



NO PASSION IN KISS WITH COX
SEE PAGE 17

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE HELPING HANDS ISSUE

Santa Monica Daily Press

WALKING THE PLANKS



A SENSE OF STRUCTURE

With the city in the black, public works are back at the fore
STORY PAGE 11

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smpd.com

Teachers won't break the bank

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMMUSD HDQTRS Teachers can buy those new pencil cases and protractors they've had their eyes on.

Just in time for a preliminary discussion set to take place tonight on the district's 2007-08 budget, school officials received the good news they've been itching to hear for the past few months amid controversy over the resignation of the former chief financial officer.

Contrary to initial reports, it turns out that the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District won't be in the red if the Board of Education ratifies a contract for a 5 percent salary increase with the teachers' union.

An initial AB1200 financial report submitted to the Los Angeles County Office of Education in October showed that a 5 percent pay raise would empty out the district's special reserve fund within three years. State law requires that school districts keep at least 3 percent of its general fund in special reserves.

But a report submitted to Superintendent Dianne Talarico on Feb. 8 by the Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) — created under AB1200 to assist school districts facing financial troubles — showed that SMMUSD will be able to maintain a 3 percent reserve fund level after all.

"I am really pleased that we had a third party independent review to substantiate what our thoughts were about the financial stability of the district," Talarico said on Wednesday. "It helps that someone from the

outside looked at it through an objective lens and validated our thinking."

The news couldn't have come at a better time for the school board, which came under fire at last week's City Council meeting over a silence clause in a settlement agreement reached with former CFO Winston Braham. The clause, which was signed just weeks after Braham resigned in late November, sealed Braham's lips on all matters related to district finances.

SEE SCHOOLS PAGE 10



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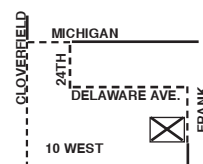
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Calendar

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2007

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Storyteller Ina Buckner at Ocean Park Branch

2601 Main St., 3:30 p.m. — 4:30 p.m.

In celebration of Black History Month, professional storyteller Ina Buckner will perform in the Community Room of the Ocean Park Library. Ms. Buckner weaves movement, songs, poetry and international tales in her storytelling. The program is free and open to the public. For more information, call (310) 392-3804.

Laughter Yoga

717 Broadway, 11 a.m. — noon

Laughter Yoga combines yoga breathing and laughter exercises to increase health and vitality, to decrease everyday stress and to promote a more positive mental attitude. This is a donation class — pay what you can (suggested donation \$5-\$10).

For more information, call (310) 471-5773.

Weekly LeTip Business Networking Group

11th Street and Wilshire Boulevard, 11:30 a.m. — 1 p.m.

Weekly networking over lunch at El Cholo to provide additional leads and referrals to your line of work. Only one person per profession may join. Call now to reserve a spot, (310) 356-7519.

Church Mice

1220 Second St., 3:15 p.m. — 4:30 p.m.

Music, art projects, Bible stories, games and snacks are offered every Thursday in the Christian Education Building of First Presbyterian Church of Santa Monica. Children 3 years of age through second grade are welcome. For more information, call Rebecca Hall at (310) 451-1303, ext. 26.

Kundalini Yoga

2309 Main St., 2 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.

This class combines the science of movement, posture, breath, sound and meditation. Donations accepted. For more information, please visit www.shiatsumassageschool.org.

Volunteers needed for Westside Special Olympics

1527 Fourth St., 6:30 p.m. — 8 p.m.

The Westside Special Olympics spring program needs volunteers. All new volunteers must attend a volunteer orientation before they can participate.

An orientation meeting will be held tonight at the Ken Edwards Center. For more information or to sign up, call (310) 458-2201, ext. 2020 or e-mail wsovolunteers@aol.com.

Nordic LAttitudes

601 Santa Monica Blvd., Main Library hours

The Santa Monica Public Library, Friends of the Library, and Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners are presenting a six-week design and discussion called Nordic LAttitudes, an educational exhibit showcasing the best in Nordic furniture and lighting design. For more information, visit www.smpl.org/nordiclattitudes.

'The Edge of Form'

2903 Santa Monica Blvd., 11 a.m. — 5 p.m.

The debut works of Joe Pinkelman, Susie McKay Krieser and Darlyn Susan Yee will be on display. For more information on the exhibit and/or the artists, visit www.TagTheArtistsGallery.com or call (310) 829-9556.

Friday, Feb. 16, 2007

Santa Monica Rotary

1250 Capri Drive, Pacific Palisades, noon — 1:30 p.m.

Guests are welcome for lunch. For more information, contact June M. Doy at (310) 922-6274 or (310) 917-3313.

'Ester Goldberg's The Big Show'

8433 Sunset Blvd., 9 p.m. — 11 p.m.

The Comedy Store presents this musical-comedy event, starring Ester Goldberg and featuring her orchestra, The Archibald Leeches. Tickets are available by dialing (323) 656-3225. Tickets are \$25, with a two-drink minimum.

Fridays at Santa Monica Bar and Grille

3321 Pico Blvd., 6 p.m. — 1:30 a.m.

Inebriatedinc.com is hosting Friday night at Santa Monica Bar and Grille. Live music until 10:30 p.m. and a DJ until closing time. For more information, visit www.inebriatedinc.com.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.





Giving peace a chance

Angelica Vasquez, of Santa Monica, signs a banner created by Alliance for Survival protesting the Iraq War. The 1,000-foot-long scroll was unfurled for the first time on Wednesday by Jwerry 'Peace Activist' Rubin at the Third Street Promenade.

Daniel Archuleta news@smdp.com

Welcome to utopia, there's lots of room

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN Is there a way to make everyone happy?

In a city where lanes are barely wide enough to accommodate cars and bicycles, city officials are desperately seeking a win-win situation — redesigning streets so that cyclists, drivers and pedestrians can all proceed with ample room and smiles on their faces.

On Wednesday, in the first step toward accomplishing such a goal, the Recreation and Parks Commission participated in a nationwide video conference on "complete streets" — thoroughfares that are safe for travel by foot, bicycle and automobile, according to Barbara McCann, a member of the National Complete Streets Coalition and a panelist in the video conference, hosted by the American Planning Association.

The panel consisted of civil engineers from both the public and private sectors, including three from the city of Boulder, Colo., where city officials were able to successfully create "complete streets," Christopher Conklin, a principal of engineering firm Vanasse Hangen Brustlin in Massachusetts where the state Highway Department adopted "complete street" design for future state projects, and McCann.

In 2000, the federal Department of Transportation also adopted a policy recommending that all new construction and reconstruction accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

"Right now, streets are considered as a means for cars," said Commissioner Kristina Deutsch. "We're (considering) redefining the

streets for our community."

The presentation included 78 PowerPoint slides, most of which showed photos of "complete streets" and so-called "incomplete streets." Many of the problem streets showed a pedestrian walking along roads that lacked a sidewalk or a bicyclist attempting to share the road.

RIGHT NOW, STREETS ARE CONSIDERED AS A MEANS FOR CARS."

Kristina Deutsch

Member, Recreation and Parks Commission

McCann showed one picture of a stretch of Highway 14 in Cary, Ill., where a young boy was struck and killed by a car several years ago while attempting to ride his bike across a bridge that didn't have a bike lane. After the community and the family expressed outrage over the incident, the state corrected the problem by creating a bike and pedestrian specific path.

"A complete street is really about avoiding this situation ... from the get go," McCann said.

In adopting a "complete street" mentality, cities will need to tweak their procedures and design manuals and retrain planners and engineers, McCann said.

In Boulder, multi-modal transportation was implemented into the Transportation

SEE COMPLETE STREETS PAGE 13

Top cop looking to take a walk

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL Looking to build on the momentum generated by the arrests last week of eight suspected gang members believed responsible for a reign of terror in Santa Monica, police Chief Timothy Jackman wants to take a walk with the community through the Pico Neighborhood.

Since joining the Santa Monica Police

Department, Jackman said he has made it a priority to venture out of his office overlooking the Civic Center downtown and pound the pavement, shaking hands with residents and business owners in an effort to build stronger relationships with the community, as well as show that Santa Monicans will not be intimidated.

During Tuesday's City Council meeting, the city's top cop extended an invitation to step out with him this evening at Virginia

Avenue Park, beginning at 6 p.m.

"One of our goals is to make everyone comfortable to be on the streets of Santa Monica," Jackman said, following a presentation to the council in which he announced major changes to the SMPD's Neighborhood Centered Policing (NCP). "I'd be more than happy to have people take a stroll through the neighborhood."

SEE NOTEBOOK PAGE 12



REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

ONE MAN'S TAKE ON CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

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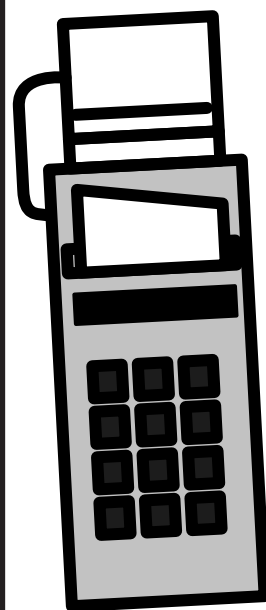
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Alarmists can hop train out of town Editor:

What a fine, funny, sad illustration of the perpetual climate of fear that is being nurtured in this country! In the article "Is Light Rail Good for Santa Monica?" (Feb. 7, page 1) a "policy analyst" for the libertarian Reason Foundation says people who board a train without a ticket are, more than others, "likely to engage in crime." Actually, the incidence of crime by all individuals on all modes of public transportation is two incidents per million passenger trips, as revealed by the Federal Transit Authority's database, mentioned in the same article.

