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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2009
Volume 8 Issue 85

# Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey



ONLINE HELP
SEE PAGE 3

THE COUNCIL COVERAGE ISSUE

## Senior housing project survives appeal process

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL A controversial senior group housing project in an upscale part of town cleared another hurdle on Tuesday when an appeal filed by neighbors was turned down.

The City Council unanimously denied a petition filed by a group of Montana Avenue area residents who argued that the Planning Commission acted in error in determining that the proposed structure was exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act because of aesthetic impacts, pointing out that a review was conducted for a previous iteration of the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Pam O'Connor recused herself from the vote because she works as a historian and preservation planner for Kaplan Chen Kaplan, the project architect.

The commission adopted the CEQA exemption in November after it denied

SEE PROJECT PAGE 10

## 'Senioritis' epidemic lives on at Samohi

BY CATHERINE CAIN
Special to the Daily Press

SAMOHI Steve Rupprecht is finding out that having a large number of juniors in his senior math classes is actually paying off.

At first concerned his juniors would be lacking some fundamental math skills, Rupprecht is now noticing a positive effect they are having on seniors in his calculus BC classes at Santa Monica High School, which used to be almost exclusively made up of seniors. Often during second semester, especially around May and June, many seniors come down with so-called "senioritis." They begin to slack off and cease to put full effort into their schoolwork.

Teachers with seniors in their classes

SEE SENIORS PAGE 12



**MAD DASH** Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

**Santa Monica High School guard Page Madea (right) battles Culver City's Alexandra Lews for a loose ball on Tuesday at the Del Goodyear Gym located on the campus of Culver City High School. The Vikings won the road game, 73-52. The win improves Samohi's record to 19-6 overall and 7-2 in Ocean League play. Samohi plays its season finale at Hawthorne High School today. The Vikings are currently second place in the Ocean.**

## City Council divided over housing aid

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL In light of a challenging economy and rising unemployment rates, leading to tough times for residents, city officials are looking into whether to use temporary funds to help those who are in imminent danger of losing their homes.

The City Council on Tuesday directed its staff to investigate what possibilities are available to provide financial assistance and temporarily cover the anticipated loss from IOUs that the state could issue for tax refunds and local aid.

The request came from Councilmember Kevin McKeown who said the funds many residents are expecting are not arriving.

"Those of us who work on homeless issues have heard over the years again and again that many families are just a paycheck or two away from being homeless," he said. "If indeed that's true and I believe it is, we no doubt have families in our town for whom even the temporary cessation of predictable state funding is going to cause a housing crisis."

The suggestion drew concerns from city staff and councilmembers given City Hall's current troublesome economic situation.

City Attorney Marsha Moutrie pointed out that City Hall can't just give residents money even if they're in dire need of it. McKeown said he envisioned the aid to kick in for families whose housing situation is immediately threatened.

"It's difficult to know what particular thing threatens someone's housing situation without becoming intimately involved in their familial budget, which is rather difficult for the city to do," Moutrie said.

City Manager Lamont Ewell cautioned that getting into the business of providing such funding to residents could undermine City Hall's financial position even more, affecting its current AAA bond rating.

Some councilmembers said they felt it wasn't their responsibility to cover for the

SEE AID PAGE 11

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# WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS




### Prose and poetry
Novel Cafe
212 Pier Ave., 8 p.m. — 10 p.m.
Read, listen, and enjoy open poetry and prose readings every Thursday. Everyone and all genres are welcome, with a 1,000 word maximum per reader. The event is hosted by Forth Magazine. Call (310) 396-8566 for more information, or visit forthmagazine.com/weeklyreadings.php.

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

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

## Friday, Feb. 13, 2009

### Movies and more
WISE & Healthy Aging
1527 Fourth St., 12:30 p.m. — 4 p.m.
Come for the twice monthly showing of an entertaining and thought-provoking film. A movie and discussion will be held followed by a lively discussion led by peer counselor Bert Dragin, who has written, directed, and produced three motion pictures. Each session is $3, which includes the film, popcorn, and discussion. Call (310) 394-9871 ext. 373.

### Get your yoga on
Ocean Park Branch Library
2601 Main St., 7 p.m. — 8 p.m.
Increase your focus and flexibility while revitalizing in this gentle yoga class. Space is limited, and advance sign up and a personal yoga mat is required. Call (310) 392-3804 or visit www.smpl.org for more information. Call (310) 458-8606 for disabled services.

## Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009

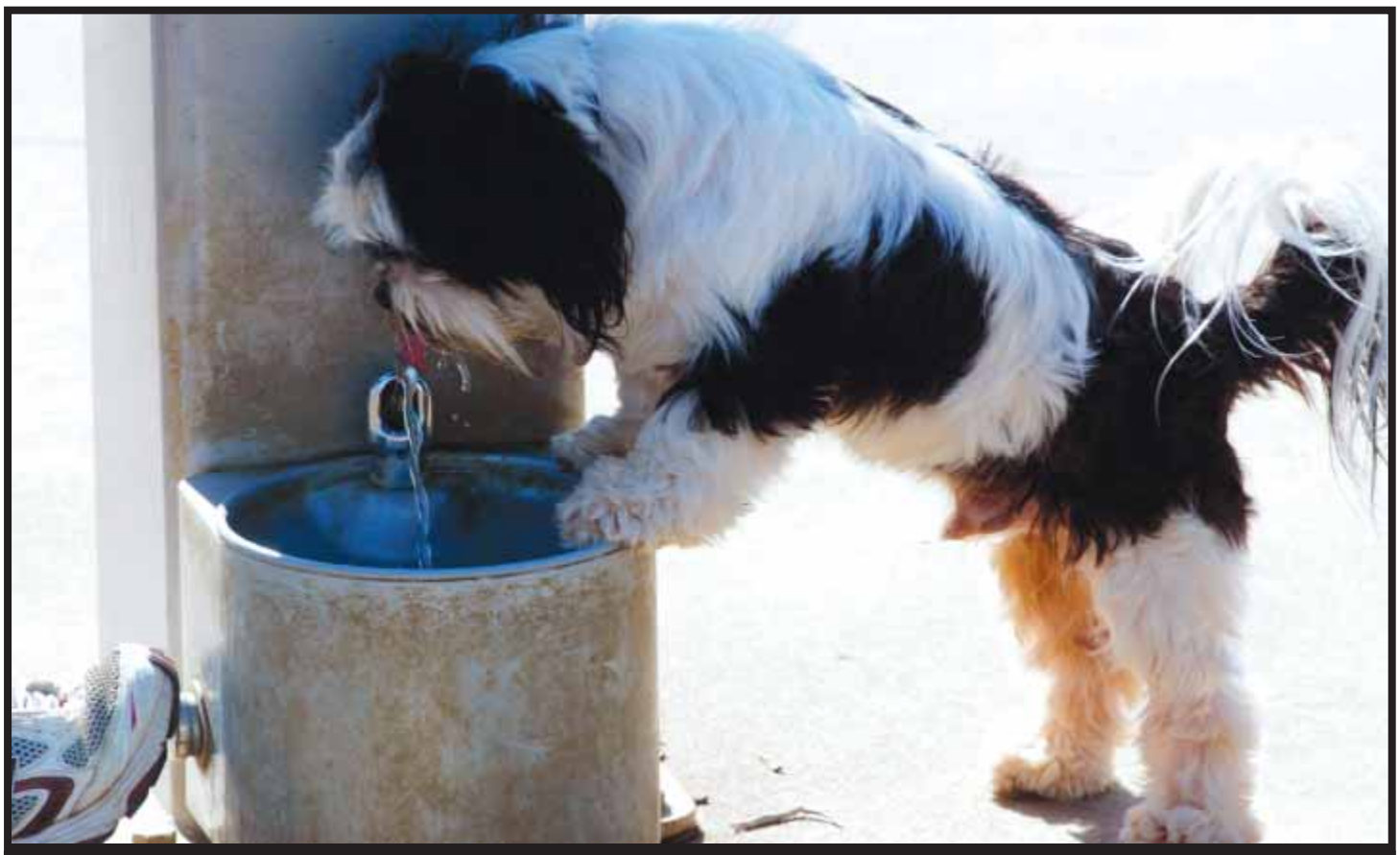
### 'Cinderella: The Musical'
Santa Monica Playhouse
1211 Fourth St., 12:30 p.m.
Audiences help romance bloom in this internationally acclaimed musical, featuring a charming prince, a zany fairy godmother, silly stepsisters, and a zealously well-meaning stepmother. Birthday and tea parties are available with every performance. Kid tickets are $10.50, adult tickets are $12.50. Call (310) 394-9779 ext. 2 or visit www.santamonicaplayhouse.com for more information.

## Sunday, Feb. 15, 2009

### Salsa the night away
Casa Escobar Restaurant & Bar
2500 Wilshire Blvd., 9 p.m.
Beginners and experienced salsa dancers alike can enjoy independent classes taught by three different teachers. Admission is $15 for the class, with free open dancing until 12 a.m. Call (310) 392-3493 for more information.

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.





**DOG DAY**

Byron Kennerly *news@smdp.com*

**Rupert the dog takes a water break at the dog park next to the Santa Monica Airport on Wednesday afternoon.**

# Schwarzenegger, lawmakers work on budget

**BY JUDY LIN**
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders on Wednesday were trying to find a compromise to fix California's massive budget deficit, as Democrats said they wanted to vote on a proposal by week's end.

Democrats and Republicans indicated they were close to a compromise but noted that a few key details had to be worked out before they could agree on the plan to deal with a shortfall pegged at $42 billion through June 2010.

"They're closing on a few key details. There is not an agreement at this point," said Schwarzenegger's spokesman, Aaron McLear.

The state Senate leader characterized the negotiations in much the same way.

"There is no deal, but there is a common framework," Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, said Wednesday before a luncheon address to the Sacramento Press Club.

Any deal is likely to include a combination of tax increases, spending cuts, long-term budget reform such as a spending cap, borrowing and a provision for additional federal money through the stimulus bill being negotiated in Congress.

Friday will mark the 100th day since the governor called a special legislative session to deal with the state's fiscal crisis. California has halted thousands of infrastructure projects, put a hold on tax refund checks and delayed payments to state contractors.

The Schwarzenegger administration also has instituted twice-a-month furloughs for some 200,000 state employees and has said it will begin a layoff process for some 10,000 state workers if no deal is reached by the end of the week.

Lawmakers have been at odds over how to close the gap through next fiscal year and the remainder of the current one. Democrats want tax increases with minimal cuts to social services while Republicans want a spending cap and business-friendly provisions in exchange for tax increases.

"When all four leaders left last night, they said they're getting closer but there's still more work to do," Sabrina Lockhart, spokeswoman for the Republican caucus in the Senate, said Wednesday. "Nothing has changed this morning."

