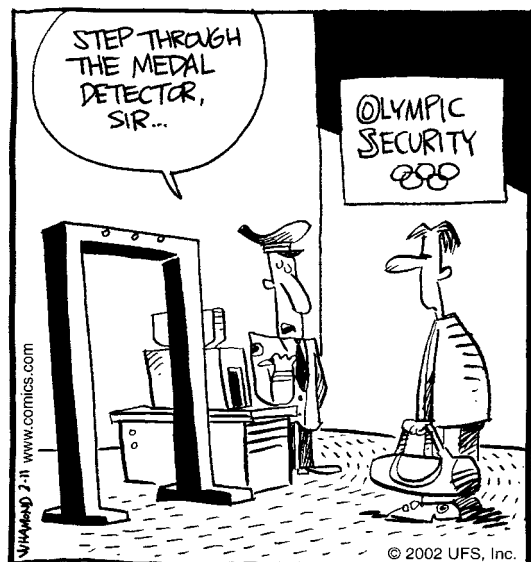
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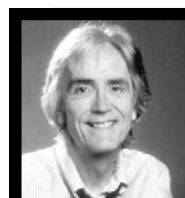
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

One man's indictment becomes a 'hairy' situation

On New Year's Eve, Los Angeles police arrested bicycle-shop owner Michael Howard, 47, and charged him with eight counts in connection with a series of incidents in which a man forcibly cut the hair of women on the street. Though Howard's alleged obsession with hair was apparently not well known to his family, one longtime friend told the Los Angeles Times that Howard "liked playing with (hair), brushing it, everything about it. He says he likes the sound of scissors cutting hair."

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BACK PAGE

Cash-for-corpses scheme stuns Poland

BY BEATA PASEK

Associated Press Writer

LODZ, Poland — It is known among Polish ambulance crews as “skin hunting” — the practice of taking bribes from funeral homes in exchange for steering corpses their way.

Now, police are investigating allegations that some medics in Poland’s second-largest city went a grotesque step further, deliberately letting very sick patients die before reaching hospitals — and even administering fatal drug doses — to boost business.

There have been no charges in any deaths — only arrests on suspicion of bribery. But police in Lodz say there is growing evidence to support allegations in an investigative report late last month in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poland’s biggest newspaper.

“We are all shocked by these crimes that are hard to imagine,” President Aleksander Kwasniewski said of the report.

The scandal has been making headlines across Poland ever since, and police in Lodz say they are following up on hundreds of tips phoned in on a hot line — and preparing to exhume bodies.

Police would not discuss details of the investigation, but said they have arrested nine people over the past two weeks and

“If there is a demand for something, somebody will supply it sooner or later ... The bodies are a kind of goods here that funeral homes want to buy.”

— BOGUSLAW TYKA

Head of the Lodz provincial ambulance service

that the probe is widening. Authorities in a dozen cities are investigating suspicions of payoffs, but the reported abuses in Lodz, in central Poland, are the most serious.

“It’s terrible, it’s awful, it’s simply unimaginable,” said Anna Starzynska, 65, a retired shopworker waiting at a bus stop near the city’s main ambulance center. “You look at that building, and you ask yourself: Do those people working there really come to your home to help you?”

State first-aid officials acknowledge the system is ripe for corruption. They blame notoriously low pay for government-employed medical workers and a lack of laws regulating intense competition among funeral homes for state-paid funerals.

“If there is a demand for something, somebody will supply it sooner or later,” said Boguslaw Tyka, head of the Lodz provincial ambulance service. “The bod-

ies are a kind of goods here that funeral homes want to buy. No laws or permit requirements or anything prevent them from competing to get the information about the deaths.”

In a typical skin-hunting deal, a funeral parlor that has been tipped off shows up within minutes to take away the body. Most bereaved relatives then find it convenient to authorize the same one to handle funeral arrangements — and receive the standard \$1,000 state payment to cover costs. If relatives want to use a different funeral home, they must pay to get the body there and pay the original home for its brief services.

Polish media reports say ambulance crews that tip off funeral homes get kickbacks of \$200 per corpse, nearly a third the monthly salary of a typical Lodz ambulance doctor.

Low salaries in public services are hardly rare in formerly communist

Poland, however, and the reports have provoked outrage among other workers.

“I’m a teacher, and I’m also paid very little, but I would never do something that breaks all ethical norms,” said Janina Solska, a Lodz resident. “It’s a rat race. It’s all about money.”

Leaders in Poland’s influential Roman Catholic Church also cite the scandal as evidence that traditional values have become corrupted by rampant capitalism.

“It’s widely suggested now that value No. 1 is money, that only money gives happiness, and that everything else, such as human dignity, honor, professionalism, is inferior to getting richer,” Bishop Adam Lepa said in the daily newspaper *Rzeczpospolita*.

Despite the allegations, officials say there has been no drop in calls for ambulances. Some people even say they appreciate cooperation between ambulance crews and funeral homes, given the lack of state morgues, coroners and clear regulations on how to handle corpses.

“My uncle I was living with died in the middle of the night. I wouldn’t have known what to do if the ambulance crew hadn’t taken his body to a funeral home,” Zbigniew Bartek, a taxi driver.

“I think it’s good that ambulance crews give you information about funeral homes — as long as they don’t murder patients, of course.”

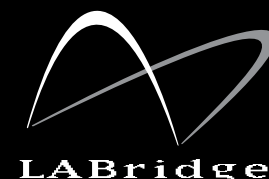
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