Must we "be afraid, be very much afraid" of our fellow workers, shoppers, etc., and stay alone in our cars?

Don Fawcett
Brentwood

Mass riders threaten all that is decent Editor:

The Daily Press recently featured a piece regarding an unlicensed, uninsured parade of speeding vehicles that takes up our city streets one Friday night each month ("Friday night bikes," Feb. 2, page 1). Far from being a leisurely ride through the "village," this bratty pack of bullies poses a consistent and obvious threat to public safety. How they have been allowed to continue a choreographed paramilitary bullying of senior citizens and mothers – forcing them out of legal crosswalks, running red light after red light, snarling intersections for half-mile stretches and doing so while blasting music from amped speakers at well over 100 decibels – without attracting our police's scrutiny is a modern mystery.

They ride in a parade permit-required size formation. They ignore traffic and public safety laws. They menace drivers and pedestrians alike, and do so with a dangerously contagious sociopathy.

Truly astounding, is the number of parents with young kids in tandem – many without helmets – all teaching their kids they can break the law any time they feel like it, by dint of being part of a gang. More importantly, they are passing their absurd sense of personal entitlement on to their youngsters, while paying lip service in their homes to obeying the law and observing the rights of others.

The clock has already begun ticking towards that one defining moment, when they block the wrong driver, filled with a week full of tension, sitting behind the wheel, just trying to get home.

Can't wait until a senior citizen falls in a crosswalk in the middle of the racing pack. Can't wait to see the city try to get out of those responsibilities, now that they know of their complicity in assisting this unruly mob's continued terrorizing of motorists and pedestrians.

Ellen Drury
Santa Monica

The city's poor get sleepy too Editor:

Ordinarily, I wouldn't comment on Matthew Muzio's letter ("Wake-up call for city's homeless," Feb. 13, page 4), but the sheer silliness of it deserves some remark.

The city of Santa Monica has already passed a municipal ordinance banning "camping in public" and, several years ago, an ordinance prohibiting sleeping in entrances to buildings.

The result: People can still be observed camping in public and sleeping in doorways.

Why is this? Quite simply, when people are forced to live 24 hours a day in public view they will no doubt be observed sleeping in public view. Many Americans have learned to tolerate, and become indifferent to, the fact that millions of our citizens are forced to make their living quarters on the streets of our cities.

"Passing a law" does nothing to alleviate this willingness to put up with such extreme poverty.

As for Mr. Muzio's fatuous suggestion that Santa Monica consider becoming a gated community ... words fail me.

Rick Reutter
Santa Monica



Iconoclast Blast

Seth Barnes

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Be whine, Valentine: Misery loves company

VALENTINE'S DAY HAS PASSED. AS YOU tuck your chocolates and cards away, tend to your fresh roses and try to pronounce the name of the ridiculously expensive French restaurant you treated your sweetheart to, consider this: Feb. 15 is, in fact, the biggest day in the annals of romance. It's when everyone can start complaining about how drab and disastrous their love life is again.

As I've said before, there's nothing America loves more than a preposterous, self-indulgent whining fit. As a day of faux romantic bliss, Feb. 14 sets the table very nicely for the following day, when we can all go back to being crabby, immature spoilsports. We behave well on Valentine's Day, pulling out all the stops to show our tender affection for that special someone. And we don't feel so bad 24 hours later when we'd happily elbow Cupid out of the way if we passed him on the street.

I don't need to go into the commercial manufacturing behind Valentine's Day. It's pretty much accepted that the holiday is a plastic, insincere charade promoted by the federal government as a subsidy to the greeting card industry. But that doesn't change the fact that everyone falls into two classes: 1) those who have to do something, anything for a loved one by virtue of the unspoken Valentine's Obligation Rule (if you don't demonstrate the extent of your love on this one random day in February, you're an unfeeling, possibly abusive ogre) or 2) those who wish they were included in group 1).

As such, nobody can escape Valentine's Day. Everyone has a stake in it, and as a result, is tacitly allowed to flip the tables on their behavior the very next day. Even the too-cool-for-school couples who shrug off the festivities as another example of American corporate imperialism run amok are, in their own way, celebrating the fact that their love is so deep-rooted and true that it doesn't need to be outwardly expressed.

As you walk around the office or run errands today, take a look at everyone around you. You'll notice a healthy, slightly weary glow. It's as if everyone just completed a marathon and doesn't have to return to training and eating well for months. We all ran the stupid Valentine's race and can get back to our core competencies of eating French fries and lounging on the couch. The romantic equivalent of this is setting your relationship on cruise control, or (if you're single) jabbering on and on about

how miserable your pursuit of the opposite, or same, sex is.

And let me emphasize that the slightly jaded normalcy that rears its head every Feb. 15 isn't bad, not by any means. Because you can't live your life at the extreme of lovey-dovey bliss without risking burnout. Ask that hot and heavy couple in high school or college you know that spent every waking minute together before breaking up via nuclear meltdown. Over the long run, slow

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TO BE OUTWARDLY
EXPRESSED.**

and steady wins the race.

In many ways, in this era of reality TV and skyrocketing divorce rates, the idealistic sheen of Valentine's Day has been scrubbed off. The Internet is riddled with people perpetually looking ... and many times, it's just a fling they fancy. After all, these days, you can't be too rigid about a timetable for finding your life partner. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Life goes on and a little cynicism and old fashioned complaining can be just the right medicine to keep on keeping on. And that's why when reality kicks in on Feb. 15, known hereafter as St. WhineTine's Day, it's not necessarily a bad thing.

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GUEST COMMENTARY BY ELAN JOURNO

Make-believe policy won't slow Iranians

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION CLAIMS TO have a way to deter the militant theocracy of Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons — and thwart its ambition to bring “death to America.” Washington’s plan aims to pressure Tehran financially and psychologically. The idea is to cut off Iran’s nuclear program from banks and businesses in other nations, and to undermine the confidence of Iranian officials. The right amount of pressure, we are told, can induce Tehran to give up its nuclear program.

In fact, this policy is a pathetic sham. It is a cover-up for Washington’s abdication of the responsibility to protect American lives.

When you consider the plan in detail, it is incredible that anyone thinks it could thwart Iran. The financial “pressure” so far includes a prohibition on the Iranian Bank Sepah from completing transactions in U.S. dollars. That bank is “the financial linchpin of Iran’s missile procurement network,” according to a Treasury Department official. The ban means Bank Sepah can no longer facilitate sales of oil in dollars — but Tehran has announced that it is now selling oil in euros.

To extend its financial “pressure” overseas, Washington hopes to persuade foreign governments, international banks and companies not to lend Iran money or sell it technology or nuclear expertise. This entails groveling before the likes of France and Germany, keen appeasers of Iran, and Russia, which gutted the already toothless U.N. sanctions against Iran. Even if some companies or countries, like Japan, agree to reduce some of their trade with Iran — the regime is about to open a brand new Russian-built reactor believed capable of producing weapons-grade nuclear material, and apparently begin industrial-scale efforts to produce uranium.

Washington’s scheme also calls for undermining the self-assurance of Iran’s zealous leadership by responding “firmly” to Iranian hostility. In one notable case, four Iranian officials were detained in Iraq on suspicion of abetting insurgents, but after protests from Tehran and Baghdad, the officials were promptly released. Preposterously, this catch-and-release scheme is allegedly “precisely the type of thing that will chip away at their confidence,” as one European diplomat

approvingly confided to the New York Times. Recently, U.S. forces detained other Iranian operatives (releasing some of them) and raided an Iranian consular office in Iraq. While our troops are now permitted to kill Iranian operatives in self-defense, these measures, in sum, are but pinpricks.

How could such a feeble policy fail to encourage Iran’s belief that it is free to pursue its hostile goals with impunity?

This plan is not some mistaken or naive attempt to deal with Iran. It is an evasion of Iran’s nature and goals — an evasion of the need to eliminate the Iranian menace.

Iran’s nuclear quest (like its funding of insurgents who slaughter our troops in Iraq) is just the latest in a series of hostilities stretching back to the 1979 invasion of our embassy. To protect American lives, we must recognize Iran as an enemy stained with U.S. blood and assert ourselves militarily to make it non-threatening. This does not mean an Iraq-like crusade to bring them elections; it means protecting U.S. lives by destroying Iran’s militant regime. But that is precisely what our leaders refuse to do.

Washington has resigned itself to the emergence of a nuclear Iran (and an endless insurgency in Iraq), because our leaders do not believe we have the moral right to stop it. To do that would be self-assertive: it would mean putting America’s interests first. Today’s prevailing ethical standard condemns such action as selfish, and therefore, immoral. Washington’s moral premise rules out as illegitimate the dedicated pursuit of American self-defense. But wishing to evade the self-destructive implications of their moral principle, our leaders concoct a plan that creates the illusion of their commitment to our defense.