While few details were being made available, the tax measures under discussion are a temporary 1 cent increase in the state sales tax, a hike in the fee for licensing vehicles to 1.15 percent and an unspecified increase in the personal income tax.

The steps to boost revenue were expected to generate about $12 billion.

In exchange, a Republican-sought spending cap would limit the amount the state can spend each year based on a predetermined formula. In good years, extra money would be skimmed off the budget and saved for later.

SEE **BUDGET** PAGE 11

# Web site focuses on smoking ban

**BY DAILY PRESS STAFF**

CITY HALL With just two weeks before the latest smoking ban is set to go into effect, city officials have launched a Web site aimed at educating residents about the new law.

The information about the smoking ban on common areas of all multi-unit residences is available via www.smconsumer.org where residents can read frequently asked questions about the law and landlords can download sample notices to post in their buildings.

The ban, which applies to condominiums and apartments, goes into effect on Feb. 26.

The City Council adopted the ordinance last month to address concerns of the dangers related to second-hand smoke. Residents in multi-unit buildings have long complained about the impacts of living near smokers, some even claiming they have developed respiratory illnesses as a result.

The law applies to everything from walkways to swimming pool areas to shared patios to parking lots.

Landlords are required under the law to give notice to all tenants and post signs in common areas.

An earlier version of the ordinance sparked concerns among many rent control advocates that landlords could use the law to evict offending tenants.

The adopted version addresses the issue by stating that landlords cannot use the ordinance to terminate tenancy and clarifying that smoking in common areas is not considered a violation of law under a lease.

The ordinance also establishes a method through which residents could challenge a neighbor who smokes in a common area, allowing them to seek damages of $100 in Small Claims Court.

The penalty goes up to $200 and $500 for the second and third offenses in the same year. The provision has led to concerns that it would set up court battles between neighbors.

The ban is just the latest in a series of anti-smoking laws that the council has enacted over the past several years, including prohibiting the activity on the beach and many outdoor areas.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

### Green equals greenbacks

**Editor:**

I was inspired to read about local efforts that promote stronger green jobs training in "Green movement gets younger" (page 3, Feb. 4, 2009). America can stop global warming and we can do it by creating quality jobs and growing the economy. That is the take-home message from a new study of the Obama administration's stimulus package commissioned by Greenpeace.

The report found that the $2.5 billion slated for weatherizing homes alone could reduce carbon emissions by 7.3 million metric tons and save $1.25 billion in annual utility costs. Similarly, a $6.9 billion investment to help state and local governments invest in energy efficiency could generate $3 billion in savings every single year and cut carbon emissions by over 20 million tons per year.

This investment, just a fraction of the size of the Wall Street bailout, means work for builders, electricians, HVAC specialists, roofers, and increased revenue for local hardware stores.

**Jenny Binstock**
Via www.smdp.com

### Get real about traffic

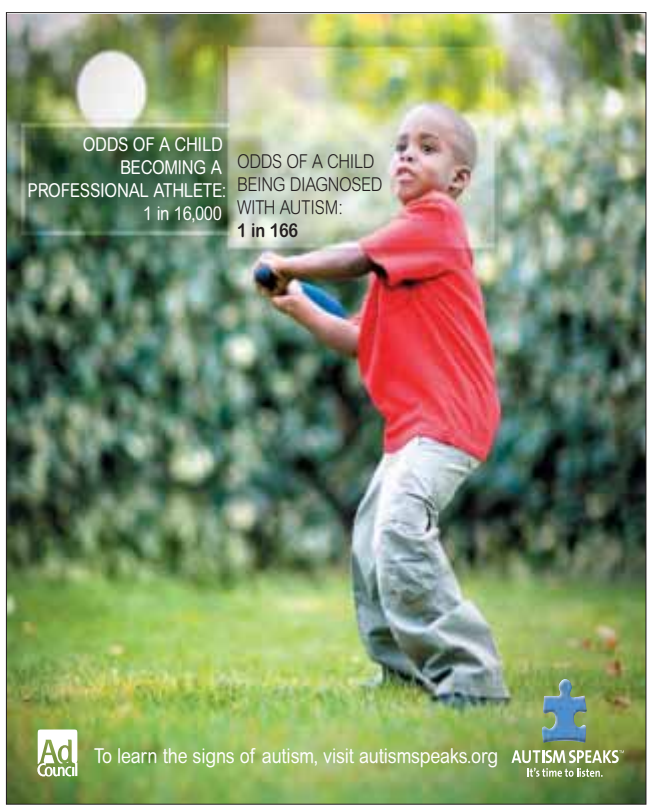
**Editor:**

It's interesting to read how someone actually thinks daily commuters will hang up their cars in favor of bikes. Has anyone asked where everyone goes? I'm sure everyone has applied pressure on a water balloon, moving the water from one end to the other, the balloon keeps the same content, just changing the shape. Well, watch Ocean Park Boulevard during peak traffic hours.

You'll watch angry commuters take short cuts through side street, racing to another bottleneck, and putting our children, pets, and pedestrians at risk. The main issue is the commuters are the same, only we've reduced the main traffic flow by half. What I have observed is two bike accidents with cars, and more traffic accidents, and frustrated commuters sitting longer in traffic polluting our city.

The city will ultimately be held liable for creating unsafe conditions on side streets that are not designed for major traffic flow. I'm a Sunset Park resident, and everyone I speak with can't understand how someone would come up with this design, without consideration to the quality of life to residents, and the pubic at large. I'm in favor of bike lanes, but the easier solution would be alternate bike routes. The reality is, until there's some reduction of cars, this design will only end up hurting someone, or worse.

**Bob Gomez**
Sunset Park




## The Rand Stand



Thomas A. Bowden — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

# Let bankruptcy courts take the wheel here

GENERAL MOTORS, HAVING SUCKED UP $9.4 billion of taxpayer cash since Christmas, now desperately craves the remaining $4 billion authorized by President Bush for disbursement in February.

And come March, once that new money has disappeared down the Detroit drain hole, renewed pleas for aid will undoubtedly land on President Obama's desk.

Will the new chief executive emulate Bush, bowing to the anti-bankruptcy sentiment fomented by Rep. Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, and others who advocate bailing out the Detroit automakers? Or will he let the bankruptcy courts take charge?

"There's only one thing you can do in bankruptcy that you can't do outside of bankruptcy — break your word, break your deals," said Frank in a "60 Minutes" interview. "It allows you to say to the small businesses who have been catering lunches for you, 'sorry, we're not paying you.' It allows you to go to the workers and say, 'sorry, we're not paying you.'"

Really? So bankruptcy is a get-out-of-jail-free card that allows treacherous companies to escape payment obligations they would otherwise have to honor? Sorry, Mr. Frank, but that's a fantasy.

Plodding behemoths like General Motors are not even eligible for bankruptcy until they've become insolvent, which means they already can't pay their bills and have no prospects for recovery. What bankruptcy does is treat the victims of those broken deals fairly — by preventing the bankrupt company from playing favorites among unpaid creditors, and by giving those creditors a big say in the distressed company's future.

If an automaker can return to profitability by streamlining products, cutting staff, or closing plants, a bankruptcy judge can allow a reorganization. But a company that's hopelessly floundering may have to be liquidated through an orderly sale of assets, with income paid to creditors according to their existing contract rights.

Yes, Mr. Frank, some creditors walk away from a bankruptcy empty-handed, or collect only pennies on each dollar of debt. Caterers, assembly-line workers, material suppliers, landlords — everyone who does business with a company in a market economy assumes a risk of non-payment. But that needn't spell disaster if creditors take steps in advance to confine the pain of bankruptcy within reasonable limits.

Wise businessmen check on credit histories, set limits on outstanding balances, and register liens on hard assets. Even unions can protect their members, such as by having pension funds placed in trusts sheltered from bankruptcy proceedings.

Under bankruptcy, the risk of financial loss stays right where it belongs, on those who assumed the risk of non-payment by voluntarily dealing with a badly managed company.

But in Barney Frank's bailout universe, Congress can simply paper over the reality of business failure by shifting those losses to taxpayers, competitors, and consumers — in short, everyone who doesn't deserve to pay.

This means that if GM's caterers don't get paid for the hors d'oeuvres served to CEO Rick Wagoner and his team of corporate bailout beggars, you and I must foot the bill. And if UAW members fear losing the staggeringly high wages and benefits they've extorted over decades using pro-union legal privileges, society must ride to their rescue.

**PLODDING BEHEMOTHS LIKE GENERAL MOTORS ARE NOT EVEN ELIGIBLE FOR BANKRUPTCY UNTIL THEY'VE BECOME INSOLVENT, WHICH MEANS THEY ALREADY CAN'T PAY THEIR BILLS AND HAVE NO PROSPECTS FOR RECOVERY.**

But shifting the financial pain of business failure onto society at large is unjust. Most obviously, taxpayers shouldn't be forced to prop up failing companies' balance sheets. But other victims abound.

Think of the profitable competitors with hard-earned credit standings, watching with justified resentment as badly managed rivals line up at the public trough.

Consumers, too, pay a price for bailouts. Bailed-out firms flood the market with inferior products — GM cars, anyone? — by continuing to own assets that would have gone to making more desirable products if market forces had ruled. Just picture today's city streets if the horse and buggy industry had been bailed out a century ago.

Is General Motors to become a brain-dead patient in a Federal bailout ward, languishing on tax-funded life support beyond all hope of recovery? Not if Congress steps aside and lets the bankruptcy courts do justice through adjudication.

THOMAS A. BOWDEN is an analyst at the Ayn Rand Center for Individual Rights. Mr. Bowden is a former lawyer and law school instructor who practiced for twenty years in Baltimore, Maryland. The Ayn Rand Center is a division of the Ayn Rand Institute and promotes the philosophy of Ayn Rand, author of "Atlas Shrugged" and "The Fountainhead."

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## Meredith Pro Tem

Meredith C. Carroll
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

# It's all in the hands

WITH ALL APOLOGIES TO LAMAZE, Fisher-Price, Playskool and Baby Einstein, they'll have to find some other baby to peddle their wares to because my 6-month-old daughter has apparently decided that playing with my hands is preferable to any of her actual toys.

During bottle feedings she'll grab whatever fingers of mine she can gather up and then bat them around like a wooden paddleball. When she's in the crib, she snatches my hand with both of hers and inspects it at close range, running her fingers along mine as if she has to memorize every inch because she suspects there might be a quiz later. If I'm holding her when she falls asleep, she'll clutch my hand to her chest as though it were an old security blanket or teddy bear.

Every time she shoves away her Surprise Inside Elephant or Jacques the Peacock and gives a little kick of glee because my hand is available for her entertainment, it reminds me just how much I loved my mom's hands when I was little. As far as I was concerned, the graceful beauty of my mom's hands was unparalleled.

