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Volume 1, Issue 81

# Santa Monica Daily Press

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## Main Street's north end to be developed

*City council approves large housing and retail development*

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON  
Daily Press Staff Writer

The north end of Main Street will no longer be a quiet and abandoned area.

After nearly three years of public process, a pending lawsuit and countless hours of review, developer Howard Jacobs finally got the go ahead from city council Tuesday to build a 133-unit housing and retail development that will cover an entire city block on Main Street.

The project got a thumbs down from the planning commission and city staff, who both recommended that it be denied. The development includes three- and four-story buildings on the west and east side of Main Street just south of Pico Boulevard. The larger building will occupy the former Pioneer Boulangerie Bakery site.

Jacobs appealed to the city council after the Santa Monica Planning Commission denied the project on Dec. 5. The commissioners said the development, which is about 170,000 square feet, would overwhelm the neighborhood and would aesthetically ruin Main Street. They said the size of the building would be out of character with the residential neighborhood.

**"Our intention is we amend our application now. Time is critical and I would beg you not to delay this."**

— HOWARD JACOBS  
Developer

Jacobs modified the plan and has been explaining the  
See MAIN STREET, page 3

## A cliff hanger



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Members of the Santa Monica Fire Department on Monday stabilize a car teetering from a downtown parking garage.

By Daily Press staff

An elderly Santa Monica couple lost control of their sedan Wednesday, leaving the car hanging from the fourth level of a downtown parking garage.

The couple, who declined to give their names, said the vehicle's brakes failed to stop the car, which sent their Mercedes over the concrete curb and suspended only by a few safety wires.

Security officers at the parking garage located at Colorado Boulevard and Second Street, witnessed the crash and called police. They rushed to pull the visibly shaken couple from the vehicle.

The Santa Monica Fire Department was called to stabilize the car while a tow truck pulled it to safety.

"It's a brand new car," said the elderly woman. "Nothing like this has ever happened before."

## Horses get temporary reprieve from judge

*Facing eviction, horses remain at Will Rogers State Park*

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER  
Daily Press Staff Writer

The state must show how suspending privately boarded horses at Will Rogers State Park would not detract from overall equestrian activities there, a judge ruled Wednesday.

Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Terry B. Friedman ordered the state Department of Parks and Recreation to return to court on Friday, March 8, with evidence showing how removing privately owned horses housed at the public park would affect other horseback riding activities.

"I'm struck by how little information there is on the level of equestrian activity

at the park," said Judge Friedman. "But then there is nothing before me that specifically tells me that."

Genesses Rievera, an 8-year old Los Angeles girl, along with 34 other plaintiffs and the support of 1,300 petition signing members of the public, filed suit in Santa Monica Superior Court in December seeking an injunction of the state's notice to evict the horses at the park. Judge Friedman allowed the horses to stay until the matter can be heard in court.

Attorneys for the state said the public would still be allowed to bring their horses to the park for use on the trails and polo fields, but they want horses permanently boarded there removed so environmental testing can be performed.

They say in order for environmental engineers to accurately determine the extent of damage the horses have on the park, the horses must be removed temporarily.

"It's very rare in a public park for private individuals to gain benefit," said Steve Capps, the deputy director of communications for the state's department of

parks and recreation. "Our mission is a public mission."

See HORSES, page 3

## Teen shot on east side

By Daily Press staff

A teenager is in stable condition after he was shot in the head Monday while walking in a troubled Santa Monica east side neighborhood.

At 7:11 p.m., the boy was shot by unidentified suspects in the 2500 block of Virginia Avenue, near the Edison Elementary School in the Pico neighborhood, police said.

Police were unable to interview the boy because of his medical condition and could not confirm a motive. A small, black compact vehicle was seen leaving

the area immediately after the shooting, police said.

The incident has left many area residents fearing for their lives and their family's safety. The neighborhood has been engulfed in a turf war between gangs for years.

"Safety is definitely a concern for me," said one resident who wished to remain anonymous. "During the day I don't worry as much, but I wouldn't let them walk around at night. All you can do is hope that you take all the precautions you can take and everything will turn out all right."

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#### ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Absorbing information could be difficult, as you could naturally put up mental and emotional barriers. Take your time if you're fighting news or a process. Simply step back and ask questions. Hold calls and quietly focus on each issue. Tonight: Do something just for yourself.



#### TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Even though others might have good intentions, communication takes interesting twists and turns. You don't have to agree with someone, though you might want to analyze the math behind a decision. You cannot be too careful! Tonight: Swap war stories with your pals.



#### GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Work needs to be your highest priority. At a certain point, you could turn on someone who keeps bothering you. Knowing what you want could be primary to making solid decisions. Use diplomacy. Handle responsibilities. Tonight: Work late.



#### CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Deal with someone carefully, especially if it involves your work or daily life. Someone might not agree with you, or he or she might not make decisions that you're comfortable with. Build on what you want. Take it slow and easy. Detach. Tonight: Rent a movie.



#### LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Your strong reaction might overwhelm even you. Hold on tight, as the unexpected plays a significant role in your actions. Use your discretion with your temper and any type of risk. Before you realize it, you could wind up in plenty of trouble. Tonight: Opt for calm.



#### VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Let others speak. You won't have much of a choice in any case. Your sense of humor will help you out, especially if you're feeling pressured by someone close to you. You might need to check out your investments carefully. Tonight: Go along with someone's desires.



#### LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Dig into work. If you have the chance, screen your calls, because an uproar seems to come through the airwaves. Keep your concentration and clear out your work. Do as much as you can by yourself right now. Pace yourself. Tonight: Incorporate some exercise into your plans.



#### SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Dance away and do whatever you need to do to stop a destructive pattern that could be upsetting your finances. You could be heading into trouble if you continue to take risks. Ask for advice from someone else who is in the know. Tonight: Curb the wild playing.



#### SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★ You could be the source of your own problems, especially those involving a domestic or personal matter. Stop what you are doing if you're getting twisted up in a problem rather than getting out of it. Tonight: Listen to someone's perceptions.



#### CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ You could jinx yourself by saying the wrong thing or possibly over-reacting to what you hear. Recognize if you're out of sorts and perhaps experiencing the winter doldrums. Stepping back could help your mood and your communication skills. Tonight: Hang out with a friend.



#### AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Don't count on a friend or loved one to come through in a special way. You could be misreading a situation and not seeing someone's transformation. Use care with money and investments. The person you're dealing with will resort to whatever he or she needs to get what he or she wants. Tonight: Make a special dinner.



#### PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Watch an authority figure plunge off the deep end. Know that you don't always have to rescue this person, as you frequently choose to do. Perhaps standing back and letting this person find his or her own way out might be best. You also might want to make a change as a result. Tonight: Whatever makes you happy.