The squeeze-Iran policy is a ruse that must be repudiated as impractical because immoral. We, the people of America, have a moral right to pursue our happiness in freedom. We owe it to ourselves to demand that our government actually fulfill its obligation to defend our freedom — not merely pretend to.

ELAN JOURNO is a junior fellow at the Ayn Rand Institute in Irvine, Calif. The writer can be contacted at media@aynrand.org.



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This week's Q-Line questions asks:

What performance, art installation or creative work — either local or international — made the biggest impression on you this past year, and why?

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State senate approves early primary

BY DON THOMPSON
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO The state Senate on Tuesday voted to move California's 2008 presidential primary from June to February to give the most populous state a larger say in national politics.

California would join at least eight other states that have or are considering moving their presidential primaries to Feb. 5.

"Right now, we don't matter," said Sen. Jim Battin, R-Palm Desert. "Because we are the biggest state, we will have the biggest impact."

Supporters said presidential candidates typically visit California to raise money for their campaigns but spend little time courting voters because the nominations usually

are decided long before the traditional June primary.

Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata said California's diverse population also provides a better proving ground for candidates.

"Why would anyone go to Iowa in January if you could go to California?" said Perata, D-Oakland.

Even with other states holding primaries the same day, he said, "We will still be the biggest state with the most at stake."

The Feb. 5 primaries would trail the New Hampshire and South Carolina primaries and caucuses in Iowa and Nevada. But they would eclipse those states in drawing candidates and national attention, Perata said.

The Senate approved the measure on a 31-5 vote. The Assembly is likely to send the bill through committees on an accelerated

basis next week, perhaps delivering it by week's end to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who supports it. It will consider what steps to take on Friday.

California's regular primary would continue to be held in June, with the general election in November.

A February election will serve other interests in addition to raising California's profile in the presidential contest.

Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, see it as a way to extend their terms. They would like to place a measure on that ballot asking voters to modify California's term-limits law so they would be able to serve longer in their respective seats.

Perata said such self-interest is inherent in politics. He rejected the idea of making

term-limit changes applicable to future officeholders, saying the state needs to keep experienced politicians in office.

"I believe there's a real problem with a lack of continuity here," Perata told reporters during a news conference before the Senate session.

Schwarzenegger has his own reasons for supporting a February ballot. He wants to reform how the state draws its legislative and congressional districts to make races more competitive. If an election were held in February, the ballot is likely to include a redistricting measure in addition to one seeking to extend term-limits.

The governor has taken no position on whether term limits should be eased, including whether he should be able to seek a third term, said Schwarzenegger's spokesman.

President Vilsack would slash greenhouse gases

BY SCOTT LINDLAW
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO Democratic presidential contender Tom Vilsack offered up a plan Tuesday to wean the nation off fossil fuels and roll back greenhouse gas emissions to a fraction of current levels.

The former Iowa governor said he would force new power plants to emit no carbon dioxide — one of the greenhouse gases blamed for rising earth temperatures — by 2020. Vilsack would cap U.S. carbon dioxide

emissions and create a credit-trading program to meet the cap.

"Energy security is the single most important issue facing America today," Vilsack said in a speech to the Commonwealth Club here. "It affects us every minute of every day. It affects our health, our personal finances, our economy and our quality of life."

Vilsack set out a seven-part plan for achieving his goal to "dramatically reduce energy imports and dramatically reduce carbon emissions."

His administration would:

— Seek a 75 percent reduction in greenhouse gases produced by the United States by 2050, principally through a mandatory "cap and trade" program among businesses and other institutions. Several of the global warming bills introduced in the new Democrat-controlled Congress, as well as measures advanced by other presidential contenders, would do just that — but some would set interim goals as well.

President Bush made a similar pledge to cap carbon emissions in his 2000 campaign,

but broke it in 2001. Bush continues to oppose mandatory emission caps, arguing that industry through development of new technologies can deal with the problem at less cost.

It will require all automotive fuel producers to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide generated by that fuel by 1 percent a year for 10 years.

It also provides a 25-cent-per-gallon federal tax credit for the production of ethanol, an alternative fuel, from so-called cellular organic fiber.

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Gabor's husband to challenge custody

BY NOAKI SCHWARTZ
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES Zsa Zsa Gabor once said: "Husbands are like fires. They go out when unattended."

Her flamboyant husband, Prince Frederic von Anhalt, says he did more than just go out. He claims he carried on a decade-long affair with Anna Nicole Smith and may be the father of her baby daughter.

Von Anhalt's lawyer Chris Fields said his client would file court papers Thursday seeking a paternity test.

Von Anhalt's out-of-left-field assertion has been met largely with disbelief and boosted curiosity about the man who, the British press reports, may have paid a bankrupt princess for his title. He denies those reports.

Von Anhalt is also known for making outrageous statements about the advantages of being rich, laying claim to a German castle and suing Viagra for leaving him unable to have sex unless he takes the drug. He later dropped the case.

Even his age has been questioned. He says he's 59; the German press puts him in his mid 70s.

Since making his claim the day after Smith died, von Anhalt has appeared on a number of news shows. Speaking in a thick German accent and wearing a ring that resembles a crown, he sometimes played it coy and other times gushed with details.

During an appearance Tuesday on the Fox News Channel, von Anhalt agreed to Bill O'Reilly's request that he come back and take a lie detector test on the show.

Bonnie Stern, the sister of Howard K. Stern, who is listed as the father of Smith's baby on her birth certificate, calls von Anhalt's assertions "nauseating."

"She didn't even know him," Bonnie Stern says.

Ronald Jason Palmieri, the longtime attorney for Gabor and von Anhalt, says: "I believe the odds of him ending up to be the parent of this child are remote to none."

Palmieri, who isn't working on the paternity matter, also says he spoke with Gabor about the situation.

"She said, 'Ron dahling, do you believe this? It's so embarrassing,'" the lawyer recounts, mimicking Gabor's famous Hungarian accent.

I BELIEVE THE ODDS OF HIM ENDING UP TO BE THE PARENT OF THIS CHILD ARE REMOTE TO NONE."

Ronald Jason Palmieri
longtime attorney for Gabor and von Anhalt

Born Hans Robert Lichtenberg, von Anhalt says he grew up in a poor German family and was abused by his policeman-father and pushed to become a military officer. Over the years he worked as a bank clerk, screenwriter, sauna manager and soccer player.

"I had a very hard childhood," he says, recalling how he sought escape in movies and newspaper articles about Hollywood celebrities, including Gabor, then a sex symbol.

To hear von Anhalt tell it, he gained his royal title through an act of kindness in the late 1950s.

Marine deal drops murder charge

BY THOMAS WATKINS
Associated Press Writer

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. A Marine pleaded guilty Tuesday to conspiracy and kidnapping in the seizure of an Iraqi man last April but denied murdering the victim, a charge that will be dismissed if the defendant completes terms of a plea bargain.

Lance Cpl. Robert Pennington, 22, told a court-martial he knew at the time of the kidnapping that it was wrong, but he participated nonetheless because he and his fellow Marines were sick of suspected insurgents slipping through the justice system.

Pennington, of Mukilteo, Wash., entered the two guilty pleas under a pretrial agreement. Through his military attorney, the serviceman also pleaded not guilty to murder, larceny and housebreaking. Those charges will be dismissed, provided Pennington sticks to the terms in a pretrial agreement requiring him to testify for the government and remain on good behavior.

Military judge Col. Steven Folsom accepted the pleas and found Pennington guilty.

Pennington described the events leading up to the kidnapping and, ultimately, the killing of Hashim Ibrahim Awad last April in the rural town of Hamdania in Al Anbar province.

Pennington, the squad's radio operator, said he was a willing player in a plan hatched by squad leader Sgt. Lawrence G. Hutchins

III to kidnap and kill a suspected insurgent. Hutchins, of Plymouth, Mass., is awaiting trial on murder and other charges. His lawyer has said he does not think Hutchins did anything wrong.

Pennington testified that the squad agreed that if they could not get hold of that insurgent, named by Pennington as Saleh Gowad, they would seize and kill someone else in an attempt to "send a message to the insurgency."

"If we could not catch Saleh Gowad or his brothers, it was another step down to kill another military aged male in the town," Pennington said. "We felt that capturing them was an exercise in futility ... they would just be released a few days later."

The squad was unable to kidnap Gowad because an elderly woman confronted them by his house, Pennington said, so the troops moved down the road to Awad's house.

Pennington testified that he and three other troops lead Awad from his home. When Awad asked them what was happening, they told him that they were taking him to Abu Ghraib prison for the night and that he would be returned home the next day, Pennington said.

In describing the killing, Pennington said he helped force Awad into a hole by the side of a road and tried to silence the protesting victim by holding his hand over his mouth.

Pennington said he did not fire his weapon at Awad.