For years my mom would go for manicures every Thursday to a woman named Fran until she switched salons and saw Lisa. I never thought she needed to go weekly because her nails always seemed so flawless they could have been used in a commercial for Lee Press On Nails (except hers are real). I loved the smell of the clear nail polish she'd sometimes apply at night in order to maintain the manicure — the chemicals were the smell of chic, I used to imagine.

My mom was born to wear jewelry like she's secretly a member of the Cartier or Van Cleef families. Small and delicate don't do her justice. Rather, she's fit to wear rings and bracelets from the United Kingdom's Crown Jewels collection, only on her they'd probably look a little more elegant than on the Queen of England. The same pieces on me look like they were straight out of a supermarket candy machine.

I used to figure her jewelry looked so awkward on my fingers and wrists because I was a kid. But when I was visiting my parents a few weeks ago I tried on the rings that were sitting on her dresser and I still look like I'm playing dress-up. Clearly there is no correlation between age and sophistication.

My mom can also make wearing a Band-Aid look sophisticated. It seems like she wears them often because with great frequency she either cuts or burns her fingers while cooking. I can forever picture my mom standing over the kitchen sink either pressing an ice cube into a scorched palm or applying pressure to a nicked finger wrapped in a paper towel. She has some faint scars on her fingertips and knuckles, but she manages to wear them with a grace that can only be achieved knowing the wounds were earned while preparing meals that would put the Barefoot Contessa to shame.

**DURING BOTTLE FEEDINGS SHE'LL GRAB WHATEVER FINGERS OF MINE SHE CAN GATHER UP AND THEN BAT THEM AROUND LIKE A WOODEN PADDLEBALL.**

It's those same hands that took art classes at Lincoln Center when I'd be away at sleep-away camp every summer. My mom would send me her creations, like the handmade kite that I held onto until from when I was 9 or 10 until just a few years ago. She'd also write me letters several times a week when I was at camp so I wouldn't feel so disconnected from my parents while I was away in Maine for eight weeks at a stretch.

It wasn't so much what she wrote that comforted me as much as seeing her handwriting. I still get a little wave of warmth when I open up the mailbox and see her script on an envelope. Sometimes she'll send me newspaper or magazine articles and stick a little Post-It on top with a short note. I don't save much these days, but I usually keep the Post-Its because just looking at her writing feels like home.

When I was at my parent's house last month I was lying in their bed watching my mom as she read a book while unconsciously stroking her pointer finger on the armchair like she was controlling a computer mouse pad. It's something she's done for as long as I can remember and for as long as I can remember, I could watch her do it for hours.

If nothing else, I hope I've inherited enough of my mom's magical ways so that when my daughter is 35 years old she'll also still want to hold my hand sometimes when we're walking down the street together. It might just be at that moment that I'll know I've done something very right.

E-mail questions or comments to meredithccarroll@hotmail.com.

## The Q Line

**Love on the cheap**

Everybody knows that the economy is in a bad place, but that doesn't mean your sweetheart has to go without this Valentine's Day.

**So this week's Q-Line question asks:**

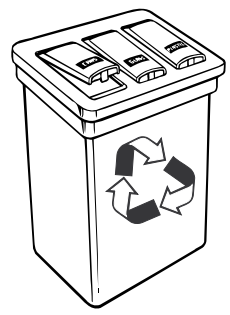
What would be your perfect affordable date this Valentine's Day?

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


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# Taxpayers may cover bill for octuplet mom

BY SHAYA TAYEFE MOHAJER
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES A big share of the financial burden of raising Nadya Suleman's 14 children could fall on the shoulders of California's taxpayers, compounding the public furor in a state already billions of dollars in the red.

Even before the 33-year-old single, unemployed mother gave birth to octuplets last month, she had been caring for her six other children with the help of $490 a month in food stamps, plus Social Security disability payments for three of the youngsters. The public aid will almost certainly be increased with the new additions to her family.

Also, the hospital where the octuplets are expected to spend seven to 12 weeks has requested reimbursement from Medi-Cal, the state's Medicaid program, for care of the premature babies, according to the Los Angeles Times. The cost has not been disclosed.

Word of the public assistance has stoked the furor over Suleman's decision to have so many children by having embryos implanted in her womb.

"It appears that, in the case of the Suleman family, raising 14 children takes not simply a village but the combined resources of the county, state and federal governments," Los Angeles Times columnist Tim Rutten wrote in Wednesday's paper. He called Suleman's story "grotesque."

On the Internet, bloggers rained insults on Suleman, calling her an "idiot," criticizing her decision to have more children when she couldn't afford the ones she had, and suggesting she be sterilized.

"It's my opinion that a woman's right to reproduce should be limited to a number which the parents can pay for," Charles Murray wrote in a letter to the Los Angeles Daily News. "Why should my wife and I, as taxpayers, pay child support for 14 Suleman kids?"

She was also berated on talk radio, where listeners accused her of manipulating the system and being an irresponsible mother.

"From the outside you can tell that this woman was playing the system," host Bryan Suits said on the "Kennedy and Suits" show on KFI-AM. "You're damn right the state should step in and seize the kids and adopt them out."

Suleman's spokesman, Mike Furtney, urged understanding.

"I would just ask people to consider her situation and she has been under a tremendous amount of pressure that no one could be prepared for," Furtney said.

Some people were beginning to respond to the children's need for care.

Rex Wolins, a pastor at Calvary Chapel Golden Springs in Diamond Bar, said that volunteers from the church will be helping Suleman with childcare. Wolins planned to release more information Thursday.

In her only media interviews, Suleman told NBC's "Today" she doesn't consider the public assistance she receives to be welfare and doesn't intend to remain on it for long.

Also, a Nadya Suleman Family Web site has been set up to collect donations for the children. It features pictures of the mother and each octuplet and has instructions for making donations by check or credit card.

> **IT APPEARS THAT, IN THE CASE OF THE SULEMAN FAMILY, RAISING 14 CHILDREN TAKES NOT SIMPLY A VILLAGE BUT THE COMBINED RESOURCES OF THE COUNTY, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS."**
>
> Tim Rutten
> Los Angeles Times columnist

Suleman, whose six older children range in age from 2 to 7, said three of them receive disability payments. She said one is autistic, but she has not disclosed the other youngsters' disabilities, and refused to say how much they get in payments.

In California, a low-income family can receive Social Security payments of up to $793 a month for each disabled child. Three children would amount to $2,379.

The Suleman octuplets' medical costs have not been disclosed, but in 2006, the average cost for a premature baby's hospital stay in California was $164,273, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The average cost for just one cesarean birth in 2006 was $22,762 in California. Eight times that equals $1.3 million.

For a single mother, the cost of raising 14 children through age 17 ranges from $1.3 million to $2.7 million, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is struggling to close a $42 billion budget gap by cutting services, declined through a spokesman to comment on the taxpayer costs associated with the octuplets' delivery and care.

Suleman received disability payments for an on-the-job back injury during a riot at a state mental hospital, collecting more than $165,000 over nearly a decade before the benefits were discontinued last year.

Some of the disability money was spent on in vitro fertilizations, which was used for all 14 of her children, Suleman said. Suleman said she also worked double shifts at the mental hospital and saved up for the treatments. She estimated that all her treatments cost $100,000.

Fourteen states, including California, require insurance companies to offer or provide coverage for infertility treatment, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. But California has a law specifically excluding in vitro coverage. It's not clear what type of coverage Suleman has.

In the NBC interview, Suleman said she will go back to California State University, Fullerton in the fall to complete her master's degree in counseling, and will use student loans to support her children. She said she will rely on the school's daycare center and volunteers.

# Vinters report weak '08 crop

**BY MICHELLE LOCKE**
Associated Press Writer

BERKELEY Wild weather produced a lighter wine harvest in California last year, which analysts say could provide breathing room for an industry coping with the budget-tightening effects of recession.

"In a way it's a blessing in disguise because this does offset some of the inventory growth that people experienced in 2008," wine industry consultant Jon Fredrikson of Gomberg-Fredrikson & Associates in Woodside said Wednesday.

There were just over 3 million tons of wine grapes crushed last harvest, according to figures released by state agriculture officials Tuesday.

That was down about 6 percent from the year before. Looking at just red wine, the drop was sharper, down 9 percent, to 1.7 million tons.

Last year was the third harvest in a row with moderate to light yields following a bumper crop in 2005.

"This recession has hit at a time in the supply cycle where we were pretty balanced," said Steve Fredricks, managing partner of Novato-based Turrentine Brokerage, a wine grape broker.

California wine sales growth in the U.S. slowed last year but still posted an increase of 2 percent with an estimated 196 million cases shipped, according to preliminary estimates by Fredrikson.

But sales have softened in restaurants, which is where many small wineries sell most of their wine, and retail consumers appear to be trading down to cheaper bottles, Fredrikson said. "They're still drinking wine; they're just looking for value," he said.

Weather was a big factor for 2008, with lower-than-normal rainfall in the winter followed by extended frosts in April that reduced crop quantity in many areas of the state.

Some areas were hit with fall frosts as well, further lowering yields.

The remaining crop seems to be good quality, but there probably will be less wine made from the '08 vintage than other years, said Kevin Sass, winemaker at Justin Vineyards & Winery in Paso Robles.

That might be good for overall market equilibrium, but isn't good news for growers, who get paid by volume, or for those vintners who grow most of their own grapes and now have less fruit to show for their efforts and outlay.

"From a consumer standpoint there's less out there, but the quality's still there. But from the producer's standpoint, if you're growing grapes or producing wine off your own property, then there's been better years," Sass said.

Grape prices on average were higher in 2008 than the year before, according to the state report. Red wine grapes averaged $643, up 3 percent from 2007 and white wine grapes averaged $539, up 12 percent.

Grapes from the well-known Napa region fetched the highest price, averaging $3,390 per ton, up 4 percent from the year before.

The white wine grape chardonnay was the most popular, accounting for just over 15 percent of the crush.

# Life without peanut butter can be tasty

**BY J.M. HIRSCH**
AP Food Editor

Whether salmonella has them spooked or allergies make them averse, plenty of people are passing on peanut butter.

Peanut butters sold directly to consumers have not been affected by the current recalls. But if you're giving peanut butter a pass, there are plenty of options for making do (or just making lunch) without it.

Here is a simple substitution that won't leave you feeling like a culinary victim.