## WEATHER

|              |               |           |          |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|----------|
| Today ...    | Partly Cloudy | High—67°F | Low—48°F |
| Tomorrow ... | Partly Cloudy | High—64°F | Low—49°F |
| Saturday ... | Mostly Cloudy | High—60°F | Low—47°F |



## QUOTE of the DAY

**"I've known what it is to be hungry,  
but I always went right to a restaurant."**

— Ring Lardner (1885-1933)

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## LOCAL



# Status of developer's lawsuit against city unclear

MAIN STREET, from page 1

architectural changes to council members for the past month and a half in private meetings.

He said Wednesday the modifications address some of the complaints the commission and city staff had about the scale of the building. The buildings' shape was reconfigured and the placement of some elements have been moved, he said.

City staff suggested that because the project is inconsistent with the city's goal of keeping commercial development compatible with residential neighborhoods, council should not approve the project.

But all of the council members agree that Jacobs' modifications have made it a decent project. It is now well designed and will revitalize an area of Main Street that has sat empty for too long, council members say.

The council voted unanimously to approve the project, with conditions and modifications not yet understood by city officials. A formal vote with the necessary paperwork backing up Jacobs' representations will be taken at the next council meeting.

Jacobs told the council he has submitted the modified plans and didn't understand why city officials were confused on what they were approving.

"Our intention is we amend our application now," he said. "Time is critical and I would beg you not to delay this."

But the council and city staff didn't take any chances. "I can't really rest easy with the developer saying 'No worries, I submitted the conditions,' ... we have to make the findings. I'm sorry but this is going to take another two weeks," said City Attorney Marsha Moutrie when she advised the council. "Maybe you need a better understanding of what the dreadful result is that will inevitably flow from the developer. I don't think another two weeks is a real long time compared to how many years have passed."

She added that the paperwork would take only a few days, but the council doesn't meet again for two weeks.

"It's not really my job to comfort an applicant here but I think we are prepared to do this very fast," she said.

Jacobs is suing the city, arguing it has dragged its feet

in completing the environmental impact review on the project, which is supposed to be done within 12 months, as prescribed by state law. The report was completed late last year.

Jacobs claims that the delay has cost him millions of dollars because he is sitting on land that he has to pay for and the city is delaying him his right to get a return on his investment. He extended escrow on the property until last March and now that he closed on the property, Jacobs pays \$2,000 a month in mortgage payments and maintenance.

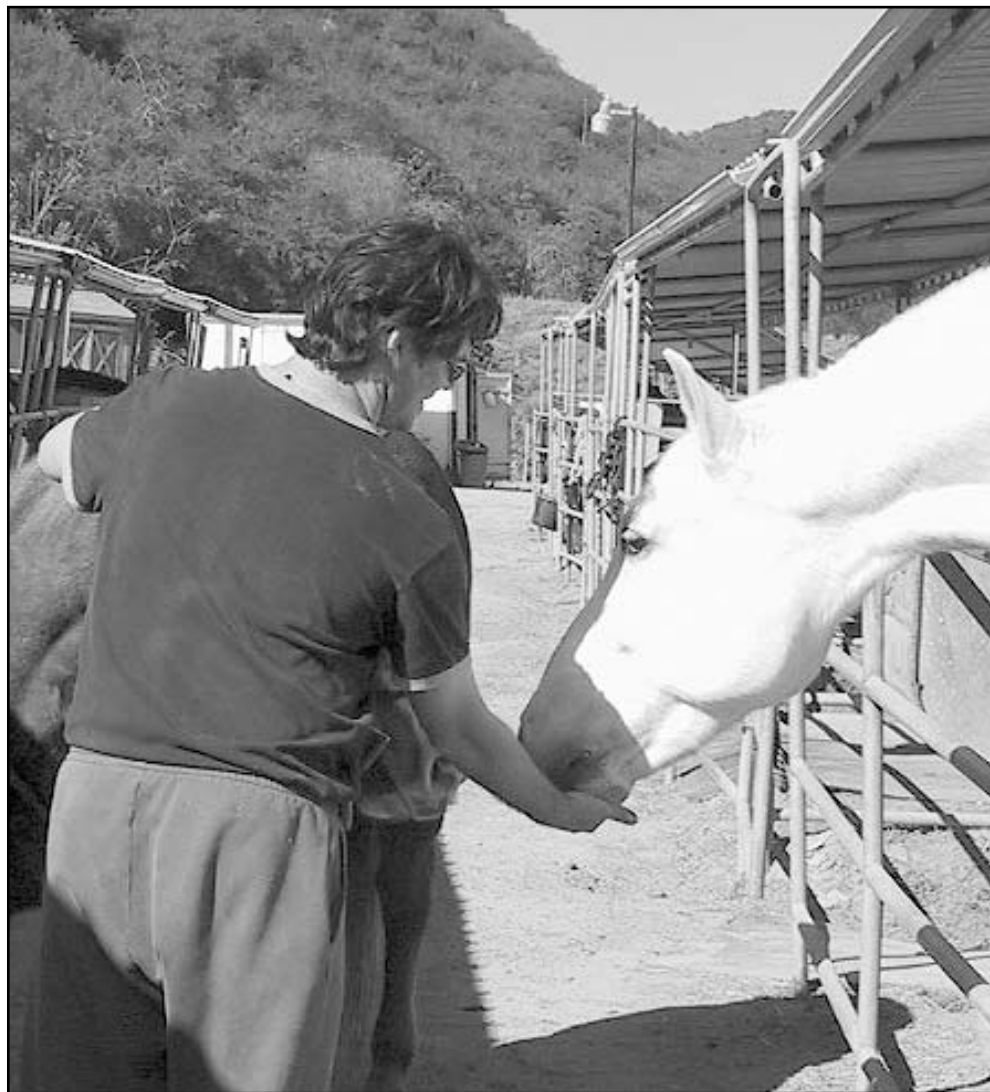
Jacobs said Wednesday he is pleased the council approved the project and is uncertain what his next move will be regarding the suit against the city.

"I'm very gratified," he said. "I don't think we are focusing on the lawsuit as much as the project right now."

Jacobs' project must now be reviewed by the city's architectural review board and the state coastal commission. He expects to break ground in December.

"There is nothing easy or automatic," he added.

## Horses remain at park until judge renders decision



File photo

Greg Steensen, a caretaker at Will Rogers State Park, may not have any horses to care of if the state wins in court.

HORSES, from page 1

But Eric M. George, the lawyer for Rievera, said removing boarded horses would diminish the level of equestrian activity in the park, violating the park's general plan adopted by the state.

**"There is plenty of evidence that I believe will show there will be no credible equestrian presence if boarding is ended."**

— ERIC GEORGE  
Attorney

To amend the plan, the state must go through a process of public hearings before any changes can be made, George said.

"This is not just an academic point," George said. "To make those types of changes you need to get the public involved, and really that's what we're asking for."

Also, George said the state never put a time limit on the temporary removal of the horses — something that could create a paradoxical "permanent temporary" eviction.