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Migrant deaths up

Pima County study cites funnel effect for 20-fold increase in mortality rate

BY ARTHUR H. ROTSTEIN
Associated Press Writer

TUCSON, Ariz. A "funnel effect" that moved illegal immigrant traffic from urban areas in California and Texas into Arizona's forbidding deserts dramatically increased the number of deaths, a study released Wednesday concludes.

In studying all deaths of illegal immigrants examined between 1990 and 2005 by the Pima County (Tucson) medical examiner's office, the Binational Migration Institute said there was a 20-fold increase in deaths over that period, "creating a major public health and humanitarian crisis in the deserts of Arizona."

The medical examiner's office examined and processed 927 recovered bodies between 1990 and 2005, according to the institute, which is part of the University of Arizona's Mexican American Studies and Research Center.

Last year, the U.S. Government Accountability Office said deaths in Arizona accounted for at least 78 percent of the increased southwestern border deaths between 1990 and 2003.

Experts including the GAO "now explain this crisis as a direct consequence of U.S. immigration control policies initially instituted in the mid-1990s," the report said — referring to "prevention-through-deterrence" measures that funneled illegal immigrants "into Arizona's remote, harsh geography."

For several years, Arizona has been the focal point for illegal immigration traffic. Starting in 1994, federal authorities began increasing Border Patrol resources, starting with Operation Hold the Line in El Paso, Texas, then expanding to Operation Gatekeeper at San Diego.

Fencing, additional agents and other infrastructure was added at other points in California and Texas, designed to make illegal crossings more difficult in those areas and to discourage immigrant traffic by pushing or funneling crossings into Arizona's more desert and mountain areas.

The report cites a 2000 newspaper interview in which former Immigration and Naturalization Commissioner Doris Meissner said: "We did believe that geography would

be an ally to us ... It was our sense that the number of people crossing the border through Arizona would go down to a trickle, once people realized what it's like."

In 1990, the Pima County medical examiner's office investigated nine known so-called "unauthorized border-crosser" deaths, and the annual average number between 1990 and 1999 was about 14 recovered bodies, the report said.

But the average between 2000 and 2005 reached 160 bodies sent to the medical examiner's office.

Though the funneling effort began in 1994, "it really didn't start taking effect in the Arizona desert until 1999," said Melissa McCormick, the institute's senior research specialist.

"In 2005, after the 'funnel effect' was in full swing, the Pima County medical examiner's office examined and attempted to identify 201 known UBC deaths," the report said.

More than a quarter of those who died could not be identified by the medical examiner's office and other U.S. and Mexican agencies, according to the report.

Critics of the federal strategy have contended for years that the policy has resulted in increased deaths. McCormick said researchers went back through reports to tabulate totals.

Giuliani tells farmers he will be old farm hand by time of vote

BY OLIVIA MUNOZ
Associated Press Writer

TULARE, Calif. — It didn't take a soil scientist to detect that former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani was on unfamiliar turf Tuesday at the 40th World Ag Expo.

Dressed in a black suit, sweater vest and penny loafers, Giuliani joked about his lack of agricultural know-how at the farm equipment show where even the crowned and

vegetables.

Inventors, salesmen and farmers from around the globe flock to the fair to peddle mammoth harvesting machines, crop insurance and other products to an estimated 100,000 visitors. So it was a natural stop for Giuliani as he makes his way across the country reaching out to a cross-section of voters.

In recent weeks, Giuliani has also sought out donors and elected officials who know him mostly as the former federal prosecutor who rose to national prominence following the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks.

He and Sen. John McCain of Arizona lead in popularity polls for the GOP nomination, well ahead of former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, who officially entered the 2008 presidential race Tuesday.

Giuliani told attendees that he supports a push by California and several other states to move their 2008 presidential primaries from June to February.

The proposed change to a Feb. 5 primary would allow him to compete outside of early voting conservative states where his stands on gays, guns and abortion have been viewed as too liberal. And an early primary could benefit a candidate with name recognition in a state the size of California, where candidates must reach millions of voters.

Though clearly out of his urban element, Giuliani sought to reassure growers he had their interests in mind.

"The American farmer is the most innovative in the world," he said. "You feed us. You take care of us. Each of us kind of helps the other."

Some of those who took the time to listen to Giuliani's keynote speech were at least impressed that he showed up even if he didn't know much about their field of work.

"A big-city New Yorker has enough interest to come here to the community and talk about the woes of the nation and about solutions," said Don Gregory, a former dairy farmer from Tulare. "I respect that."

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TAKE CARE OF US. EACH OF US
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Rudy Giuliani
former New York City

glittery Dairy Princess wore jeans and boots. But he vowed to be well-versed on the subject by the end of his campaign for president.

"This is not an area where I claim to be an expert, but I do understand how agriculture is critical to our nation," said Giuliani, who said he is seeking the Republican nomination. "If you're from Brooklyn, this a very good thing for you to see."

The farm show is an annual event in the San Joaquin Valley, the nation's most productive farmland that is home to dairies, fruit and nut orchards, vineyards and fields of

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Military recruits criminals to fight

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON More recruits with criminal records, including felony convictions, are being allowed to join the Army and Marine Corps as the armed services cope with a dwindling pool of volunteers during wartime.

The military routinely grants waivers to take in recruits who have criminal records, medical problems or low aptitude scores that would otherwise disqualify them from service. Most are moral waivers, which include some felonies, misdemeanors, and traffic and drug offenses.

Defense Department statistics show that the number of Army and Marine recruits needing waivers for felonies and serious misdemeanors, including minor drug offenses, has grown since 2003. Some recruits may get more than one waiver.

The Army granted more than double the number of waivers for felonies and misdemeanors in 2006 than it did in 2003.

The number of felony waivers granted by the Army grew from 411 in 2003 to 901 in 2006, according to the Pentagon, or about one in 10 of the moral waivers approved that year. Other misdemeanors, which could be petty theft, writing a bad check or some assaults, jumped from about 2,700 to more than 6,000 in 2006. The minor crimes represented more than three-quarters of the moral waivers granted by the Army in 2006, up from more than half in 2003.

Army and Defense Department officials defended the waiver program as a way to admit young people who may have made a mistake early in life but have overcome past behavior. And they said about two-thirds of the waivers granted by the Marines are for drug use, because they require a waiver if someone has been convicted once for marijuana use.

Lawmakers and other observers say they

are concerned that the struggle to fill the military ranks in this time of war has forced the services to lower their moral standards.

"The data is crystal clear. Our armed forces are under incredible strain and the only way that they can fill their recruiting quotas is by lowering their standards," said Rep. Marty Meehan, D-Mass., who has been working to get additional data from the Pentagon. "By lowering standards, we are endangering the rest of our armed forces and sending the wrong message to potential recruits across the country."

... THE ONLY WAY THAT THEY CAN FILL THEIR RECRUITING QUOTAS IS BY LOWERING THEIR STANDARDS."

Marty Meehan
Rep. D-Mass

Army spokesman Paul Boyce said Tuesday he is concerned because the Pentagon data differs from Army numbers. But overall, he said, "anything that is considered a risk or a serious infraction of the law is given the highest level of review."

"Our goal is to make certain that we recruit quality young men and women who can keep America defended against its enemies," Boyce said.

The data was obtained through a federal information request and released by the California-based Michael D. Palm Center, a think tank that studies military issues.

In recent years the military has also relaxed other standards for recruitment.

Nevada town strikes down English-only ordinance

By the Associated Press

PAHRUMP, Nev. Town board members have struck down an ordinance that set restrictions on flying foreign flags, denied benefits to undocumented immigrants and declared English the official language of this growing desert town.

The controversial measure, which briefly put Pahrump in the midst of the national immigration debate, was enacted in November but never enforced.

"I think it's clear that the main purpose and effect of this bill was to spread fear throughout the community, particularly the immigrant community of Pahrump," said Lee Rowland, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union, which called the measure unconstitutional.

Board member Laurayne Murray said Tuesday she hoped the ordinance's repeal will allow the community and the board to focus on more relevant matters.

"We have way more urgent business to address in this community," she said. "We are

going to create our reputation in the world in a more positive way."

Murray is the only board member who voted on the ordinance and its repeal. The law's chief backer, retired government worker Michael Miraglia, and three other members have since left public office.

Miraglia said Wednesday that he would continue to advocate for similar immigration measures, and that he hoped his English-language ordinance would become a statewide ballot measure.

"Somebody out there must be able to stand up for Americans," he said.

Hispanics in Politics President Fernando Romero said he believes the repeal indicates that most people in Pahrump, a town 60 miles southwest of Las Vegas, do not support measures that target immigrants.

"It's a few people who happen to get into a position where they can manipulate the situation," Romero said.

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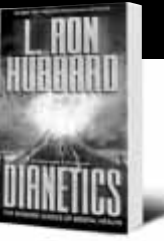
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District: There's plenty to go around

FROM SCHOOLS PAGE 1

Rumors began to surface that Braham resigned because of a disagreement with the board over the 5 percent salary increase.

"The main thing is it puts to rest the issue of his resignation," said School Board Vice President Oscar de la Torre on Wednesday. "It was not a financial matter at all."

"It was a personnel matter." If Braham did resign over a personnel matter, the reasons behind his departure could remain a mystery, since such issues are protected under the law.