**PEANUT NOODLES**

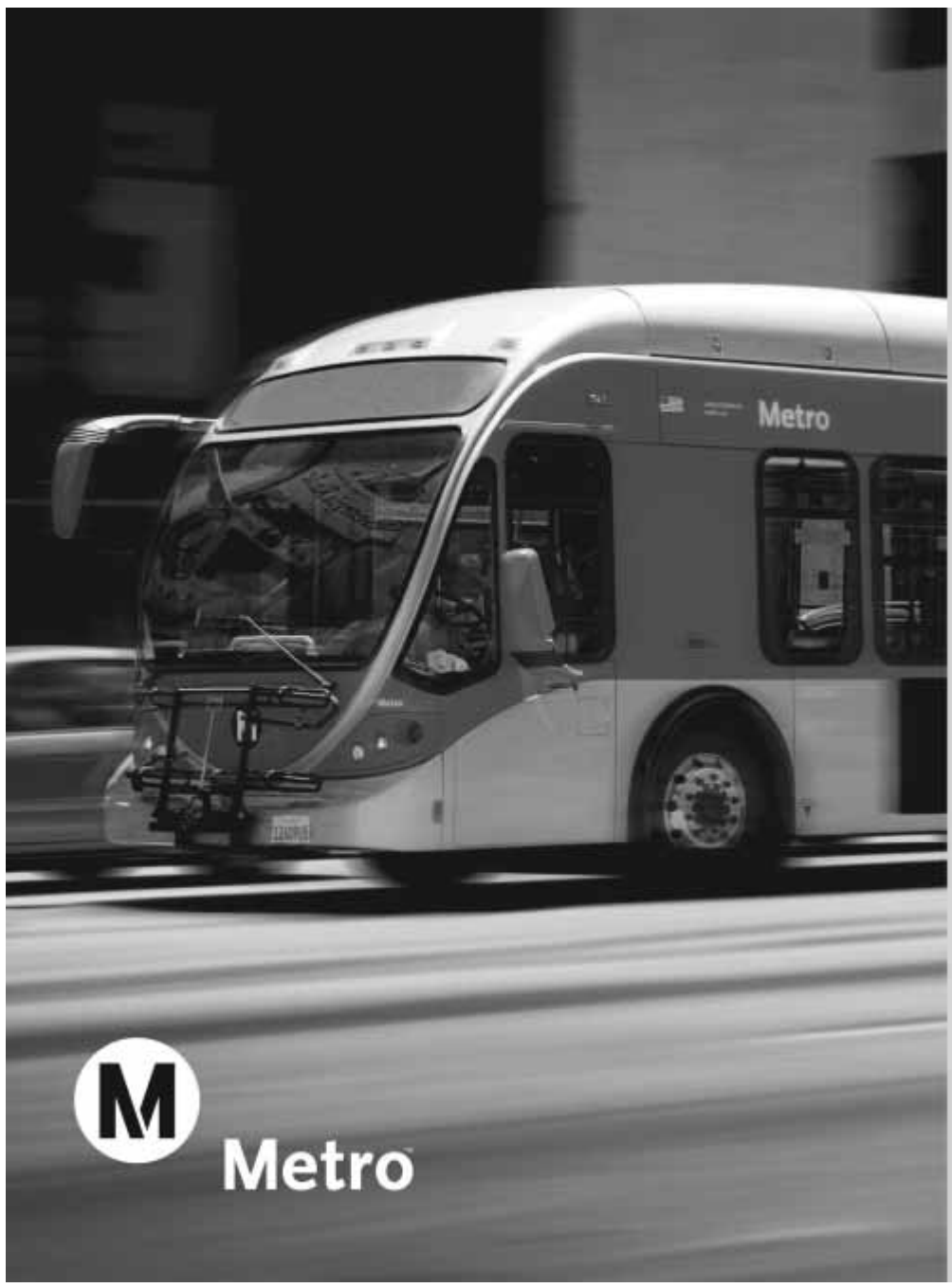
The gist here is you toss warm noodles with a spicy sauce made from peanut butter, hot peppers, scallions and usually a splash each of vinegar and soy sauce.

Some grilled chicken or shrimp often are added for good measure.

If tree nuts aren't your concern (peanuts are a legume, but some people with peanut allergies also have tree nut allergies), cashew butter is the best choice. It is ultra rich and creamy, making it a perfect foil for the other flavors in the sauce.

In a blender, combine 1 cup of cashew butter, 1 teaspoon (more or less to taste) hot sauce, 1 chopped scallion, 2 cloves of garlic, 1 tablespoon of soy sauce, 2 tablespoons of rice or cider vinegar and 3/4 cup of the pasta cooking water.

Blend well until mostly smooth, then toss the sauce with warm noodles. Add grilled or roasted chicken, shrimp or tofu and garnish with chopped scallions or cilantro. This also is a good dipping sauce for chicken wings or spring rolls.




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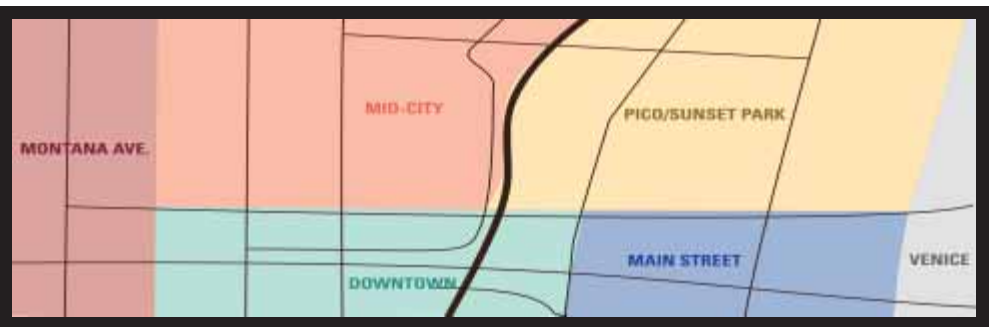



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Byron Kennerly *news@smdp.com*

THE SCENE: **A senior housing project at 749 17th St. has drawn criticism from neighbors.**

# Senior group housing project moves forward

FROM **PROJECT** PAGE 1

another appeal by the Montana Neighborhood Coalition and resident Ron Goldman over the Architectural Review Board's approval of the project at 749 17th St.

City Hall said that two different exemptions apply to the project, including one that pertains to developments that are ministerial and where there is certainty that the proposed activity would not have a significant impact on the environment.

The commission adopted the CEQA exemption in November after it denied another appeal by the Montana Neighborhood Coalition and resident Ron Goldman over the Architectural Review Board's approval of the project.

"This exemption makes a mockery out of the planning process," Goldman said.

The appellants also pointed out that an environmental review was conducted for another project on the same site by the same applicant — Charles Rosenbleet.

The proposal has long been a contentious issue in the Montana neighborhood where residents have been outspoken in their concerns over the project, including the potential traffic impacts on the heavily traveled street and a sloped driveway, which they believe is too narrow considering the wide turn that cars would need to take when entering the garage. An earlier version of the driveway, which was 12-foot-wide and single lane, also drew complaints from residents who saw a possible safety risk in that cars would be forced to back out on to Montana Avenue if they were entering the garage when another automobile was exiting.

The architect returned with a revised plan that expanded the driveway to two lanes.

"The neighborhood is in no way against senior group housing," Goldman said. "This is solely about site and building design."

He added that there is no reason why public safety and parking issues could not have been resolved with a proper site plan.

"It's basic architectural 101," he said.

Located on the corner of 17th Street and Montana Avenue, the project is proposed to be a two-story senior group housing project with 17 residential units. The building will be designed in the Spanish/Mediterranean style. Proponents have argued that the site is a desirable location because of nearby amenities.

Architect David Kaplan said the project applicant has met with neighbors and city staff over the years to smooth out concerns with the development, pointing out that it meets height and setback requirements.

"We deliberately tried to make it fit into this neighborhood," he said.

He added that the type of residents living in the development are less likely to drive during rush hour.

"We have practiced in the city a long time," he said. "We believe in this process."

The developer originally proposed an adult day care center with three condominiums and seven senior group housing units. That proposal was withdrawn after neighbors expressed concerns about traffic and safety impacts. An amended version was submitted earlier last year.

"This project has gone through extraordinary review in the community and at some point things have to come to an end and I know there was a lot of uproar in the community and I was getting a lot of emails about this project," Councilmember Richard Bloom said. "I must assume many of the objections the community had are addressed in the subsequent redesign in the project."

melodyh@smdp.com




## PLAY IT AGAIN

Fabian Lewkowicz *FabianLewkowicz.com*

**One-Man-Band Arthur Nakane plays at the Santa Monica Pier on Wednesday. Nakane has been performing as a solo act for 33 years. He can perform up to seven instruments at one time; an electric guitar, he has a drum machine for drum beat affects, plays keyboards with the tip of his guitar, plays the harmonica and the electric kazoo, shakes the tambourine and maracas, strikes symbols and sings duets by himself with on-the-spot recording.**

# Financial help would assist residents suffering from IOUs

FROM **AID** PAGE 1

state.

"We all know that the state is hurting but do we all realize they can solve their problem?" Councilmember Bob Holbrook said. "I can just sort of see this thing bouncing off of Sacramento that Santa Monica is going to help bail us out.

"Sounds silly doesn't it?"

Holbrook added that the pressure needs to stay on the legislature and governor to resolve the fiscal problem and not take any responsibility for it.

He said that it would be difficult for him to vote for such an allocation if it came to the council.

Councilmember Pam O'Connor echoed the concerns, adding that she does not want to set up the expectation that providing assistance to residents was something that City Hall could financially take on.

"The state takes away money that's due to us and we have to be careful that we don't start taking on their responsibilities as they are taking our money away," she said. "Getting more information is fine but no expectation should be coming that I am necessarily going to support moving in this manner."

McKeown said that City Hall has some funds set aside for housing emergencies and people who need to be relocated.

"This is one of those social emergencies where we have power as a local government that we could responsibly execute," he said.

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# Budget proposal calls for $15B in cuts

FROM **BUDGET** PAGE 3

Such a change would require voter approval in a special election sometime this year. Voters also will be asked to authorize the state to sell bonds based on the lottery's projected future revenue. That plan was approved as part of budget negotiations last year and assumed the lottery bonds would bring in $10 billion over the next two fiscal years.

The budget proposal being discussed this week also calls for $15 billion in spending cuts, ranging from public schools to programs for the poor and disabled.

Most of the savings, $8.6 billion over the next 17 months, would come from education, but the cuts would hit nearly every aspect of state government.

State workers would continue taking two days off a month without pay under Schwarzenegger's furlough order, saving $1.3 billion. The proposed cuts also eliminate two of 14 paid state holidays and limit some overtime pay, according to a spreadsheet provided by a source close to the negotiations.

The source did not want to be identified because public distribution of the negotiating points was not authorized.

According to the internal document, 10 percent would be cut from the prison system's medical budget at the same time the state is engaged in a legal battle with the court-appointed receiver who oversees health care reforms at the state's 33 adult prisons. The receiver, J. Clark Kelso, has proposed the state sell as much as $8 billion in bonds to build seven inmate medical facilities.