"There is plenty of evidence that I believe will show there will be no credible equestrian presence if boarding is ended," he said. "I'm optimistic that once all the evidence is in, we will prevail."

The park, located in the Pacific Palisades, is a popular destination for hikers of the Backbone Trail, as well as people who come to watch polo matches, play soccer and other sports.

It is also currently used for horse enthusiasts to board their horses, as well as a place where kids learn to ride.

The Department of Parks and Recreation determined last October that the horse operation was significantly degrading the environment in the park.

They say the horses have turned green pastures into muddy fields, and that waste from the animals are polluting nearby streams and creeks.

"It seems like the damage that is being done is being lost in all this," said Capps. "Pasture is a packed-down, barren field, and if you compare it to pictures from the past you can see that."

State officials announced last fall that it would suspend overnight horse boarding while a new management plan for the park is developed.

"Many of the streams have been polluted. You can see horse manure running down into that creek," he said. "We don't know the full extent of what's going on there and that's why we want the horses out for a bit so we can study this fully."

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## STATE

# San Diego city council approves pot ID cards

By The Associated Press

**SAN DIEGO** — The City Council approved a plan that will allow sick people who use marijuana to obtain identification cards to protect them from possible arrest.

Council members approved the measure 7-2 on Tuesday. Cardholders can carry up to one ounce of marijuana under the plan, which was conceived by a citizens Medical Cannabis Task Force. The program also will include a 24-hour hotline that police can call to verify the cardholders' identification.

"This is a very modest response to an immediate and real need," Councilwoman Toni Akins said.

Marijuana is illegal in California but voters approved Proposition 215 in 1996

that allows the medical use of the drug after users receive their doctor's permission. The city-issued cards will not protect users from arrest by federal authorities and cannot be used in other cities.

Some people who smoke marijuana for medical use have complained they have been arrested by police and accused of abusing their privilege. Medical marijuana patient Susan McNichols said she was detained and taken away in handcuffs from her car last summer. She was eventually released.

"This was a very painful and humiliating experience," she said.

It will take city leaders about six months before the program can begin. They must first raise between \$20,000 and \$30,000 to pay for the program and find an agency to manage it.

## Coast Guard recovers 1 1/2 tons of marijuana

By The Associated Press

**SAN DIEGO** — A Coast Guard crew returned to port Wednesday with more than 1 1/2 tons of marijuana that was abandoned in the Pacific Ocean by smugglers off the coast of Mexico.

The Coast Guard cutter Steadfast, based in Astoria, Ore., was patrolling international waters Jan. 26 when it came upon a 30-foot powerboat with three men on board and what appeared to be several hundred bales of marijuana.

As the Coast Guard pursued the smaller boat, the men threw the bales overboard. After a seven-hour chase, the smugglers escaped and were last seen heading toward Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

The Coast Guard recovered a total of 3,572 pounds of marijuana from the sea and turned it over to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in San Diego.

## First Lady offers motherly take on American Taliban

By The Associated Press

**CENTURY CITY** — As a mother, First Lady Laura Bush said she feels sympathy for the American Taliban's parents, but said they also serve as a valuable example of how important it is to pay attention to adolescents.

She described John Walker Lindh's predicament as a "sad" journey, saying his story provides a couple of lessons for parents.

"Make sure your children are mature before you allow them to do certain things," Bush told the San Francisco Chronicle. Her remarks came Tuesday at the Town Hall of Los Angeles. She had previously only expressed sympathy for Frank Lindh and Marilyn Walker.

Lindh trained in an al-Qaida camp in Pakistan and stayed after he was told Osama bin Laden "had sent forth some

fifty people to carry out 20 suicide terrorist operations against the United States and Israel," the indictment charges.

If convicted, Lindh faces up to life in prison.

"As all parents know, there's a certain time when children are not going to do what their parents want them to," said Bush, whose own teen-agers' foibles have been the subject of news coverage. "(They) get to a certain age where it doesn't matter what you say to them."

Lindh pleaded innocent Wednesday to conspiring to kill Americans. He appeared in court in Alexandria, Va. on a 10-count indictment that included charges of aiding a terrorist organization.

"In some ways, it's sort of the extreme of what American parents want their children to do ... travel the world," Bush said.

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## NATIONAL



# Country great Waylon Jennings dead at 64

BY JIM PATTERSON  
Associated Press Writer

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** — Waylon Jennings, who defined the outlaw movement in country music, died Wednesday after a long battle with diabetes-related health problems. He was 64.

Jennings spokeswoman Schatzie Hageman said Jennings died peacefully at his home in Arizona.

Jennings, a singer, songwriter and guitarist, recorded 60 albums and had 16 No. 1 country singles in a career that spanned five decades and began when he played bass for Buddy Holly. He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in October.

He had been plagued with diabetes-related health problems in recent years that made it difficult for him to walk. In December, his left foot was amputated at a Phoenix hospital.

Jennings and his wife, singer Jessi Colter, sold their home in Nashville more than a year ago and moved to Chandler, Ariz.

In 1959, his career was nearly cut short by tragedy soon after it began.

He was scheduled to fly on the light plane that crashed and killed Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson. Jennings gave up his seat on the plane to the Richardson, who was ill and wanted to fly rather than travel by bus with those left behind.

With pal Willie Nelson, Jennings performed duets like "Mammas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys," "Luckenbach" and "Good Hearted Woman." Those 1970s songs nurtured a progressive sound and restless spirit embraced later by Travis Tritt, Charlie Daniels, Steve Earle and others.

His resonant, authoritative voice also was used to narrate the popular TV show "The Dukes of Hazzard." He sang its theme song, which was a million seller.

"I aimed the narration at children and it made it work," he said in a 1987 AP interview.

He traditionally wore a black cowboy hat and ebony attire that accented his black beard and mustache. Often reclus-

sive when not on stage, he played earthy music with a spirited, hard edge. Combined, Jennings had a well-defined image that matched well with his history of battling record producers to do music his way.

About his independence, he said: "There's always one more way to do something — your way."

Some of his album titles nourished his brash persona: "Lonesome, On'ry and Mean," "I've Always Been Crazy," "Nashville Rebel," "Ladies Love Outlaws" and "Wanted: The Outlaws."

He often refused to attend music awards shows on grounds performers should not compete against each other. Despite those sentiments, Jennings won two Grammy awards and four Country Music Association awards. He did not attend his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame last year.

For about 10 years, he declined to appear on the Grand Ole Opry because a full set of drums was forbidden at the time. That rule was eventually dropped.

In 1992, he told the AP: "I've never compromised, and people respect that."

Of his outlaw image, he said: "It was a good marketing tool. In a way, I am that way. You start messing with my music, I get mean. As long as you are honest and up front with me, I will be the same with you. But I still do things my way."