Last week, several City Council members requested that the two boards hold a joint meeting together with Braham to discuss the circumstances surrounding his throwing in the towel. Those discussions are no longer necessary, according to de la Torre.

"I think this report puts to rest the notion that our former chief financial officer was

right and we were wrong," de la Torre said.

So why all the fuss with the original AB1200?

"When he (Braham) did it, it was too preliminary," de la Torre said. "It wasn't all well thought out."



THE MAIN THING IS IT PUTS TO REST THE ISSUE OF HIS RESIGNATION."

Oscar de la Torre, Vice President, Board of Education

In exactly one month, the Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association will finally get what it's been waiting for all these years — the school board is expected to approve the contract.

"I'm very pleased to see the teachers will be receiving a much deserved and long overdue salary increase," said Harry Keiley, president of the teachers association.

NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET

A highly touted hire from the Glendale Unified School District, where he held the same title, the board's new chief financial officer, Stephen Hodgson, is expected to introduce a series of talking points at

tonight's meeting on how to direct the budget formulation process for the 2007-08 school year.

Hodgson, who began work at SMMUSD on Feb. 1, was not available for comment on Tuesday.

"He outlines the process that he would like to take us through," Talarico said. "It's a process he has used in the past and wants to

familiarize the board with it."

In the discussion item report, Hodgson recommends several areas that the board should explore when developing the upcoming budget — review the district's vision statement and a document guiding future budgetary decisions. The board should also accept that budget and staffing reductions will be necessary, and explore ways to lessen the financial impact of declining enrollment, which has been caused by the district's moratorium on non-district residing students.

Also suggested in the discussion item is a three-year projection on budgetary matters.

"It's never too early to start those conversations," Talarico said. "We're well within the traditional time frame for preparation."

melodyh@smdp.com

✉ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

Oregon appeals court orders shorter sentence for SUV arsonist

BY JEFF BARNARD

Associated Press Environmental Writer

GRANTS PASS, Ore. The Oregon Court of Appeals on Wednesday ordered a shorter sentence for a man serving 23 years in prison after admitting he set fire to three sport utility vehicles to protest the contributions of gas-guzzling vehicles to global warming.

The appeals court sent the case of Jeff Luers of Eugene back to Lane County District Court for resentencing, saying the

trial judge erred by imposing sentences on the arson and attempted arson counts consecutively, rather than merging them together.

Luers was convicted in June 2001 after he admitted setting an early morning fire at a Eugene car dealership in June 2000 that destroyed a pickup truck and damaged two other trucks. He did not admit to putting an incendiary device on an oil delivery truck in Eugene, but was convicted in that case, too, and sent to the Oregon State Penitentiary.

Luers' sentence gained widespread attention, with groups around the country raising money to help him.

The city of Eugene's Human Rights Commission wrote a letter urging his sentence be reduced, noting similar crimes "have not been met with such harsh sentences."

His co-defendant in the case was sentenced to five years after agreeing to plead guilty.

A self-proclaimed anarchist, Luers has denied being a member of the radical Earth

Liberation Front, but acknowledged supporting the group's goals and tactics.

In recent months, 12 other people have pleaded guilty to federal charges they were part of an Earth Liberation Front cell based in Eugene that was responsible for 20 arsons around the West from 1996 to 2001. Sentencing in those cases is expected this spring, with prosecutors recommending terms of five to 15 years.

✉ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com



This Is No "Bull"

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the energy"



City workers get back to work

With the budget back in black, postponed projects can resume

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE From freshly paved streets and wider sidewalks to a new Civic Center parking structure and an \$80 million Big Blue Bus facility, City Hall is resuming several infrastructure projects after putting them on hold in recent years to save money, city officials said.

With the budget in the black, a new emphasis has been placed on improving services to residents and properly maintaining the more than 400 buildings owned by City Hall, all the while continuing to invest in the future with projects like the public beach club at 415 Pacific Coast Highway and storm water diversion measures along Ocean Avenue to protect the Santa Monica Bay for future generations.

Then there are the projects people won't see, such as replacing street and traffic light

circuits, water mains, and the eventual construction of a water treatment plant near one of the city's wells to help clean water tainted by a fuel additive that seeped into the ground.

While those projects may not be quite as visible, they are equally important, said Craig Perkins, director of environmental and public works management.

"People notice that the street lights keep working, but they really don't think about the work that goes into making sure they stay lit," Perkins said. "That's not sexy like a new park or (recreation) center, but it's something the city needs to invest in equally."

For instance, along Main Street and in downtown, many of the street and traffic light circuits are old and are more susceptible to failing, which might not only create a traffic nightmare, but could also result in accidents.

"These old circuits are like Christmas lights," Perkins said. "If one light goes, they all go. The public needs a more reliable system and we are working to provide that."

City Hall is also working with residents along Yale Street to narrow the street and widen parkways, with residents picking up the cost for construction. The Airport Park and improvements to Airport Avenue are

also close to completion. The council recently approved a contract to renovate Reed Park, adding new landscaping and lighting.

But doing so can be difficult, especially when construction costs are soaring by the minute. Delaying a project by a year or even a few months can result in millions in additional costs. If the council puts street resurfacing or the replacement of air conditioners

underground. If the council is lucky, it may have extra, one-time funds to work with and then it becomes a question of which project takes priority.

"A good example are streetscape improvements along Lincoln and Santa Monica boulevards — two of Santa Monica's least beautiful streets," Perkins said. "Those are two very expensive projects, so if there were



IF ONE LIGHT GOES, THEY ALL GO. THE PUBLIC NEEDS A MORE RELIABLE SYSTEM AND WE ARE WORKING TO PROVIDE THAT."

Craig Perkins, director of environmental and public works management

on hold, it can easily get behind and will have a difficult time catching up.

"We have a lot of work that needs to be done, but hasn't been done, and all the while costs are increasing," Perkins said. "We are sort of getting squeezed between a rock and a hard place."

Every year there is roughly \$15 million budgeted for capital improvement projects, much of which goes towards ongoing needs such as burying electric and telephone lines

\$20 million available for one-time money, would it be better to improve or beautify Lincoln (Boulevard) or invest in Memorial Park or the old Fisher Lumber site?

These are policy choices that will have to be discussed."

kevinh@smdp.com

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■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

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The sequins squad

Christine Chang, news@smdp.com

(Clockwise from top left) Valentine's Day with the Oceannaires begins with members determining their schedule for the day; Member Nick Rogers pumps himself up for the first performance; Bowties are at the ready; President Jerry Walker untangles balloons inside the group's car; In addition to serenading in person, the Oceannaires also serenade via cell phone; Kathy Swope thanks the Oceannaires for serenading her inside her place of work on Wednesday.

Santa Monica hedge wars begin anew

FROM NOTEBOOK PAGE 3

CHANGING DIRECTION

In one of his first major moves since arriving, Jackman is looking to reassign officers as part of an assessment of NCP. His goal is to give patrol officers more responsibility and hold them more accountable for the level of crime in their service areas. Jackman also hopes officers will be able to interact more with residents and business owners so that they get to know one another on a more intimate level instead of the officers only speaking to those they serve when an incident unfolds.

"Our patrol officers want to be and need to be actively engaged within the community," Jackman said Tuesday, as scores of residents and police officers looked on. "Our community wants to not only see these men and women who patrol their neighborhoods, but they want to get to know them. This holds true for our officers; for we too want to get to know our community so that we can better serve them."

"There is no better way to develop trust

— obviously a two-sided issue — than developing a personal relationship," Jackman added.

The chief is currently evaluating SMPD's patrol plan and the distribution levels for all personnel as part of a realignment in which patrol officers will be assigned and accountable for specific geographic boundaries. Jackman said he believes he will have a formal plan completed by July 1.

In the meantime, he will be walking the beat, and he hopes others will tag along.

"It is said that the greatest impediment to criminal conduct is the certainty of capture," Jackman said. "If everyone in the community works together to identify and bring to justice those who would come here to hurt people, we will end the violence that much sooner."

"I think we have moved much closer to that goal in the last month."

A LITTLE THANKSGIVING

Council members praised the chief and his foot soldiers for arresting the eight suspected gang members believed responsible

for the murders last year of 15-year-old Eddie Lopez and 20-year-old Miguel Martin. Following his presentation, council members, city staff and roughly 50 to 60 residents — most of whom were there to talk about hedges — gave the SMPD a standing ovation.

"I want to say on behalf of the entire council and the community that we have received an outpouring of people expressing their appreciation for not only the arrests, but an understanding and appreciation for the hard work your department put in to make these arrests possible," said Mayor Richard Bloom.

HEDGE WARS: THE SAGA

From there, the meeting took a dramatic turn from community unity to backyard brawling. While no physical blows were levied, there were plenty of verbal jabs as 47 neighbors squared off over the city's wall, fence and hedge ordinance that has been a source of contention for the last three years.

Many complained that the ordinance, meant to rectify decades of inaction by City Hall to properly enforce an existing law reg-

ulating the heights of walls, fences, and hedges, has done nothing to address their concerns. Bamboo, cypress trees and other hedges have continued to grow beyond reasonable heights, blocking out the sun, allowing mold to grow, asthma to worsen and depression to sit in, some residents said.