Meanwhile, the poor are likely to feel the brunt of the state's cuts.

California would not give cost-of-living increases to families on welfare, low-income seniors and disabled people. If California does not receive more federal money from President Barack Obama's economic stimulus package, the legislative leaders have agreed to make deeper cuts.



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# Dangers of slacking off

FROM SENIORS PAGE 1

often note a slip in attendance of their burnt-out feeling students, especially after AP tests are taken in early May.

Juniors, on the other hand, generally work diligently through the end of the year in order to keep up their grades and AP scores, knowing both will be weighed heavily by college admissions officers in the following year.

"They go strong to the very end," Rupprecht said of his junior students. "That mood, that energy they bring — it has an effect on the seniors."

Senioritis happens earlier and earlier every year, Rupprecht said. The math teacher used to notice a few students would suddenly stop caring after the AP tests in May and June. As the years went on, however, he detected senior apathy starting in April, and recently March — right about the same time when many seniors get their college acceptance letters. Last year, Rupprecht was unhappy to see senioritis affecting students at the semester break, in January.

The concept of senioritis is quite understandable. After almost four years of heavy homework loads and tests, and especially after the extremely draining junior year when students take SATs, many seniors have a strong urge to slack off and stop caring about school altogether. After seniors are accepted into a college, they start to feel as though the work they produce afterwards has very little meaning.

In practice, however, senioritis seems almost impossible. How can seniors slack off, especially those with several AP and honors classes? With important AP tests and finals, indulging in senioritis seems like a very unwise choice.

"For me, senioritis is something that is going to take some time getting used to. Even though I'm already accepted to my top choice, I still feel the weight of grades on my shoulders. There's always that off-chance that a school will look at and frown upon any sinking grades. However, other things like AP tests seem less pressing than they were during my junior year," said Santa Monica High School senior Kyle DeHovitz.

Like DeHovitz, most seniors justify their attitude with the common knowledge that AP tests taken during the last semester of high school have no weight when it comes to college acceptance. The same idea exists for second semester grades. In fact, most seniors feel that once they are admitted into college, nothing they do after matters anymore.

An admissions offer from a college does not grant safety to seniors, however.

"On average, we cancel about 70 plus freshman admissions a year, or fewer than 2 percent, for failing to meet the admission provisions," said Vu Tran, director of undergraduate admissions and relations with schools at UCLA.

At UCLA and most other universities, admitted students are required to send in a final transcript to prove they have maintained a certain GPA and graduation requirements. According to the UCLA Freshman Provisional Admission Contract, this means having an unweighted B average with no more than one C during second semester. Earning a D or F in any class can lead to admission withdrawal.

> **"ON AVERAGE, WE CANCEL ABOUT 70 PLUS FRESHMAN ADMISSIONS A YEAR, OR FEWER THAN 2 PERCENT, FOR FAILING TO MEET THE ADMISSION PROVISIONS."**
>
> **Vu Tran**
> Director of undergraduate admissions and relations with schools at UCLA

"We do make exceptions on a case-by-case basis for students who do not meet the provisions but have extenuating/mitigating circumstances beyond their control," Tran said.

With the economy in the shape that it is, some colleges, including several UCs, have been asked to reduce the number of admissions granted to applicants. Under such conditions, seniors cannot afford to perform poorly during their last semester at high school.

While UCLA and UC Berkeley were spared, other UC campus have been asked to reduce freshman enrollment by roughly 2,300 students, said Claudia Luther, senior media relations representative at UCLA.

Many teachers understand the urge to indulge in senioritis and prepare their classes accordingly. Some assign projects or papers with enough weight to determine students' grades after AP testing ends in May, meaning students could fail if they don't keep up.

Others, such as Rupprecht, continue teaching with a more hands-on approach in order to motivate seniors to stay focused. Rupprecht also covers some subjects that college professors will expect students to know, but that the College Board does not cover in the AP test.

"I've always done this, but I stress it a little bit more," Rupprecht said.

The unit he teaches after the AP test has enough weight to affect borderline grades.

"I'd say that [senioritis] does hit people pretty hard, especially after the first semester final. Most people will do enough just to get by," said Alex Flores, a senior who took Rupprecht's calculus class as a junior. He feels the last unit is captivating enough to keep seniors on task, and said the work is easy, quick and simple.

While it is true that AP tests taken during the senior year do not affect college admissions or withdrawals, Rupprecht and Tran both stress the importance of good AP scores in regards to college, which could end up saving seniors time and money.

"[They're] not important for admissions decisions but they could benefit students with college credits toward graduation," Tran said.

news@smdp.com

WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR
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# Bankers promise tangible reform

BY JIM KUHNHENN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON Facing a disgusted public and Congress, bank CEOs agreed with demands for greater accountability Wednesday in the first testimony on how they're spending money from the taxpayer-funded $700 billion bailout.

"Both our firm and our industry have far to go to regain the trust of taxpayers, investors and public officials," John J. Mack, head of Morgan Stanley, told the House Financial Institutions Committee.

Added JP Morgan Chase & Co.'s Jamie Dimon: "We stand ready to do our part going forward."

The eight top bankers appearing before the panel were generally contrite and conceded they have work to do to win over a bitter public and an exasperated Congress. They had little choice but to acknowledge as much, given intense anger and anxiety as the troubled financial system continues to spiral downward in an ever-worsening recession.

Taxpayers are furious with big banks that benefited from the federal bailout designed to get credit moving again, but which also spent lavishly on executive bonuses, company retreats and office redecorating.

Lawmakers also are feeling the heat for signing off on the bailout package plan, which was conceived last year under President Bush and now is in the hands of President Barack Obama.

Across Capitol Hill, senators pressed Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner on whether the Obama administration will need to request more money to fund its financial industry rescue plan. Obama's finance chief declined to speculate and told the Senate Budget Committee that more requests are possible.

"So you have no clue," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., told Geithner. "Why not just ask for more? We know you will."

A day after unveiling an effort to pump up to $2 trillion into the financial system, Geithner defended the lack of detail in the plan that caused fresh heartburn on Wall Street and Capitol Hill. He said the plan was presented in mistakes of the past 12 months where things were rushed out before they were ready, and strategy had to be adapted because of that."broad strokes to avoid repeating the "

Over more than five hours in the House, the CEOs were met with deep skepticism from lawmakers who aggressively quizzed them on how they have used more than $160 billion in taxpayers' money.

Rep. Barney Frank, chairman of the panel, told the CEOs as the hearing opened. "There has to be a sense of the American people that you understand their anger ... and that you're willing to make some sacrifices." Frank, D-Mass., also asked banks to impose a moratorium on mortgage foreclosures until Geithner comes up with a systemwide mortgage modification.

The panel's top Republican, Spencer Bachus of Alabama, said the bankers and Congress must sway people by "winning back their trust and their confidence."

Repeatedly, lawmakers were scornful and treated the financial heavyweights almost like naughty schoolchildren, ordering them to raise their hands to indicate their responses to blanket questions about their own use of perks and any policy changes made since accepting the bailout money.

"You created the mess we're in," scolded Michael Capuano, D-Mass. "And now you're saying 'Sorry. Trust us.' ... America doesn't trust you anymore."

At one point, under questioning from Rep. Dennis Moore, D-Kan., the CEOs went down the line disclosing how much bailout money their institutions received last year and how much they personally made. Their salaries ranged from $600,000 to $1.5 million annually, without bonuses.

The initial spending of the bailout money was secretive, lacking strict requirements that the banks account publicly for how they were using it. Banks weren't helped by reports that Wall Street firms doled out more than $18 billion in bonuses to their employees last year or that Goldman Sachs and Wells Fargo had planned conferences in Las Vegas.

One by one, the CEOs applauded the financial bailout program for making more loans available and promised to pay their share of the money back to the Treasury over time. Several asserted that none of the government's money went to bonuses or dividends.

Citigroup CEO Vikram Pandit said his salary would be set at $1 with no bonus until the company makes money again.

He also struck an apologetic tone for letting the bank consider buying a private jet plane after receiving bailout money. The bank ultimately scrapped the plan under pressure from Obama.

"We did not adjust quickly enough to this new world," Pandit said. "I get the new reality and I will make sure Citi gets it as well."

"We understand taxpayers are angry" and they are right in demanding that institutions receiving their money take a "conservative, sober and frugal" approach to using it, said Kenneth D. Lewis of Bank of America.

Meanwhile, New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo accused Merrill Lynch & Co. executives of corporate irresponsibility by secretly and prematurely awarding $3.6 billion in bonuses as taxpayers were bailing out the industry. Cuomo made the claims in a letter to Frank, saying that Bank of America, which acquired Merrill last fall, was apparently complicit in the move to award bonuses before Merrill's dismal fourth quarter earnings were announced.

Pressed about the report at the House hearing, Lewis said Bank of America urged Merrill to reduce the bonuses "substantially" as it prepared to take over the failing company but couldn't force it to make changes.

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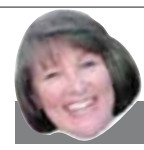
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## Play Time

Cynthia Citron — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

# Seduced by a mirage

"FATA MORGANA" IS A BITTERSWEET coming-of-age story set in a provincial village in Hungary in the early years of the 20th century. It is the night of the annual Anna Ball, Hungary's premier social event, first held in 1825 and still held each July in various cities around the country. As is traditional, friends and family have gathered in their fussy finery at George Peredy's family's home, prior to catching the train to the nearest ball.

George, the autobiographical alter ego of playwright Ernest Vajda, is a handsome 18-year-old, played with innocent charm by Michael Hanson, making his first post-UCLA debut and doing a handsome job of it. George has decided to stay home this year, much to everyone's chagrin. But no sooner has everyone left than a beautiful blonde arrives.

She is Mathilde Fay (Ursula Brooks), the flirtatious wife of Gabriel Fay (a blustering, portentous Scott Conte), George's uncle. She has been introduced earlier through the gossip of the neighbors, who have noted that she is reputedly cheating on her husband by dallying with a count.

Mathilde has a minor hissy fit when she discovers that she has missed the family's departure for the ball and that she has also missed the last train of the evening.

But she perks up when she conceives of a different diversion: teasing and tormenting poor bewildered George.

Eventually realizing that he is too inexperienced to follow up on her sexual advances, she climbs the stairs to his bedroom and doesn't come down again.

George, of course, falls completely in love with her and actually believes her blithe assurances that she loves him, too. And he proceeds to make a fool of himself when his family returns by announcing that he is planning to marry her just as soon as she divorces her husband.

It's a simple plot, easily resolved, leaving George sadder but wiser and Mathilde free to continue cuckolding her devoted husband with whomever she will. And living up to the reputation of her wily namesake, the fairy Morgan le Fay, step-sister of King Arthur, pupil of the wizard Merlin, and creator of a particular kind of watery mirage frequently seen on the plains of Italy and Hungary.