Born in Littlefield, Texas, Jennings became a radio disc jockey at 14 and formed his own band not long afterward.

He and Holly were teen-age friends in Lubbock, Texas, and Jennings was in Holly's band. Holly also produced Jennings' first record.

"Mainly what I learned from Buddy was an attitude," Jennings said. "He loved music, and he taught me that it shouldn't have any barriers to it."

By the early 1960s Jennings was playing regularly at a nightclub in Phoenix. In 1963, he was signed by Herb Alpert's A&M Records, then was signed by RCA in Nashville shortly thereafter by Chet Atkins. Once in Nashville, he and Cash became friends and roommates.

His hit records began in the mid-

1960s and his heyday was the mid-1970s.

His "Greatest Hits" album in 1979 sold 4 million — a rare accomplishment in country music for that era.

In the mid-1980s, he joined with Nelson, Johnny Cash and Kris Kristofferson to form the quartet the Highwaymen, which recorded together and did concert tours.

"I'd like to be remembered for my music — not necessarily by what people see when they see us — but what they feel when they talk about you," he said in 1984.

"Some people have their music. My music has me."

His other hit singles included "I'm a Ramblin' Man," "Amanda," "Lucille," "I've Always Been Crazy" and "Rose in Paradise."

He made occasional forays into TV movies, including "Stagecoach" and "Oklahoma City Dolls," plus the Sesame Street movie "Follow That Bird" and the B-movie "Nashville Rebel."

He has said he spent 21 years on drugs and had a \$1,500-a-day cocaine habit.

"I did more drugs than anybody you ever saw in your life," he told the Country Music Association's Close Up magazine in 1994.

In 1977, he was arrested at a Nashville recording studio and charged with conspiracy and possession of cocaine with intent to distribute. The charges were later dismissed.

He kicked the habit in 1984 by leasing a house in Arizona and going cold turkey, he said.

He and Colter, his fourth wife, married in 1969. They had one son, Shooter.

## Authorities sweep through Missouri town in raid

BY BRANDON FERGUSON

Associated Press Writer

**CARTHAGE, Mo.** — Federal, state and local authorities raided homes and other buildings Wednesday in a large-scale drug and weapons sweep that led to 28 arrests.

Helicopters flew overhead as dozens of FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents, along with state and local police, were seen throughout the city. Residents of one neighborhood reported SWAT officers breaking down the door of one home around 6 a.m.

Authorities said the sweep was the culmination of a two-year investigation. Besides those arrested Wednesday, 34 people face federal or state charges in the case, investigators said.

The probe focused on the trafficking of cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana from California, Texas and Guatemala into southwest Missouri, authorities said. Also, more than 100 weapons linked to one suspect were seized.

"It involves a very large-scale and multijurisdictional investigation into ... illegal narcotics trafficking and illegal firearms trafficking," said Chris Whitley with the U.S. Attorney's office in Kansas City.

He described the illegal activity as "a series of relatively closely related but still separate conspiracies. There was no particular mastermind."

Immigration officials set up checkpoints throughout the city, checking people's immigration papers, KOAM-TV reported.

## Lays get \$12.1 million for properties

By The Associated Press

**ASPEN, Colo.** — Former Enron Chairman Kenneth Lay and his wife have sold two properties for \$12.1 million, including a \$10 million cottage that served as their family retreat.

The cottage sale is the highest price per square foot that real estate agents can remember in this haven for the ultrarich and famous.

The Lays, who have two more Aspen properties for sale, paid \$1.9 million in 1991 for the 3,015-square-foot cottage on a three-acre wooded lot, part of which fronts the Roaring Fork River. The 43-year-old, three-bedroom house with a green picket fence was extensively renovated in 1993 and is located near downtown with views of Aspen Mountain.

The manager of the limited liability company that bought the house is

Bradley P. Bell of Los Angeles. Broker Joshua Saslove refused Wednesday to release any details about who he is except that he already has ties to Aspen.

The Lays also sold an undeveloped lot at the foot of Red Mountain to Carol S. Parks of Boston for \$2.1 million. The property, which sits on a bluff above the Aspen Art Museum, had been listed for \$2.95 million.

Bell paid Lay and his wife, Linda, the equivalent of \$3,330 a square foot for the house, according to the warranty deed made public Tuesday.

"The highest price any home has ever sold here before is around \$1,260 a square foot," real estate broker Heidi Houston said.

The Lays sold the secluded home last week without formally listing it. The deal was bittersweet for the couple, Saslove said.

"It was their personal family

retreat, and they were very apprehensive about having to sell it because they have spent so much time there," Saslove said. "They had children baptized there. They held weddings there. They buried their pets in the back yard."

The house appears modest from the outside but is "warm and fuzzy" on the inside, Saslove said. He said he was not surprised by the sale price because of the location.

The Lays have said they are struggling financially after the collapse of Houston-based Enron, embroiled in the country's largest ever bankruptcy. Congress and federal officials are investigating the company's collapse amid questions about its accounting practices.

Saslove said some offers have been made on the Lays' other two houses in Aspen, listed at \$6.125 million and \$6.15 million, but none have been accepted.

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## NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL

# Single men outnumber single women in U.S.

BY RON KAMPEAS  
Associated Press Writer

**WASHINGTON** — For every 10 single young American women this Valentine's Day, there are at least 11 single young guys, which is good news for florists, who expect booming business.

The bad news is that, once they're hitched, men are likelier to pick up a cheap bouquet with the groceries than go out of their way to find something special.

Figures from the Census Bureau and the cut flower industry released this Valentine's Day depict an America ripe for courting.

People are waiting longer to get married, according to the 2000 census: Median ages for first marriages are 25 for women and just shy of 27 for men, up about four years from the 1970 census.

The figures show 115 single men in their 20s for every 100 women the same age. And before you say "not until I'm at least 30," it doesn't change much later on: There are 109 men for 100 single women in the 30-44 range.

Maybe that's why florists are so busy. "I've been speaking to retailers, and we're expecting a strong Valentine's Day," said Jennifer Sparks of the Society of American Florists, the industry's representative to government. "Even in a recession, flowers are known as a great communicator."

Actual numbers won't be available until after the holiday, because men — who buy 70 percent of flowers on the day — are notorious last-minute purchasers.

Florists are also counting on the day falling midweek, which traditionally causes deliveries to spike. "There's the surprise impact of delivery to the office," Sparks said. "She gets attention, and he's a hero."

"She" should enjoy the grandstanding while she can, because it often comes to a grinding halt once the ceremony is over, according to NPD Group, a market research firm that tracks the industry. Husbands are likeliest to buy their flowers at the supermarket — generally, the cheapest outlet — making 46 percent of their purchases there.

By contrast, just over 11 percent of overall flower purchases are made at the supermarket, with most people preferring the Internet and traditional florists. "Valentine's Day skews younger, to those people trying harder to impress their girlfriend," said Barrie Rappaport of NPD. "After you get married, you're done."