Others were in front of the council fighting for their hedges to remain. They were upset that city staff was tampering with what they felt was a nearly flawless law that seemed to satisfy the overwhelming majority of people who took the time to take photos and document the heights of their hedges. They did not want the council to go back on their word and do away with "grandparenting," which allowed most hedges to remain at their current heights.

After more than two hours of talks, the council decided to extend the ordinance as is, but instructed staff to return soon with a revised version.

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for Feb. 27.

kevinh@smdp.com

Christine Chang news@smdp.com

WIGGLE ROOM: A bicyclist makes his way across Ocean Avenue on Wednesday. City officials are engaged in a program to render Santa Monica thoroughfares 'complete streets,' with ample room for automobiles, cyclists and pedestrians.

City officials look to cut wide swath

FROM COMPLETE STREETS PAGE 3

Master Plan in 1996, when it was revised for the first time. The city has encouraged alternative modes of transportation to its residents and visitors by introducing the "Eco Pass," an unlimited bus pass. There are currently 60,000 of the bus passes in circulation. Eco Pass users are nine times more likely to ride the bus, said Randall Rutsch of the city of Boulder.

The presentation from the Boulder panelists centered on the Broadway corridor, where they successfully implemented "complete streets." Photos of the corridor showed a street safely shared by pedestrians, bicyclists and cars.

In designing a "complete street," pedestrian walkways should be at least five feet wide and clear of any obstructions. Bicycle lanes should have at least a width of 40 inches and a 100 inch vertical operating space, according to Conklin. As for drivers, the lanes should be designed with the largest vehicle — usually a big rig — in mind.

"Complete streets" also entails additional landscaping.

On a busy stretch of Ocean Park Boulevard, between Lincoln Boulevard and Main Street, residents of the corridor have sought more greenery from the city, even going as far as planting their own trees several years ago.

Sitting with his laptop open, Bob Taylor, the co-chairman of the Ocean Park Boulevard Improvement Committee, glanced at a Google Earth satellite image of the city.

With his cursor, he pointed at the green parts of the city — North of Montana and Sunset Park. Ocean Park, on the other hand, appeared to have a dreary grayish feel.

When Taylor showed the Google Earth image to city officials, they thought he had intentionally colored in parts North of Montana, Taylor said laughing.

But the dangers posed by the wide intersections, which unintentionally invite high-speed traveling, are no laughing matter.

melodyh@smdp.com

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■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

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Do they know about you?

Premium chocolates make pot even sweeter

BY LISA LEFF

Associated Press Writer

BERKELEY, Calif. Americans' love of chocolate has become a dark and bittersweet affair, and it took a former vintner to make it so.

John Scharffenberger and Robert Steinberg launched the first U.S. chocolate manufacturing company in half a century, drawing heavily on Scharffenberger's refined palate and his past as a maker of sparkling wines.

Together, they set out to do for dark chocolate what fellow Californian Robert Mondavi had done for wine — demystify, democratize and domesticate it.

Call it kismet, uncanny timing or creative chemistry, but in the 11 years since co-founding Scharffen Berger Chocolate Maker they have watched the public's appetite for gourmet chocolate expand from a Valentine's Day extravagance to an everyday indulgence.

"We've gone through a food revolution in this country," said Scharffenberger. Just as Americans have become more sophisticated about wine, whole-bean coffee, artisan cheeses and other products that once were the luxury of certified foodies have been mainstreamed to the masses.

"The one thing that remained to be done was chocolate, and that's what we hit on," Scharffenberger said.

Like the label of a fine wine, the wrapper

on a Scharffen Berger chocolate tells you exactly what's inside. It was the first U.S. chocolatier to feature the cacao count prominently on its wrappers — the higher the number, the darker and more bitter the chocolate. And the source of the beans is also noted, for those who like knowing whether their chocolate got its start in Madagascar, Ecuador, Ghana or Peru.

mous with American chocolate, has invested heavily in premium chocolate, showing it is more than a fad, she said. Besides buying Scharffen Berger 1 1/2 years ago, the company has introduced its own line of premium chocolate bars and late last year purchased Ashland, Ore.-based Dagoba Organic Chocolate.

Between 2003 and 2005, U.S. sales of pre-

mium chocolate has increasingly become a selling point. And consumers have also responded to manufacturers' efforts to tout their relationships with growers in the developing countries where cacao typically comes from, she said.

The quality and quantity of cacao in a bar or bonbon is what distinguishes fine chocolate from the coating on a Snicker's, according to Scharffenberger, who personally oversees the blending of 30 varieties of beans that go into the company's products and visits the ranches in Guatemala, Madagascar and other countries where it secures supplies.

"We aren't creating flavors that are earth-shattering, just delicious," he said.

The Food and Drug Administration requires milk chocolate to contain at least 10 percent cacao, but Scharffen Berger's milk chocolate contains a whopping 41 percent. Its darkest dark chocolate, 82 percent.

Before Scharffenberger and Steinberg set up shop, California already was home to plenty of chocolate makers — both high-end and pedestrian. Besides Ghirardelli, they include Glendale-based Nestle USA, Guittard Chocolate Co. in Burlingame, Joseph Schmidt Confections, which also was bought out by Hershey's last year, and See's Candies in South San Francisco.

The growth has been steady enough that by 2000 California had edged out Pennsylvania as the top chocolate market.

I CAN'T AFFORD A MINK AND A DIAMOND, BUT I CAN AFFORD A PIECE OF REALLY GOOD CHOCOLATE."

Marcia Mogelonsky, analyst with the market research firm Mintel International

Scharffen Berger bars now are prominently displayed in the checkout lines of grocers like Trader Joe's, Andronico's and Whole Foods.

Yet venerable players like Reading, Pa.-based Godiva Chocolatier Inc., part of The Campbell Soup Co., and Ghirardelli Chocolate Co., now headquartered in San Leandro, jump-started the trend, said Marcia Mogelonsky, an analyst with the market research firm Mintel International. They popularized fancy chocolates with upscale, single-serving packaging, wider distribution and savvy marketing, she said.

Even The Hershey Co., the name synony-

mium chocolates went from \$1.4 billion to \$1.79 billion, according to Mogelonsky. While it still represents only a fraction of the overall \$15.7 billion chocolate market, the growth rate for the good stuff has been much faster — 28 percent over the three-year period compared to annual rates of 2 to 3 percent for the industry as a whole.

"People were ready for a change," said Mogelonsky. She relates the trend to Americans' growing self-indulgence.

"I can't afford a mink and a diamond, but I can afford a piece of really good chocolate," she said.

As with wine and coffee, the origin of

Eclipse Aviation boss challenges industry

BY TIM KORTE

Associated Press Writer

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. Vern Raburn hopes to stir up an industry that typically doesn't like to be nudged, let alone shaken.

One of the first employees hired at Microsoft Corp. when the software heavy-weight started in the 1970s, Raburn joined his old buddy, Bill Gates, in cultivating a revolution that changed the world's business tools.

Yet after nearly 10 years as president and chief executive of fledgling aircraft manufacturer Eclipse Aviation, Raburn has discovered cutting-edge innovation isn't always embraced in his new industry — for good reason.

"In the world of general aviation, change is viewed as bad," the 56-year-old Raburn said during an interview with The Associated Press. "Like with medicine, the cost of a mistake is high — human life."

As such, the aviation industry tends to hold strongly to time-tested products and philosophies. And that's the environment where the straight-talking Raburn is trying to sell his flashy Eclipse 500.

"In venture capital, failure is part of the culture. Failure has never been part of the culture in aviation," he said.

It's among the wave of very light jets that have been dubbed "SUVs of the skies." Supporters say the aircraft will radically change the way people travel.

Eclipse delivered its first customer-ordered aircraft last week, and 39 more are on the assembly line at the company's Albuquerque plant. Raburn said Eclipse expects to sell 500 jets this year.

Cessna Aircraft Co. delivered its first light jet in November. Brazil's Embraer SA, an

alliance by Honda Motor Co., and Piper Aircraft Inc. are seeking certification and deliveries in coming years.

Such airplanes weigh less than 10,000 pounds. They have two engines, generally seat five to seven passengers and can fly at higher altitudes than traditional piston-driven or turboprop airplanes. And they're a lot cheaper than other private jets.

The Eclipse 500 sells for \$1.5 million, about half as much as the most inexpensive business jets currently in service.

IN THE WORLD OF GENERAL AVIATION, CHANGE IS VIEWED AS BAD."

Vern Raburn

President and chief executive of fledgling aircraft manufacturer Eclipse Aviation

Raburn predicts the VLJs, as they're also known, will expand jet travel for small businesses and families in a way that never has been accessible until now.

But is there really a demand for these aircraft?

"There's always been a presumption of a market, a belief that if you can make airplanes affordable enough, that if you build it they will come," said Dr. Janet Bednarek, a University of Dayton professor who studies aviation history.

"How big the market is, that's the big question. It's never been as big, at least historically, as the dreamers have dreamed."

Raburn agrees, saying his gamble is rooted in his belief such a demand exists.