The appeal of this beguiling play, however, comes not from the plot, but from the uncomplicated inhabitants of this unsophisticated village in the boondocks of Hungary. Heading the excellent cast are George's parents, Sarah Brooke and Tony Pasqualini, a warm and loving couple in the play as well as in real life.

And supreme among the gossiping neighbor-ladies is Irene Roseen, easily recognizable for the many performances she has given in L.A. productions and some 14 shows at the South Coast Repertory Theatre.

Marilyn Fox, artistic director of the Pacific Resident Theatre, has taken this talented ensemble and made them believable, albeit quaint, and endowed them with an old-fashioned dignity you wouldn't mind seeing in neighbors of your own.

**THE APPEAL OF THIS BEGUILING PLAY, HOWEVER, COMES NOT FROM THE PLOT, BUT FROM THE UNCOMPLICATED INHABITANTS OF THIS UNSOPHISTICATED VILLAGE IN THE BOONDOCKS OF HUNGARY.**

Robert Broadfoot and Audrey Eisner, set and costume designers, respectively, have produced the look of a Hungarian parlor of the era and the burgundy taffetas and decorous necklines worn by ladies of that time.

"Fata Morgana" might be considered an inconsequential bit of froufrou, like its costumes, but it is more than that: it's a delightfully performed comedy with a first-rate cast. Highly enjoyable entertainment.

"Fata Morgana" will continue Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 through Feb. 28 at Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd. in Venice. Call (310) 822-8392 for tickets and information on closing dates.

CYNTHIA CITRON can be reached at ccitron@socal.rr.com.

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MLB

# Giambi applauds steroid admissions

BY GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

SAN FRANCISCO Jason Giambi is happy to see more baseball players going public with their involvement in performance-enhancing drugs and hopes the fascination with baseball's steroid era soon will fade.

Giambi, who returned to the Oakland Athletics this year after seven ringless seasons with the New York Yankees, spoke briefly about performance-enhancing drugs at the close of a season kickoff luncheon hosted by Comcast SportsNet Bay Area, the A's television broadcasters.

"It's starting to be a time to move forward," Giambi said. "There's too many great things going on in this game. I know it's great media, but ... I don't know how long you want to dredge up the past. There's some really great things going on in this sport now."

Giambi was among the first major leaguers to acknowledge his involvement in steroid use, though he made the admission in an indirect way. During a strange news conference in 2005, Giambi said he was sorry five times and apologized three times — without saying for what.

"It's been a great thing for me to not be looking over your shoulder," Giambi said at the luncheon on Treasure Island, midway between mainland San Francisco and Oakland. "There's never going to be an end to the questions. There's just going to be a point where you're moving forward and talking about what happens in the future."

Giambi, who was mentioned in the 2007 Mitchell Report on doping in baseball, also could be called to testify at Barry Bonds' trial next month on charges of lying to a federal grand jury.

And Giambi has been a teammate of Alex Rodriguez and Miguel Tejada, both center stage this week. Rodriguez acknowledged using banned substances while playing for the Texas Rangers from 2001-03, and Tejada pleaded guilty Wednesday to misleading Congress about performance-enhancing drugs and admitted to buying — but not using — human growth hormone.

"I think Al did the right thing," said Giambi, Rodriguez's teammate in New York for the past five seasons. "I think it was enough pressure playing in New York without having to look over your shoulder all the time. ... I hope he gets through this all right, because he is a good friend."

Giambi also praised Tejada, his teammate on the Athletics' playoff teams in 2000 and 2001.

"He's moving forward too, and hopefully he can play baseball now," Giambi said.

A's owner Lew Wolff echoed Giambi's weariness of the constant doping revelations that take focus away from the sport.

"I'm disappointed that it continues," said Wolff, who took over the club in 2005, after Giambi and Tejada had left. "However, now baseball has the most rigorous testing and penalties of any sport. Those who have violated this in the past ... have a chance to rewrite their careers in a really positive way. Players playing today, they have a chance to prove themselves in the era I'm involved in."

Giambi isn't concerned about whether he plays first base or designated hitter for the A's, whose improved lineup centers around Giambi and fellow newcomer Matt Holliday.

MLS

# AC Milan gets deadline for making Beckham deal

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CARSON Los Angeles Galaxy coach Bruce Arena expects to know by Friday whether David Beckham will return to the team next month or remain in Europe.

"We think it's best to come to a conclusion; Either David is going to stay (with the Galaxy) or remain at AC Milan," Arena said Wednesday. "In order for our team to move forward, our league to move forward, it's best that we get a decision as soon as possible."

Earlier in the day, MLS commissioner Don Garber gave the Italian club a deadline to work out a transfer deal for Beckham. The league owns the contract of the 33-year-old midfielder.

"By Friday, he is either coming back or he is transferred," Garber said in Columbus, Ohio, before the U.S. played Mexico in a World Cup qualifier. "If it is not resolved by Friday, I will not approve the transfer. This has been going on too long. ... There is no reason for it to drag on."

Beckham also wanted to see a deal reached.

"Obviously everyone wants it sorted out as quickly as possible because it's been going on for a while now, and of course I hope it gets sorted out," Beckham said after England's 2-0 loss to Spain at Seville. "Negotiations with Milan are ongoing. We'll just have to wait and see."

The former Real Madrid and Manchester United player again left no doubt where he wanted to play.

"I would like to stay there. They're some great players there, great people there and it's been great for me," Beckham said. "I love playing with Milan and it's always been very special."

Arena said he has no idea whether Beckham will be back.

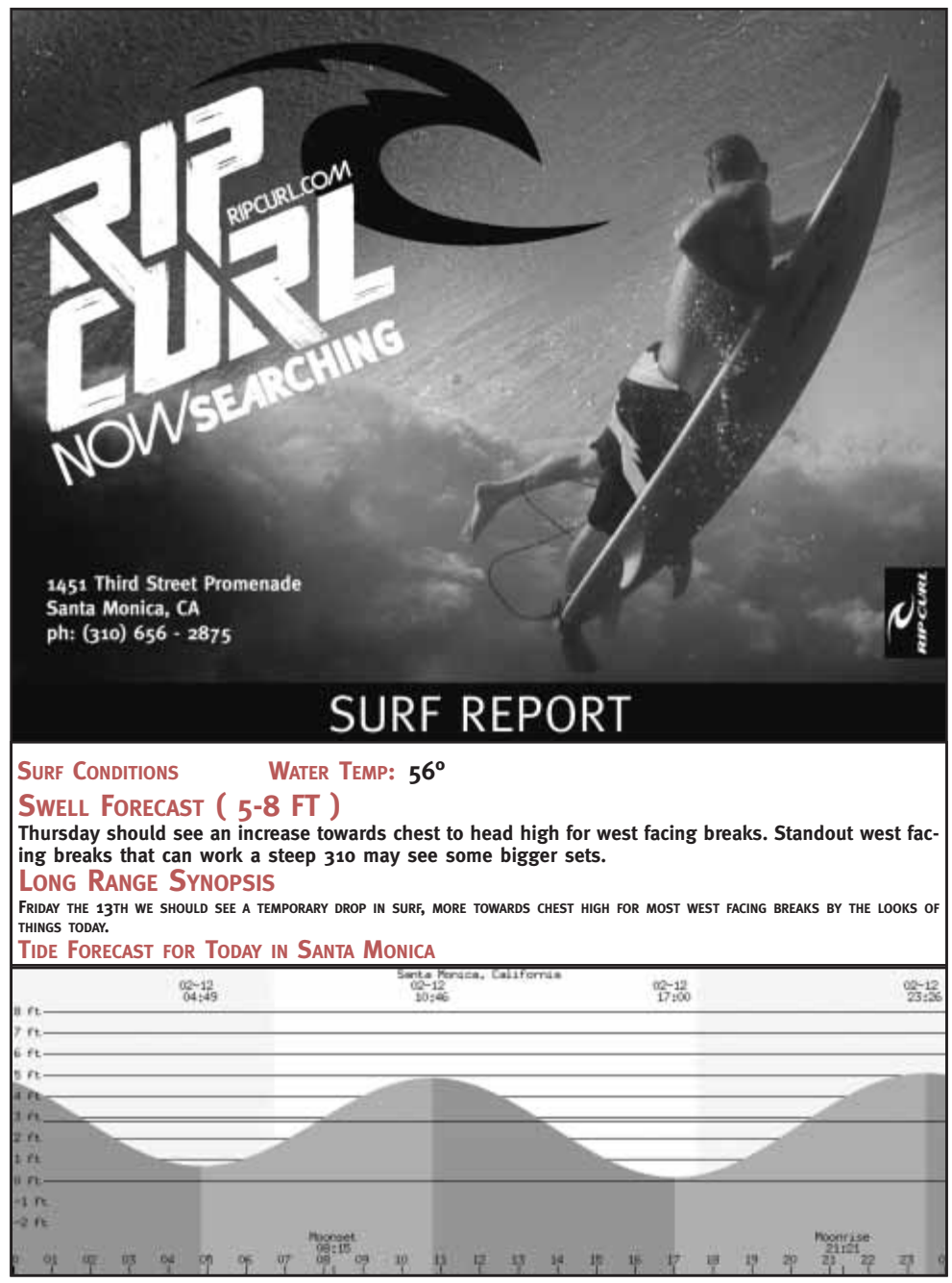
"I can't predict that. We have a short period of time to get it sorted out," he said. "I know we've had discussions with AC Milan and it will be interesting to see what they come back with this week in order to let both parties make the correct decision.

"I think AC Milan understands where we're coming from and hopefully we can work something out over the next couple of days."

Beckham signed a $32.5 million, five-year contract with MLS in 2007, but has said recently that he wants to continue to play for AC Milan. His loan to the Italian team expires on March 8.

Arena insists the Galaxy will be fine without or without Beckham.

"Certainly when you lose a great player; he brings a lot to the team both on and off the field. However, this is a team sport. It's not like basketball where one player can make such a difference," the Galaxy coach said. "We have a bunch of good players here."




## SURF REPORT

**Surf Conditions** **Water Temp:** 56°

**Swell Forecast ( 5-8 FT )**

**Thursday should see an increase towards chest to head high for west facing breaks. Standout west facing breaks that can work a steep 310 may see some bigger sets.**

**Long Range Synopsis**

Friday the 13th we should see a temporary drop in surf, more towards chest high for most west facing breaks by the looks of things today.

**Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica**




BEACH REPORT CARD

## NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **February 3, 2009**

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

**QUICK STATS** (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 5
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 40 / 29
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 7 / 12

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

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

| LOCATION | DRY | WET |
|---|---|---|
| Los Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth | A+ | A+ |
| Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth | A+ | F |
| El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Las Alisos creeks | A+ | A+ |
| Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach | A+ | A+ |
| Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth | A+ | B |
| Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth | A+ | F |
| Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private) | A+ | A+ |
| Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth | A+ | A+ |
| Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach | A+ | A+ |
| Latigo Canyon Creek mouth | A | A+ |
| Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach | A+ | A+ |
| Puerco State Beach at creek mouth | A+ | A+ |
| Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd. | D | F |
| Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence | A | A+ |
| Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily | F | F |
| Malibu Pier - 50 yards east | A+ | A+ |
| Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon | A+ | A+ |
| Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero) | A+ | A+ |
| Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs | F | B |
| Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach | A+ | A+ |
| Tuna Canyon | A+ | A+ |
| Topanga State Beach at creek mouth | A | B |
| Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach | F | ns |
| Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach | A+ | F |
| Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain) | A+ | A+ |
| Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence | A+ | A+ |
| Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain | A+ | A+ |
| Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain | B | A+ |
| Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua) | F | F |
| Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain | A | A+ |
| Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain | A+ | D |
| Santa Monica Municipal Pier | F | F |
| Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain | A | F |
| Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms) | A+ | A+ |
| Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain | A | F |
| Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain | A+ | A+ |
| Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain | A+ | F |
| Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain | A+ | A+ |
| Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south | A+ | B |
| Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St. | A+ | A+ |
| Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower | A | A+ |
| Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth | D | F |
| Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain | A+ | A+ |
| North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach | A+ | A+ |
| Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty) | A+ | B |
| Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain | A+ | A+ |
| Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant | A+ | A+ |
| Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain | A+ | B |

**LEGEND**

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

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

Heal the Bay

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

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

## MOVIE TIMES

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

**Two Lovers (R) 1hr 40min**
7:30

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

**Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (R) 1hr 32min**
2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:35

**Fanboys (PG-13) 1hr 30min**
12:50, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45

**Milk (R) 2hrs 08min**
1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

**Defiance (R) 2hrs 17min**
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

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

**The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG-13) 2hrs 48min Closed Captions and Descriptive video**
1:15, 4:45, 8:15

**New in Town (PG) 1hr 36min**
1:35, 4:05, 7:05, 9:30

**The Uninvited (PG-13) 1hr 27min**
2:30, 5:05, 7:40, 9:50

**Coraline 3D (PG) 1hr 40min**
11:00am, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

**Frost/Nixon (R) 2hrs 02min**
1:45, 4:25, 7:00, 9:25

**Push (PG-13) 1hr 51min**
1:55, 4:35, 7:20, 10:00

**The Pink Panther 2 (PG) 1hr 32min**
2:10, 4:55, 7:30, 9:45

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG) 1hr 27min**
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

**Gran Torino (R)**
1:00, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50

**Taken (PG-13) 1hr 33min**
11:50am, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 9:40

**Hotel for Dogs (PG) 1hr 40min**
11:40am, 2:10, 4:30, 7:00

**He's Just Not That Into You (PG-13) 2hrs 09min**
1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 9:20, 10:10

**The Reader (R) 2hrs 02min**
12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30

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

# At home, Cancer

### ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ Defer, and you'll get results. You'll understand a lot more if you relax and go with the moment. Someone you look up to pressures you beyond the norm. Think about what is happening and be willing to establish what is enough. Tonight: Catch up on another's news.

### TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Focus on getting the job done and getting ahead. You might be baffled by all the pressure around you and others' demanding ways. You don't need to push someone or feel forced to make a decision. Tonight: Easy works.

### GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ You come up with answers where others might draw a blank. How you deal with the many people in your life reflects your true nature. You could have a problem saying no to someone you care about. Tonight: Lighten up the moment.

### CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Coming from a basic point of view, you manage to develop a stronger sense of identity and direction. It could be difficult to deal with others, as they push you quite hard. A partner pitches in, allowing greater give-and-take. Tonight: At home.

### LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ New beginnings become possible if you relax and keep conversations moving. Pressure builds from out of nowhere — so it seems. Consider a reorganization of your daily life. Your fiery side emerges when dealing with a partner. Careful. Tonight: Hanging out is fun.

### VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ Continue to process a new rush of emotional possessiveness or material envy. You understand that this won't help you in any way, shape or form. Build your own sense of identity and security. Tonight: Treat yourself to something special.

### LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ You feel as if everything is working as you feel it should. Bathe in the moment, but don't get too secure, as surprises could easily pop up. Your easy side, with the additional ammunition of creativity, makes you a sure-bet winner. Tonight: Kick up your heels.

### SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Continue to remain cool, calm and collected. Though you are sure you don't have all the answers, you don't need to ask anyone for help at this point. You will gain more through centering and eyeing a key goal or different path. Tonight: Do your thing.

### SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Meetings prove to be important. Whether you are with a new group or learning a new hobby, it hardly makes a difference — you are heading in a new direction. The way you deal with key goals and getting the support of others paves the path to success. Tonight: Think "weekend," even if it's early.

### CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ You might want to do something very different. The problem remains that someone in charge has some very different ideas. Review a situation with a bit more care and directness. Tonight: A must appearance.

### AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Your ability to see past the obvious could make a big difference. Understand what is going on behind the scenes. Sometimes observation takes on a bigger role and more significance than asking questions. Tonight: Let your mind wander.

### PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Relate on a one-on-one level, and you'll succeed in communicating some very basic and significant points. You don't need to know everything, so stay on topic. Tonight: A close encounter.

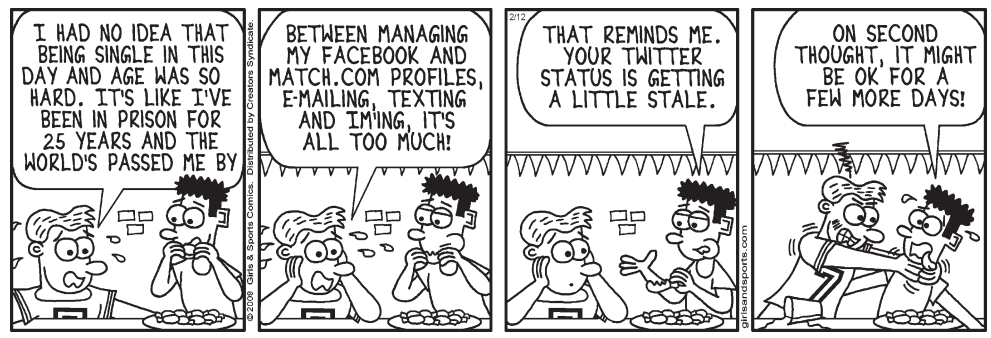
JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS
The stars show the kind of day you'll have:
★★★★★ Dynamic ★★ So-So
★★★★ Positive ★ Difficult
★★★ Average

## Happy birthday

Be willing to risk more this year, once you get as many facts as possible. You are just plain lucky. Still, a touch of action could make all the difference. Loosen up and consider different attitudes or styles. Being individualistic has always been your style, but that characteristic might emerge even more. If you are single, you will meet people with ease, and you could easily meet someone quite special this year. If you are attached, you add that extra zip in your relationship, heating up the bond. LIBRA understands you better than you think. Don't kid yourself!

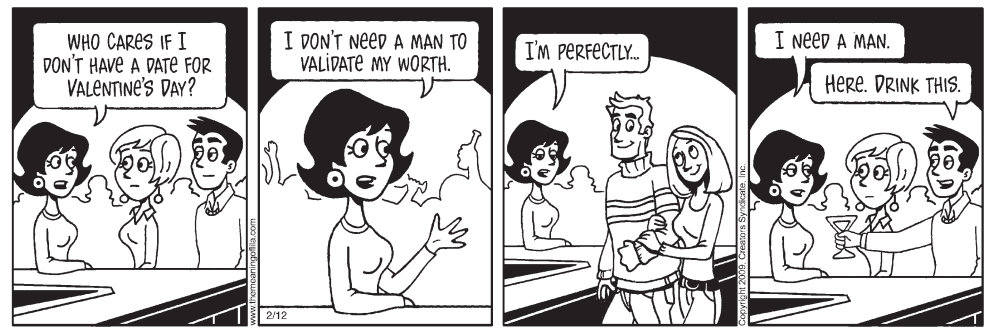
## Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein




## The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



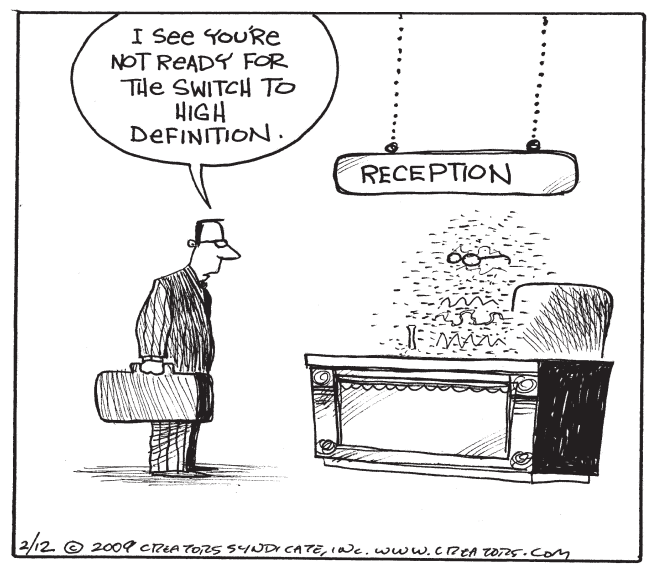

## Garfield

By Jim Davis




## Strange Brew

By John Deering




## Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly




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# Sudoku

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

King Features Syndicate

## GETTING STARTED

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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# MYSTERY PHOTO

Rachel Dardashti *news@smdp.com*

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

# *CROSSWORD*

## By THOMAS JOSEPH

### ACROSS

**1** Windshield clearer
**6** Miser Marner
**11** Undermine
**12** Sweet liqueur
**13** Revealed
**14** Words to the band
**15** Funds
**17** Say further
**19** Geological period
**20** Driver's aid
**23** Bragged
**25** "The Last of the Mohicans" heroine
**26** Made like a traffic helicopter
**28** Nights before
**29** Be contrite
**30** German article
**31** "The Office" role
**32** Week part
**33** Moolah
**35** Cooking herb
**38** Dance parties
**41** Precise
**42** Dancer Castle
**43** Poker night needs
**44** Pithy