# Misspellings in education reform fliers laughed at

By The Associated Press

**MADRID, Spain** — The government couldn't help but chuckle last week when students opposed to reforms aimed at raising education standards released a flier calling for demonstrations with a glaring spelling mistake.

Now it's the government's turn to blush.

A letter written in Catalan, signed by Environment Minister Jaume Matas and sent to tens of thousands of homes in northeastern Spain, contained 13 spelling errors and two geographical errors.

The letter defends a controversial hydrological project in which water is to be diverted from the Ebro River, which flows through the Aragon and Catalonia regions, to the Mediterranean coast.

Education and Culture Minister Pilar del Castillo, the architect of the education overhaul, reacted to the flier by saying, "Students who call demonstrations are the ones who get the worst grades." She has said repeatedly in recent days that Spain's schools are churning out uneducated young people.

Responding to minister Matas' multiple slip-ups, a Socialist Party leader in Catalonia, Jaume Antich, said: "Are you trying to prove Pilar del Castillo right when she talks about low cultural levels? In view of this letter, I don't know if you'd pass the exam she wants to reinstate."

# Couple hold city officials accountable with lawsuit

By The Associated Press

**STUART, Fla.** — A jury has awarded \$50,000 to a couple who sued officials in the town of Sewall's Point for displaying a picture of their house at City Hall with the words: "Our view of the hillbilly hellhole."

Residents Blaine and Sally Rhodes had asked jurors to award them more than \$15,000 in the defamation lawsuit against Mayor Don Winer and clerk Joan Barrow.

The suit claims Winer and Barrow ridiculed and harassed the Rhodeses and invaded their privacy by displaying an 8-by-10 photo of their house, given to the officials for Christmas in 1998.

The photograph of the back of the Rhodes house showed a damaged floating dock hanging from a tree.

"It's a great burden off my shoulders," Blaine Rhodes told television station WPTV. Government officials "have to be held accountable for their actions, just like you and me."

The Rhodeses' neighbor, Jann Levin, took the photograph and wrote the caption. She has reached an undisclosed settlement with the couple.

Michael Piper, attorney for Sewall's Point, said the caption was "a classic statement of opinion, and opinion is not defamation."

## INTERNATIONAL



# Bush won't fulfill Pervez Musharraf's wish list

BY RON FOURNIER

AP White House Correspondent

**WASHINGTON** — President Bush praised Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf for showing “great courage and vision” in the war against terrorism and pledged Wednesday to help trim his nation’s \$3 billion debt.

But Bush dashed Musharraf’s hopes for trade benefits, fighter jets and a U.S. commitment to mediate disputes between Pakistan and India.

Musharraf said Pakistan needed high-tech aircraft as a deterrent to more powerful India.

He also pledged to keep Pakistan on the U.S. side in the war against terrorism, although Musharraf said on PBS’ “The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer” that siding with the United States posed a danger for him.

Returning Mush’s compliments, the Pakistani president said terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden was not using Pakistan as a refuge. “I would certainly think that he is in Afghanistan, either dead or alive,” the Pakistani leader said.

In a joint news conference, conducted beneath a presidential seal in the White House’s marble foyer, Bush also addressed possible threats from Iraq and said he was considering all options to keep Saddam Hussein in check.

U.S. officials say the president has directed his war council to develop and refine a full range of alternatives on Iraq — including military action — that could be used to topple Saddam.

“I’m serious about defending our country,” Bush said. He has accused Iraq of working to develop weapons of mass destruction that could be used by terrorists.

Musharraf was questioned about the kidnapping of an American journalist in Pakistan. He said he was “reasonably sure” Daniel Pearl was alive, expressed hope that Pearl would be released soon and said Pakistan’s steps to “crush extremism” among Islamic fundamentalists may have given a motive to the kidnappers.

But later, in the PBS television interview, he said Pakistan had no evidence that Pearl was still alive.

Musharraf, 58, might seem an unlikely ally for the administration.

He took power in a coup in 1999, and was viewed with deep suspicion by both the Clinton and Bush administra-



Ron Edmonds/Associated Press

**Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, left, answers a reporter’s question, as President Bush looks on. The two met with reporters in the Grand Foyer of the White House Wednesday in Washington. Musharraf, making his first White House visit, is expected to ask for \$3 billion in debt relief and other economic aid.**

tions. When Bush ran for president, he couldn’t answer when asked to identify Pakistan’s leader.

The relationship was transformed after terrorists attacked Sept. 11. Bush went to war against the al-Qaida network based in Afghanistan, which borders Pakistan, and forced Musharraf to choose between the United States and militant anti-American factions in his own country.

At considerable risk to his government’s stability, Musharraf cut ties with Afghanistan’s ruling Taliban regime, shared intelligence with the United States and allowed America to use Pakistani air bases and air space. In return, Bush dropped long-standing economic sanctions, committed as much as \$600 million in loans and aid and encouraged the International Monetary Fund to give Pakistan a \$135 million loan.

Hoping to benefit further from his new alliance with America, Musharraf came to Washington seeking relief from his country’s debt, lower tariffs for Pakistan textiles and approval to buy military goods from the United

States. After nearly two hours of talks, Musharraf declined to say whether Bush had made a dent in Pakistan’s wish list.

“We need to wait for concrete results,” Musharraf said curtly. “I wouldn’t like to comment.”

Later, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Bush offered \$200 million atop the \$600 million in U.S. aid already offered Pakistan. The new money can be used to erase \$1 billion in Pakistan debt, he said.

Pakistan wants the administration to release 28 American F-16 fighters sold to Pakistan in the 1980s, when it was an ally against the Soviet Union. The planes were withheld by Congress when Pakistan developed nuclear weapons, and Fleischer said there has been no change in Bush’s opposition to the sales.

U.S. textile manufacturers oppose Pakistan’s request for lower textile tariffs. Fleischer said Bush made no promises on the issue but talks would continue.

During the news conference, Musharraf complained about “the massive and aggressive deployment of Indian forces” on the Indian-Pakistan border. He wants the United States to mediate the conflict, but Bush won’t do so unless India drops its opposition to mediation.

“The only way this issue is going to be solved is if the Pakistani government and the Indian government sit down and have serious, meaningful dialogue to resolve this issue,” Bush said.

The leaders also discussed the possibility of additional U.S. aid to bolster the Pakistan economy and promote education reforms.

Bush and Musharraf, in their second face-to-face meeting, agreed to increase contacts between their respective militaries. The Pakistan leader met later with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and backed away from earlier statements that he thought bin Laden was dead.

“My assessment can be as good or bad as yours,” he said.

At the White House, Bush said: “President Musharraf is a leader with great courage and vision, and his nation is a key partner in the global coalition against terror.”