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BASKETBALL

Bruins return

UCLA's Collison, Mata expected back in lineup this week

BY BETH HARRIS
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES Injuries to point guard Darren Collison and center Lorenzo Mata proved costly in UCLA's weekend loss at West Virginia. Now, the fifth-ranked Bruins are waiting to see if their starters will be in the lineup for this week's road trip to Arizona.

The Bruins (21-3, 10-2) head to the desert with a half-game lead over Washington State (10-3) in the Pac-10 race. They play Thursday at Arizona State, winless in 13 conference games, and Saturday at No. 19 Arizona (8-5).

"We're in crunch time now," UCLA coach Ben Howland said.

Collison said his left shoulder was feeling better Tuesday, when he spent 20 minutes shooting but had no contact in practice.

"I can't really extend my left arm all the way, but they said I shot the ball pretty well," he said. "I'm not going to be 100 percent Thursday, but if I'm near 100 percent, then I'm going to feel comfortable playing."

Howland said Collison's status would be decided before tip-off Thursday.

Collison injured his shoulder in the second half of last Wednesday's 70-65 victory over Southern California. He believes it happened when he ran into the basket support after getting fouled.

"It's a lot better than it was last week," he said, explaining the pain was so bad after the USC game that he couldn't use his left hand.

Collison didn't play in UCLA's 70-65 loss at West Virginia last Saturday, giving freshman Russell Westbrook his first start. It was a rocky one, with a rattled Westbrook turning the ball over and missing shots in front of the loud road crowd.

"Without Darren, we are in a little bit of chaos," leading scorer Arron Afflalo said.

If Collison can't go Thursday, Westbrook likely would replace him again.

"I have faith in Russell if he does get that opportunity, he's going to be successful," Collison said. "I told him to keep his head up. It was a team thing. We all played bad."

Mata sat out the second half Saturday because of a sore left hip.

"I feel much better," he said. "I feel confident I'll be ready."

Arizona State would seem to be an easy game for the Bruins, who won 60-50 at Pauley Pavilion last month. But they fell behind by 11 points to start the game against the Sun Devils' zone.

The Sun Devils (6-18) had a pair of four-point losses to Oregon and Oregon State last week. Before that, they lost to Washington State by one and by five to Washington.

"They have nothing to lose," Collison said. "ASU is still a good team. They brought everyone down to the wire."

The game will reunite Collison and his high school teammate Jeff Pendergraph, the Pac-10's second-leading rebounder who is shooting 55 percent from the floor.

"I spoke with Jeff and he was asking how I was feeling," Collison said. "You look forward to the game a lot more than other games."

It also pairs brothers Josh Shipp of UCLA and Jerren Shipp of ASU. In their other meeting, Josh finished with 12 points and Jerren eight.

"This game has me very nervous," Howland said.

Mushers begin shipping dog chow

BY MARY PEMBERTON
Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE, Alaska Stan Hecker hoisted a 40-pound bag of dog food up on one shoulder and lumbered off where he deposited it on a pallet to be shipped to one of the checkpoints along the 1,100-mile Iditarod Trail.

For Hecker, a 57-year-old retired labor relations practitioner from East Lansing, Mich., making the trek to Alaska for the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race has become a decade-long tradition.

Hecker was one of about 30 volunteers who assembled at a loading dock Wednesday close to the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport for the dog food drops — a sure sign that the world's longest sled dog race is just a few weeks away.

"It became a vacation for me," said Hecker, who plans to spend 45 days in Alaska. "It's fun."

As of Wednesday, 83 teams will compete in the 2007 Iditarod, set to start March 3 from downtown Anchorage. Most of the mushers are from Alaska, with Washington, Montana, Wisconsin, Vermont, Colorado, Wyoming, Ohio and Michigan also represented.

Mushers also are coming from Canada, Norway, Germany, Argentina and Serbia.

Hecker helped the mushers as they backed their trucks up to the loading dock to deliver more than 2,000 pounds of dog food

each, divided into bags with the musher's name and checkpoint destination written in large block letters on the outside.

The dog food — approximately 86 tons — is stockpiled at more than two dozen checkpoints, where mushers can rest their dogs on straw beds, fill up their food bowls and perhaps get a little sleep themselves before heading out on the trail again.

Iditarod volunteer Opie Combs, 37, who describes himself as "a bum" but actually works in a retail store in Anchorage, also was helping hoist food bags on Wednesday.

During the race, he and Hecker will help out at the Kaltag checkpoint 359 miles from the finish line.

"It's fun. I like the dogs. I like the race," Combs said. "I always root for the underdog so I hope someone comes up huge from the back."

That was not the case last year when Jeff King, 50, of Denali Park became a four-time Iditarod winner, fending off four-time champion Doug Swingley, 53, of Lincoln, Mont.

Each team needs about 2,000 pounds of dog food along the trail, said volunteer Sonny Chambers of Eagle River, who was helping weigh the bags. The Iditarod air force — a collection of pilots who volunteer their time and planes — will fly out of Anchorage this weekend to make deliveries. The focus now is getting food to checkpoints south of the Alaska Range.



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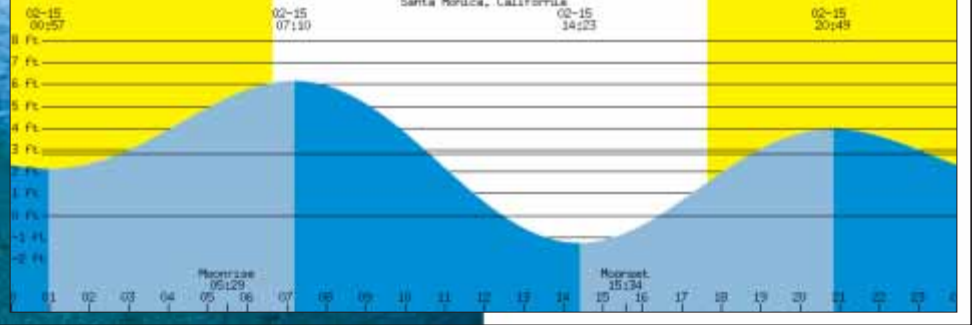
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WATER TEMP: 59°

SWELL FORECAST (3-5 FT)
Today's swell is looking smaller, more along the lines of waist high for west facing breaks. Winds may calm a tad but remain NE'erly offshore, but that tide will be climbing ever higher in the AM.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS
TRACKING NW FOR WEEKEND...
TRACKING NW AND SW FOR 23RD...

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 6, 2007**

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QUICK STATS
(for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 17
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 4
- Number of wet days -- 7
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 34 / 30
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 10 / 13

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

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth	A+	A+
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A+
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Aliso creeks	A+	A+
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	A+
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	A+
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 Dan Blocker County Beach	B	A+
Puerto State Beach at creek mouth	A	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerto Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	F	A+
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	B	A+
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily	F	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A	F
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A	D
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	A+
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	A	A+
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	B	B
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	C
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	A	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset 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

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

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LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	D	F
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain	D	B
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua)	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	D	A+
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	F	A+
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	C	F
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain	A	F
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms)	A	B
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A	D
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	A+
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	C	F
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A+	A+
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	F
Venice Beach--projection of Topsail St.	A+	A+
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower	B	C
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	A	C
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+	A+
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+	A+

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.

Just don't be alone, Leo

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS
The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

★★★★★ Dynamic ★★★★★ Positive
★★★★ Average ★★ So-So ★ Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ Friends surround you. Positive vibes flow through your associations. Use this period to connect with the special people in your life. Network. Make new friends. You can have what you want if you focus. Tonight: Where the action is.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Others often look to you for direction. Though you might not feel that you are a natural-born leader, many people do. Your strong, gentle style also encourages many people to want to work and be with you. Tonight: A must appearance.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Reach out for others. Seek out information. The more opinions you get, the better the end results will be. Trust your judgments as well. By being open, you'll break new ground. Take in the big picture. Demonstrate your ability to empathize. Tonight: Try a new restaurant.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ A key person wants all your attention and will do whatever it takes to get it. Though you might be shocked by what goes down, look past his or her actions and understand what is happening below the surface. Tonight: Be with your best friend.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Others want to and will dominate. You have to get a lot done, but you also might want to socialize. Let others do as much as they want, and free yourself up. Be smart; use a situation to your benefit and make another person happy. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ Emphasize routine, performance and getting the job done. You might be more effective than you realize. Check out an offbeat diet or health program before launching into it. Remember, your body isn't an experiment! Tonight: Easy does it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ One of your greatest assets is your charm. Mix this trait with unusual creativity, and how can you be anything but a success? Honor the importance of relationships and the people in your life. Let others know how you feel. Tonight: Try something offbeat.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Do as much as you can quietly behind the scenes. You might not be comfortable with what is happening within a personal situation. Right now, you might not be able to change it either. Observe, but also discuss. Be open to another's point of view. Tonight: Your home is your castle.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ You have a way with others that draws them toward you. Though you are making the first move, do not even think that others are anything but receptive. Screen calls if you feel overwhelmed. Tonight: Favorite place with favorite people.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Do what you do best. Handle finances and build security. Your instincts come into play with a decision. Tap into this endless and exceptionally strong area of your mind at present. You might be surprised by the end results. Tonight: Pay bills first.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Finally, you feel empowered, energetic and creative simultaneously. Use this high energy to realize a key hope or desire. Others certainly want to please you right now. Don't hesitate to seize the moment. Tonight: You make the call.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★ Know when to back off and proceed differently. You might jolt others with your insight. Perhaps keeping your insight and perspective to yourself will add to someone else's comfort. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

Born Today
Actress Jane Seymour (1951)
Cartoonist Matt Groening (1954)
Astronomer Galileo Galilei (1564)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>
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Happy Birthday!
You are capable of manifesting whatever you want this year. Just think positively, knowing nothing is impossible. Your high charisma and energy team up to create a force to behold. You will gain success through networking, broadening your horizon and being more responsive to others. You are the sign of friendship and draw many more people and friends. Though this quality endures, sometimes your creativity overwhelms others. If you are single, you could meet your life-time partner. This bond will incorporate friendship and love. If you are attached, blend in more friendship.