### DOWN

**1** Network
**2** Author Levin
**3** Studied
**4** Genesis site
**5** European grazer
**6** Unstressed vowel
**7** Eye part
**8** Permit
**9** Parisian pal
**10** Collector's goal
**16** Call for takeout
**17** Needed a massage
**18** Herd cattle
**20** Made way, in a way
**21** Gladiator's setting
**22** Bash
**24** Director Craven
**25** Officer
**27** Bad point
**31** Leaves at the altar
**33** Jane's primer pal
**34** Uncommon
**35** Nap site
**36** Logger's tool
**37** Wisconsin Indian
**39** Print units
**40** Espy

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | A | I | R | O | ■ | ■ | D | A | F | T |
| A | C | R | I | D | ■ | R | O | M | E | O |
| S | T | O | O | D | ■ | E | V | I | T | A |
| H | E | N | S | ■ | E | V | E | N | E | D |
| I | D | O | ■ | C | E | O | ■ | O | S | S |
| N | O | R | M | A | L | L | Y | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| ■ | N | E | A | R | ■ | T | E | A | S | ■ |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | N | O | R | E | A | L | L | Y |
| C | A | D | ■ | L | A | D | ■ | T | I | E |
| O | R | I | G | I | N | ■ | L | E | D | A |
| R | E | G | A | N | ■ | B | O | R | I | S |
| A | N | I | T | A | ■ | A | G | E | N | T |
| L | A | T | E | ■ | ■ | D | O | D | G | Y |

**Yesterday's answer**

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

2-12

## DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 18 29 38 43 47
Meganumber: 7
Jackpot: $85M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 14 23 24 25 44
Meganumber: 18
Jackpot: $7M

FANTASY 5: 7 13 20 28 38

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 3 8 9
EVENING: 4 2 1

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 04 Big Ben
2nd: 01 Gold Rush
3rd: 12 Lucky Charms
RACE TIME: 1:40.97

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

■ **Community Property:** (1) As part of a highly contentious New York divorce, surgeon Richard Batista, who in good times had donated a kidney to his wife, demanded in January that she either give it back or compensate him with $1.5 million in consideration of the rarity of his kidney match. (2) Also in January, Thomas Rowley, 28, went on trial in Victorville, Calif., for his allegedly more direct approach two years ago after he and his girlfriend split. According to prosecutors, Rowley said that since he had paid for her breast implants, he felt entitled to recover them, allegedly by carving them out of her body (and consequently was charged with attempted murder).

■ **Intimate Health Care:** (1) A sex-education advocacy organization in Sweden complained in November about the government's program that, finally after years of resistance, provides prosthetic penises to newly transgendered males. The policy was nonetheless termed unfair because the devices are cosmetic only and do not "work." (Regulations prohibit taxpayer money for "sexual aids.") (2) In October, five employees of the health-care provider New Zealand Care resigned when the company ordered them to provide (as routine service to developmentally disabled patients who request it) assistance in masturbating.

## TODAY IN HISTORY

**1945** President Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin signed the Yalta Agreement during World War II.

**1975** Margaret Thatcher was elected leader of Britain's opposition Conservative Party.

**1979** followers of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini seized power in Iran.

**1989** the Rev. Barbara C. Harris became the first woman consecrated as a bishop in the Episcopal Church, in a ceremony held in Boston.

**1990** South African black activist Nelson Mandela was freed after 27 years in captivity.

## WORD UP!

**tome** \tohm\, *noun*:
a large, often scholarly, book

Santa Monica Daily Press

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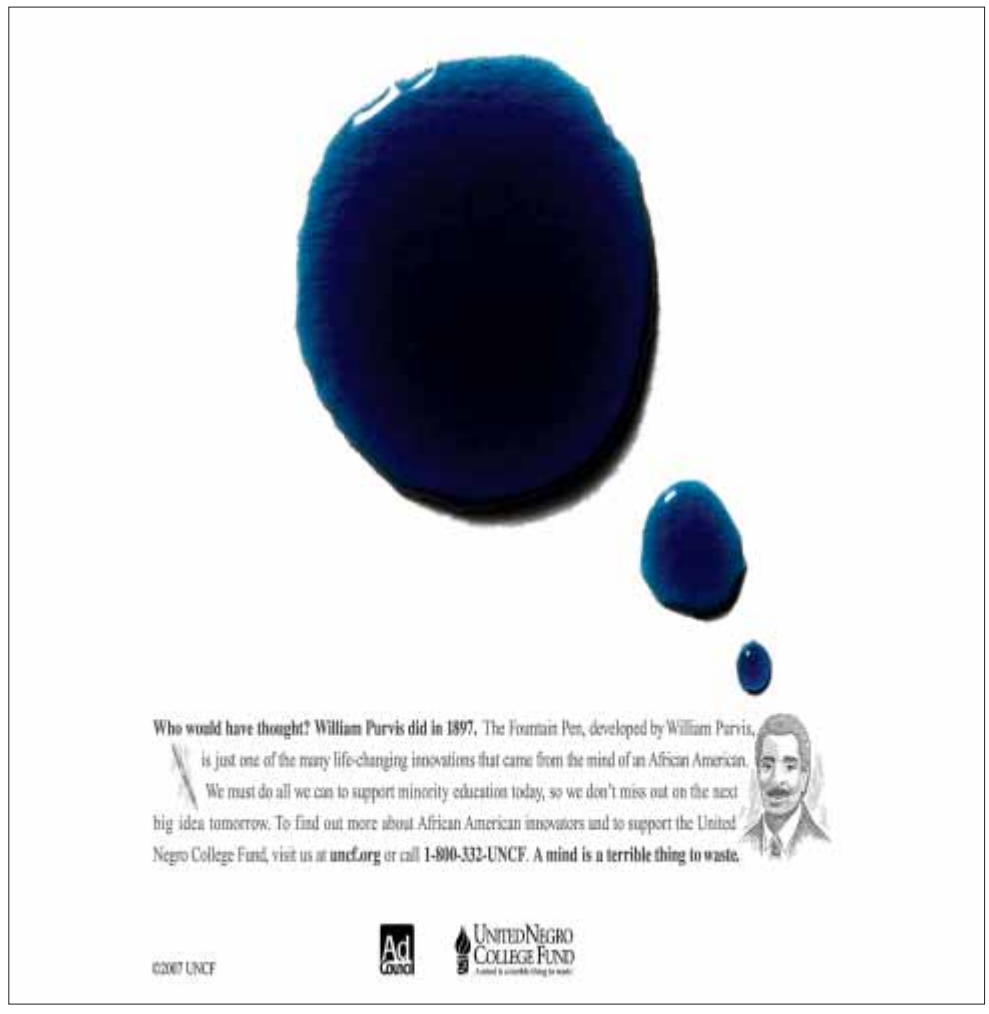
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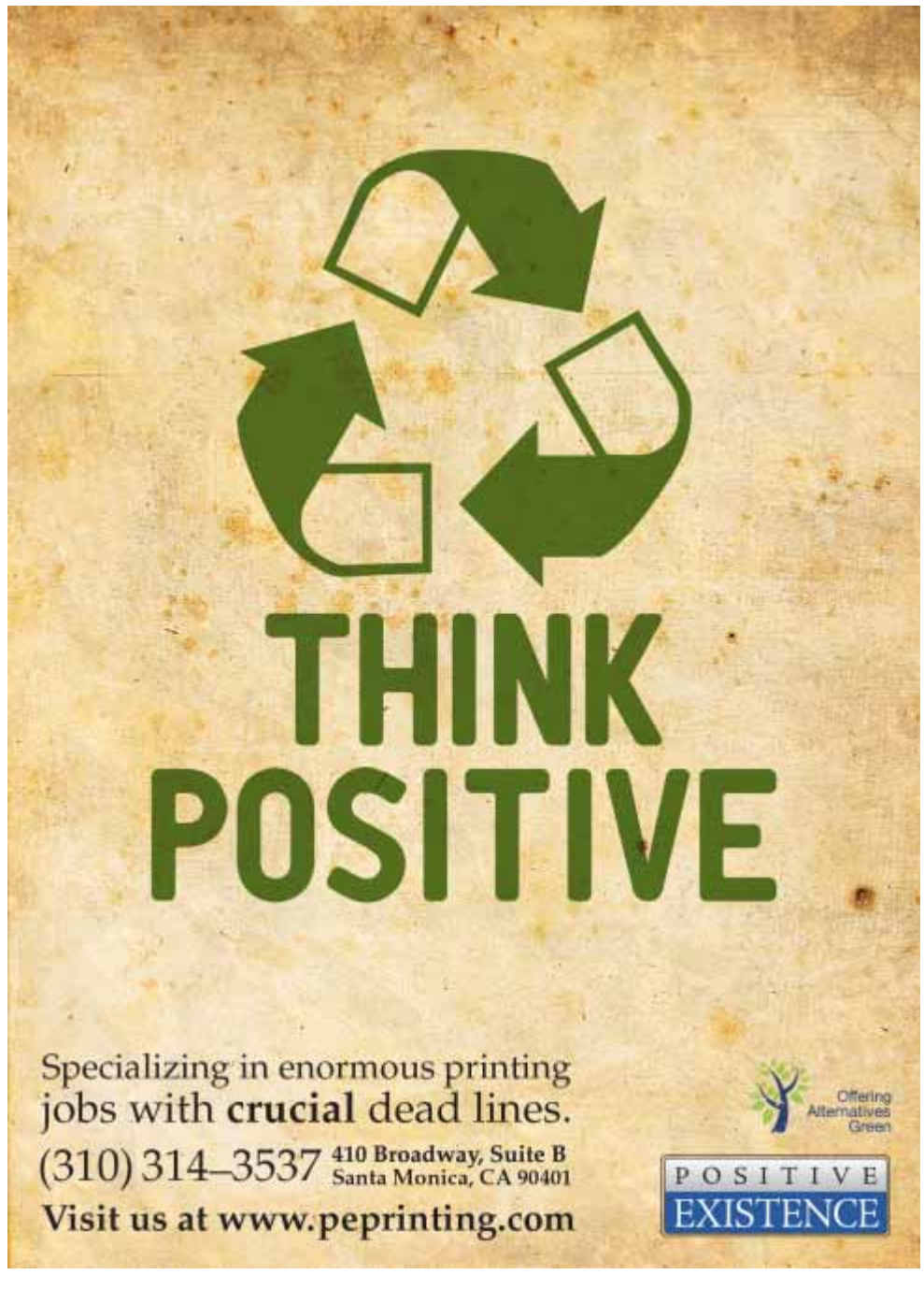
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| | | Single Family Homes | Condos & Townhomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Santa Monica Canyon | = | $2,335,000 | $1,895,000 |
| North of Montana | = | $3,372,000 | $1,295,000 |
| Between Wilshire & Montana | = | $1,995,000 | $799,250 |
| South of Wilshire | = | $1,010,000 | $789,000 |
| Sunset Park | = | $1,137,500 | $674,000 |
| Ocean Park | = | $1,747,000 | $740,125 |

Statistics Updated Every Monday

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