## al-Qaida suspect blows himself up

BY AHMED AL-HAJ

Associated Press Writer

**SAN’A, Yemen** — A suspected al-Qaida member, believed to have links to one of the Sept. 11 hijackers, blew himself up Wednesday evening after being cornered by security forces in a San’a suburb.

Sameer Mohammed Ahmed al-Hada, 25, was trying to flee from Yemen authorities who had staked out his house in San’a, police officials said.

Authorities believe al-Hada was a brother-in-law of Khalid al-Midhar, one of the 19 hijackers from the Sept. 11 attacks, and also a brother-in-law of one of the 17 men named by the FBI in an alert issued Monday warning of a possible terrorist attack, according to a U.S. government source, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

Officers approached al-Hada as he left his house, but the suspect ran and tried to throw a grenade that detonated in his hand and killed him instantly, police said. No police were injured.

Al-Hada was the son of Ahmad Mohammad Ali al-Hada, a known al-Qaida operative, according to a U.S. official, speaking on the condition of anonymity. However, the suspect’s name does not appear on a U.S.-produced list of Yemenis

believed to be suspected al-Qaida members.

Police arrested a man who was sitting in a car outside al-Hada’s house at the time, the officials said on condition of anonymity. No further details on the arrest were available.

The explosion, which happened near San’a University, came two days after the FBI issued a warning of more terrorist attacks — either in the United States or against U.S. interests in Yemen. It identified 17 men believed to be involved in the plans.

The warning identified the possible ringleader as Fawaz Yahya al-Rabeei, a Yemeni citizen born in 1979 in Saudi Arabia. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said al-Rabeei is believed to have links to al-Qaida but is not believed to have been involved in the attack against the USS Cole in the Yemeni port of Aden in October 2000 that killed 17 U.S. sailors.

At least two terror suspects believed to be in Yemen, Qaed Salim Sunian al-Harethi, allegedly a top al-Qaida official, and Mohammed Hamdi al-Ahdal, are wanted by the United States for the Cole attack.

Police said that they had learned

about al-Hada from his landlord.

According to the police, the rental contract had ended and his landlord asked al-Hada for documents to renew the contract. Al-Hada did not provide the documents and the landlord informed the police.

The police began inquiries and learned he was an active al-Qaida member in Yemen and that he had also been to Afghanistan. They did not specify when he was there.

Neighbors told the AP that al-Hada spent most of his time inside his house, rarely had visitors and had claimed to be a San’a University student.

Following Wednesday’s explosion, security officers searched al-Hada’s house, seizing two pistols, documents, books, a mobile telephone and a piece of paper containing telephone numbers, police said.

Yemeni Interior Ministry officials said they informed U.S. Embassy staff in San’a of Wednesday’s incident. Other police sources said both FBI investigators and Yemeni security officers are studying the documents taken from al-Hada’s house.

Yemen’s government admits there may be al-Qaida suspects in the country, but says the network has no military training camps or any other organized presence.

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## INTERNATIONAL

# Authorities negotiate Taliban leaders' surrender

BY JONATHAN EWING  
Associated Press Writer

**KANDAHAR, Afghanistan** — An Air Force transport plane crashed in a remote region of Afghanistan, injuring all eight crew members but none critically, U.S. officials said Wednesday.

In another development, Afghan authorities are negotiating the surrender of 15 Taliban leaders, who may include former Cabinet ministers, an Afghan official said. They could provide information useful in the hunt for fugitive Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar and al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden.

U.S. authorities also said they gathered enough remains from the site of a U.S. missile strike to do DNA tests to try to determine who was killed.

Seven of those injured in the Tuesday evening crash of the MC-130P were able to walk and none of the injuries were considered life threatening, said Maj. Brad Lowell, a spokesman for U.S. Central Command at MacDill Air Force in Tampa, Fla.

Lowell said the injured were taken to a medical facility in the region around Afghanistan, but he would not be more specific.

The cause of the crash is unknown, although it does not appear to have been caused by hostile fire, said the U.S. Central Command, which oversees the Afghan war effort.

Lowell would not describe the plane's mission. The \$75 million propeller-driven aircraft — nicknamed the "Combat Shadow" by the Air Force — mainly refuels helicopters flown by special forces troops, operating mostly at night to avoid detection.

The plane also can drop leaflets and small teams of special operations soldiers.

Air crashes and other mishaps have been far more deadly to American forces than enemy fire during the four-month U.S.-led war.

In the deadliest accident, a KC-130 refueling aircraft crashed Jan. 9 in neighboring Pakistan, killing seven Marines.

On Jan. 20, a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter crashed south of Baghram in Afghanistan, killing two of seven Marines aboard.

U.S. special forces and CIA operatives are leading the hunt in Afghanistan for fugitives from the former Taliban regime and al-Qaida.

The 15 Taliban figures willing to surrender are negotiating indirectly with representatives of Gul Agha, the governor of southern Kandahar province, said his spokesman, Khalid Pashtun. That province was the Islamic movement's stronghold before the U.S.-led war began in October.

Pashtun said Tuesday evening the surrender could take a month. He refused to identify the Taliban leaders but said "it is possible" some were Cabinet ministers.

Asked whether they would be turned over to the Americans if they surrender, Pashtun said: "They are just talking with us ... We haven't reached that level yet."

The most senior Taliban official known to be in custody is former Foreign Minister Mullah Wakil Ahmed Muttawakil, who surrendered Friday.

**"Most of them have  
shaved their beards and  
changed the shape of  
their turbans."**

— YOUNOUS QANOONI  
Afghanistan interior minister

He was being questioned at the U.S.-commandeered air base in Kandahar. Afghan authorities want him tried for crimes committed during the hardline regime's five years in power.

The former Taliban figures might provide information on the whereabouts of Omar and bin Laden. In an interview published Tuesday, Afghanistan's interior minister said both men still are alive.

Younous Qanooni said Omar is living in southern Helmand province, protected by his tribe, and that bin Laden is in the Afghan-Pakistani border region, the London-based Asharq Al-Awsat daily newspaper reported.

Pakistan has sent troops to the border and maintains there is no evidence bin Laden has entered its territory.

Qanooni claimed as many as 50,000 Taliban activists still are in Afghanistan, protected by tribes.

"Most of them have shaved their beards and changed the shape of their turbans," he was quoted as saying.

The new Afghan government of Hamid Karzai — which assumed power in December — said Taliban and al-Qaida fugitives threaten the country's shaky peace. Karzai has appealed for international peacekeepers now protecting the capital, Kabul, to extend their stay and expand to other cities.

But Germany, Britain and other European countries believe their forces already are overextended by peacekeeping commitments in the Balkans. The United States does not want its troops performing peacekeeping duties in Afghanistan and instead has offered to help build an Afghan army.

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## SPORTS

# Americans take more medals; Norwegians get gold

BY LARRY MCSHANE  
Associated Press Writer

**SALT LAKE CITY** — Five days into the Winter Games, it's impossible to keep the Americans off the medal stand — or to avoid the growing controversy over the pairs figure skating decision.

Bode Miller, whose first two runs in the combined offered faint hope of success, roared through his final slalom trip to grab a silver medal — the 10th medal in five days of competition for the U.S. team.

"I had a lot of mistakes out there," Miller told the crowd after his medal. "I felt like I kind of let you guys down. I just wanted to prove something on that last run."

Miller is an ex-snowboarder — and while the U.S. team in his former sport has taken four medals, his ski silver was the first medal by an American male in Alpine since Tommy Moe won a pair in the 1994 Olympics.

The out of competition news was — typically — another flap over figure skating. An American referee who oversaw the scoring at Monday night's pairs competition made unspecified allegations about the scoring, the head of the International Skating Union said.

A Russian couple received the gold medal despite a seemingly flawless routine by their Canadian competition, igniting a firestorm of complaints.

Miller's come-from-behind run came on a day dominated early by a Norwegian biathlete and a Swiss ski jumper, who became the first double gold-medal winners of these Winter Games.

Simon Ammann of Switzerland took the 120-meter gold, becoming only the only the second ski jumper in history to win gold medals on both hills in the same Olympics.

And Ole Einar Bjoerndalen won gold in the 10-kilometer biathlon sprint, making him the first biathlete to win three Olympic golds.

On the slopes, Miller struggled in the downhill and first slalom run. The left side of his body scraped against the snow following a fall in the downhill, and he slipped at a pair of turns in the slalom.

He was 15th after the downhill and fifth overall heading into his last trip down the course. At the end, his go-for-broke run bested everyone but Norway's Kjetil Andre Aamodt, who took the gold. The bronze

went to Benjamin Raich of Austria.

Aamodt's sterling Olympic career now includes two gold, two silver and two bronze medals.

Miller's silver kept the U.S. team atop the medals table with 10 (3 gold, 5 silver, 2 bronze), and extended its medal-winning string to five straight days. They were just ahead of the nine medals of Germany (3-5-1) and Austria (1-1-7).

### • FIGURE SKATING:

Yes, it's the quadrennial Winter Games skating controversy. It's not Tonya and Nancy — nobody's taken a whack to the knee yet — but this one is lingering, too.

Two days after Russians Elena Berezhnaya and Anton Sikharulidze took the gold medal over Canadians Jamie Sale and David Pelletier, the head of the International Skating Union said he was "embarrassed" by the furor around the decision.

ISU boss Ottavio Cinquanta said, without going into detail, that "certain allegations" were made by American referee Ronald Pfennig about the controversial judging. The decision that gave the Russians gold swung on a single vote after a Canadian routine that many believe had given them the Olympic title.

But at this point, the Russians remain the winners and the Canadians can only complain. The Canadian Olympic Association sent Cinquanta a letter Wednesday requesting an independent inquiry, and the ISU promised a rare "internal assessment."

### • SKI JUMPING:

Ammann — a ski jumper with a striking resemblance to Harry Potter — again came out of nowhere to grab a gold medal in the 120-meter jump. Three days earlier, he claimed gold in the 90-meter.



Alessandro Trovati/Associated Press

Norway's Kjetil Andre Aamodt speeds down the course during the downhill portion of the men's combined in Snowbasin, Utah on Wednesday at the Salt Lake City Olympics.

The 20-year Ammann had never even won a World Cup event before his sudden Salt Lake City success. He became only the second ski jumper in history to win gold medals on both hills in the same Olympics, joining Matti Nykanen of Finland.

Afterward, Ammann admitted that his nerves nearly got the best of him.

"I am trembling," Ammann said. "I was so nervous. After takeoff, I was flying away. I felt this jump was really, really good. I can't believe it. I am the champion."

Adam Malysz of Poland won the silver medal, and Matti Hautamaeki of Finland took the bronze.

• **BIATHLON:** Bjoerndalen hit all 10 targets to take the gold in the 10-kilometer biathlon sprint, just two days after his victory in the 20K biathlon.

Bjoerndalen feared his late starting position would wipe out his shot at back-to-back golds.

"I never thought I would win today," Bjoerndalen said. "I started so late. I don't like starting this late."

Bjoerndalen, an Olympic veteran, became the first biathlete to capture three gold medals in a career; his resume also includes two silvers. Germany's Sven Fischer was second in the 10K, while Austria's Wolfgang Perner won the bronze.

• **WOMEN'S BIATHLON:** There was one more double medalist — but this one settled for bronze.

Magdalena Forsberg of Sweden finished third in the women's 7.5-kilometer sprint, giving her two Salt Lake City bronze medals. Kati Wilhelm won the gold medal, while Uschi Disl of Germany won the silver and won the bronze.

• **WOMEN'S HOCKEY:** Canada, the silver medalist in Nagano, beat Russia 7-0 for its second straight Olympic victory and a spot in the medals round. The loss dropped the Russians to 0-2, ending their medal hopes.

Sweden moved into the next round as well with a 7-0 victory over Kazakhstan, ending their hopes of a Salt Lake City medal.

• **CURLING:** The American men's team fell to 1-2 after a 9-8 loss to undefeated Germany (3-0). The U.S. team was leading until a late German comeback forced them into extra time.



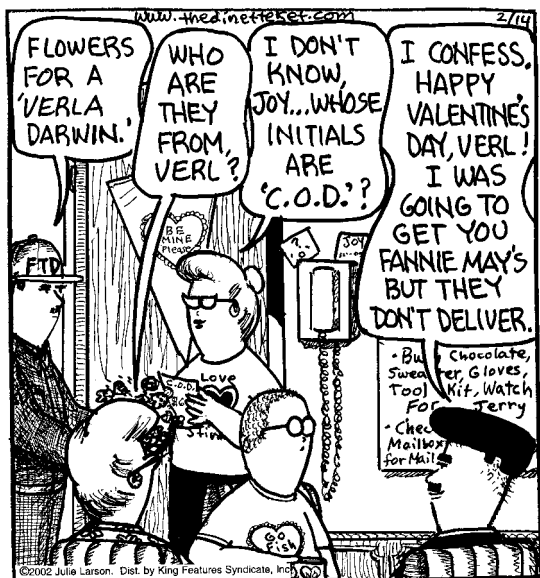
Jens Meyer/Associated Press

Winners of the women's 7.5Km biathlon sprint, from left, Germany's Uschi Disl, silver, Germany's Kati Wilhelm, gold, and Sweden's Magdalena Forsberg, bronze, celebrate during the flower ceremony at the Winter Olympics on Wednesday at Soldier Hollow in Midway, Utah.



## COMICS

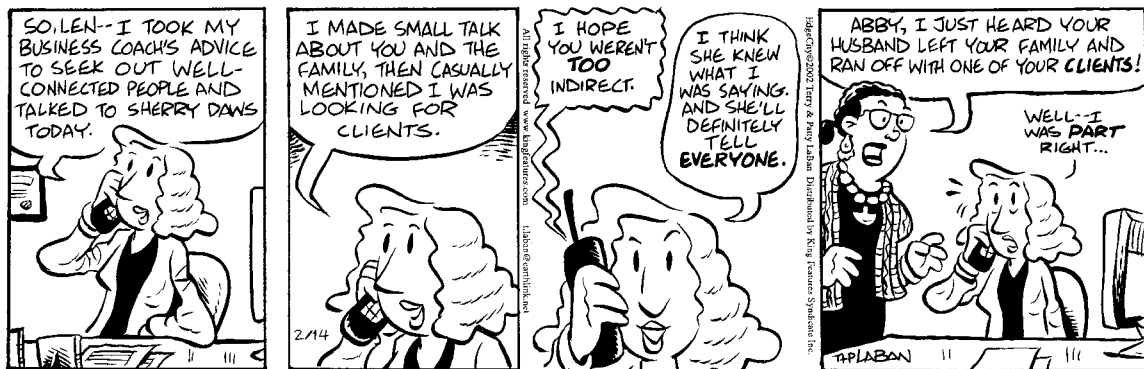
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27 Fire  
28 Rival of Rather  
30 Under the weather  
33 — Lama  
34 Portly  
35 Lairs  
37 Transmit  
38 Iowa city  
42 Struck out

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Yesterday's answer

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2-14

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## NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

### Human implant chips available this year

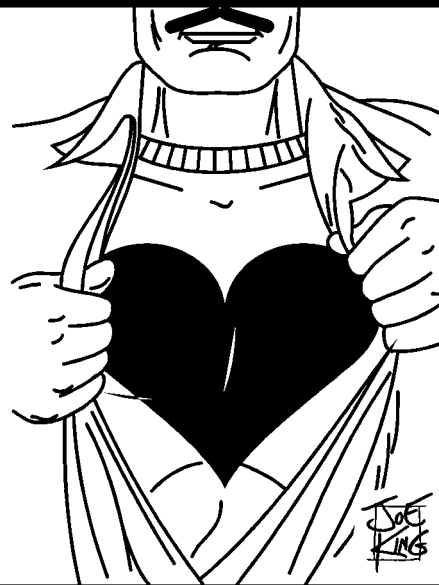
Applied Digital Solutions (Palm Beach, Fla.) said in December that it will sell human-implantable chips with space for about 60 strands of information starting early in 2002, but only in South America. In the United States, ADS still needs FDA approval, which it might get later this year. Right now, only some livestock have the chips (and, of course, Professor Kevin Warwick of Reading University in England, as reported in News of the Weird in July 2001, whose arm-implanted chips open his office door and turn on the lights).



## BE MINE?

Happy Valentine's Day!

- SMDP



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## BACK PAGE

# Scientists trying to figure out why sex is so great

BY MALCOLM RITTER

AP Science Writer

Don't let this dampen your Valentine's Day, but the fact is, scientists are still trying to figure out what's so great about sex.

They're looking beyond candy hearts and romantic dinners to the fact that in the cold light of biology, sex is a pretty inefficient way to reproduce.

It's so widespread among plants and animals that there must be some payoff. After more than a half-century of debate and some 20 published theories, scientists are still trying to pin down just what the payoff is.

"It's clearly one of the most fundamental questions in evolutionary biology," says William Rice of the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has pursued the question by giving fruit flies bogus chromosomes, then checked the eye color of thousands of descendants.

It is easy to forget that sex is not the only game in town for the plant and animal kingdoms. In fact, there are thousands of asexual species now, Rice said.

Many species of the whiptail lizard, for example, are all-female and just clone themselves with unfertilized eggs. Scientists believe the asexual lizards arose from sexual species.

Microscopic creatures called bdelloid rotifers have reproduced through asexual cloning for tens of millions of years. That greatly annoys scientists who say no creature should be able to keep doing this so long.

Rotifers have been called an evolutionary scandal. Imagine that: a no-sex scandal.

Actually, it is rare for an asexual species to persist a very long time in evolutionary terms, suggesting again there's something beneficial about sex.

At first blush, it makes some sense to have self-reproducing females and just dispense with males altogether, even before you consider things like singles bars. After all, if your job is to pass on your genes to future generations sex just gets in the way.

Consider the notion of two mating sexes. Each female passes only half her genes to each offspring, rather than all of them. And about half her brood on average ends up without a womb, which chops the next generation's productive capacity in half.

What's more, sex breaks up the successful gene combinations found in the parents and gambles on new, untried mixes in the next generation. Does that make any sense?

**"It's clearly one of the most fundamental questions in evolutionary biology."**

— WILLIAM RICE

University of California, Santa Barbara

Maybe so. It's pretty clear, scientists say, that the evolutionary lure of sex has something to do with that gene-mixing. While clones merely pass along their genetic endowment in a chunk, sexual species shuffle the deck.

To understand that, remember that the genetic makeup of an organism is somewhat like a baseball team. Everybody has a full team, with all the positions covered, but who plays at each spot differs. And there are good players and bad players in the same way there are good genes and bad genes.

Clones essentially pass their own rosters on to their offspring, while sexual species create new rosters.

Why tinker with a successful genetic lineup?

Currently, most scientists offer two general theories about why sex is so good: It helps a species get rid of harmful mutated genes, or, alternatively, it helps the population take advantage of beneficial mutations. Call it bad genes vs. good genes.

Of course, the explanation could be some combination

of those two ideas, although scientists suspect one or the other is probably the major factor.

The bad-gene idea says sex can make the faulty genes sitting ducks for elimination by natural selection, by separating them from good genes as they pass through generations. It can group bad genes together so they get wiped out in batches when the unfortunate recipients don't reproduce. Sex can also break up harmful combinations of genes, even when each by itself isn't so bad.

The alternative view says sex can help good genes spread through a species or bring favorable combinations together, speeding up evolution and helping species adapt more quickly to changing environments. One version says sex helps defend populations against evolving parasites and germs, for example.

Rice reported his experiment with the fruit flies in October. It bolstered the idea that sex helps good genes spread through a population. The work showed that a favored gene spread more quickly if it appeared on a chromosome that participates in gene-shuffling than if it did not. Rice's experiment also found evidence that harmful mutations accumulate faster without gene-shuffling.

Rice said it appears humans naturally produce harmful mutations so often that we'd go extinct if we didn't use sex to get rid of them. But it's not clear how often that situation occurs in other animals, and therefore how widely the bad-mutations theory of sex can be applied.

That's especially a mystery for non-vertebrates that pump out their generations quickly, said gene expert Peter Keightley of the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

Most evolutionary biologists probably favor theories about promoting the spread of good genes rather than those focusing on eliminating harmful mutations, Keightley said.

His own pick? "I'm still open. We need better data to decide."

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