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New flava' Ben & Jerry's names flavor for Comedy Central's Colbert

STEPHEN COLBERT may have no taste for the truth, but he does have a sweet tooth. Ben & Jerry's has named a new ice cream in honor of the comedian: "Stephen Colbert's Americone Dream." It's

vanilla ice cream with fudge-covered waffle cone pieces and caramel. Announcing the new flavor Wednesday, Ben & Jerry's called it: "The sweet taste of liberty in your mouth." The Vermont-based

ice-cream maker is known for naming its flavors after people such as Jerry Garcia, Wavy Gravy and the band Phish — which Colbert sees as a political bias. "I'm not afraid to say it. Dessert has a well-known

liberal agenda," Colbert said in a statement. "What I hope to do with this ice cream is bring some balance back to the freezer case." Colbert, who spoofs flag-waving conservative pundits on his Comedy Central show, "The

Colbert Report," is donating his proceeds to charity through the new Stephen Colbert Americone Dream Fund, which will distribute the money to various causes. No plans have been specified.

AP

BUSCEMI BRINGS 'INTERVIEW'

STEVE BUSCEMI brought "Interview," based on a film by slain Dutch director Theo van Gogh, to the Berlin film festival Wednesday, saying it isn't intended as a political statement. "Interview" is the first of three English-language remakes, each by different directors, of a Dutch-language trilogy by van Gogh. Van Gogh was shot and stabbed to death on an Amsterdam, Netherlands, street in 2004 by a man angered by how the director depicted Islam in his short TV movie "Submission." Buscemi, 49, both directed "Interview" and plays the lead role as a fading war reporter forced to interview a soap star, played by Sienna Miller, after having an argument with his editor. Buscemi said he wasn't intending to make a political statement by doing the remake, which festival organizers said van Gogh had initially intended to do himself. "I don't make political statements," he told reporters. "I understand it is an homage to Theo, but I couldn't have made this film if I didn't like his work." Buscemi also dismissed a question about reports that he had received death threats.

AP

'30 Rock' co-star Morgan pleads guilty

TRACY MORGAN pleaded guilty Wednesday to a misdemeanor drunken driving charge. The 38-year-old comic, who co-stars on the NBC sitcom "30 Rock," submitted the plea in Manhattan Criminal Court in exchange for a conditional discharge, meaning he must meet conditions set by the court and the case against him will be dismissed.

Judge Ellen Coin ordered Morgan to enter a doctor-supervised alcohol program, do community service to be determined later, and avoid being arrested again within the next six months. The judge also fined Morgan \$1,000 and suspended his driver's license for six months. Outside court, Morgan, who came to court in a taxi with wife Sabina, apologized for his behavior. "Drinking and driving is not cool," he said, and he promised he would never be in that situation again. Morgan, a "Saturday Night Live" cast member from 1996 to 2003, was stopped about 4:30 a.m. on Nov. 28, 2006. Police said he smelled of alcohol and later failed a Breathalyzer test.

On Dec. 2, 2005, Morgan

was arrested in Hollywood on impaired driving charges after police stopped him for speeding. Authorities there said his blood-alcohol level was 0.13 percent, over the legal limit of 0.08 percent. He led no contest to a misdemeanor charge and was sentenced to 36 months' probation, fined \$390 and ordered to attend an alcohol education program.

AP

Mills McCartney visits British police

HEATHER MILLS MCCARTNEY visited a police station near her home in Hove on Wednesday to discuss unspecified issues, Sussex Police said. A spokesman for the 38-year-old former model said Mills McCartney had received death threats since her split last year

from ex-Beatle Paul McCartney, 64. Sussex Police said Mills McCartney spoke to detectives at a station near her home in Hove, 50 miles south of London, by appointment. "It was a preplanned meeting for her to discuss a number of issues," a spokeswoman for the force

said on customary police condition of anonymity. "The meeting did not relate to anything specific and she was not arrested." Mills McCartney has complained of being harassed and vilified by the media. Her spokesman, Phil Hall, said she had received death threats. "She has been subject

to death threats and there has been ongoing communication with Sussex Police about that," Hall said. "I imagine it's to do with that." The couple announced their separation in May and began divorce proceedings in July. They have a 3-year-old daughter, Beatrice.

AP

No passion in screen kiss for 'Friends'

Expecting to see a passionate lip-lock between **COURTENAY COX AND JENNIFER ANISTON** on the season finale of FX's "Dirt"? It's not going to happen, Cox says. "There is no tongue and it is really not a big deal to kiss," the 42-year-old actress tells syndicated TV entertainment show "Access Hollywood" in an

interview set to air Wednesday. "I am not saying, 'Don't tune in to watch Jennifer on the show,' because she is fantastic and you get to see us together again," Cox says. "But if you think it is just about a major make-out session, you will be disappointed." Cox and Aniston co-starred on the long-running

NBC sitcom "Friends," which ended in 2004. In the March 27 season finale of "Dirt," Aniston, 38, guest stars as a lesbian magazine editor and rival to Cox's character, ruthless tabloid queen Lucy Spiller. "When she first arrived, everyone was really quiet," Cox says. "It was like they were giving her respect, and I was like, 'This is my

bud, Jen. Come on people, let's have some fun.' And by day two, everyone was more loose, and by day three, we were having a ball." Aniston has a "great sense of humor," Cox says. "That girl cuts up just as much as the rest of us. She is very fun and she's goofy, and she is just a doll."

AP

Santa Monica Daily Press

MOVIEGUIDE

AERO THEATRE
1328 Montana Avenue
(310) 395-4990

Wednesday
Dinner at Eight
7:30
Thursday
Bonnie and Clyde
7:30

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

Babel (R)
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:05
Because I Said So (PG-13)
1:35, 4:30, 7:20, 9:55
Blood Diamond (R)
4:10, 9:45
Breaking and Entering (R)
1:45, 4:40, 7:30, 10:15
The Queen (PG-13)
1:25, 7:10

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

Casino Royale (PG-13)
4:30, 10:00
Catch and Release (PG-13)
2:00, 7:35
Children of Men (R)
2:10, 4:50, 7:40, 9:55
Dreamgirls (PG-13)
1:20, 4:20, 7:30, 10:15
Epic Movie (PG-13)
1:00, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:25
The Messengers (PG-13)
1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:50, 10:05
Night at the Museum (PG)
1:40, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30
Pan's Labyrinth
(El Laberinto del Fauno) (R)
1:30, 4:30, 7:10, 9:45

LANDMARK NUWILSHIRE
1314 Wilshire Blvd
(310) 281-8223

Letters From Iwo Jima (R)
1:20, 4:45, 8:00
The Lives of Others
(Das Leben der Anderen), (R)
1:10, 4:35, 8:15
Venus (R)
1:30, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30
Volver (R)
1:40, 4:20, 7:10, 9:55

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

Letters From Iwo Jima (R)
1:20, 4:45, 8:00
The Queen (PG-13)
1:55, 4:35, 7:30, 9:55
Venus (R)
1:30, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30
Volver (R)
1:40, 4:20, 7:10, 9:55

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

Freedom Writers (PG-13)
11:10am, 4:40, 10:10
Hannibal Rising (R)
1:00, 4:10, 7:10, 10:20
Last King of Scotland, The (R)
12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50
Norbit (PG-13)
11:00am, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40
Norbit (PG-13)
12:00, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30
The Pursuit of Happyness, (PG-13)
1:50, 7:30
Smokin' Aces (R)
11:30am, 2:00, 4:30, 7:20, 10:00

More information email news@smdp.com

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Janric Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty
BRONZE

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

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GETTING STARTED

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

SOLUTIONS TO LAST PUZZLE

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

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NO. I'M QUITE CERTAIN WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER

REALLY? A CUTE GUY LIKE YOU, AND WE'VE NEVER MET?

SORRY. I REMEMBER EVERYONE, AND WE'VE NEVER MET BEFORE

ARE YOU SURE?

LADY! I'M SORRY, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU IN MY ENTIRE LIFE!

WHAT'S WITH THAT GIRL?

OH, SHE JUST HAD ME CONFUSED WITH SOMEONE ELSE

The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose

HAPPY "THE DAY AFTER"!

YOU, TOO.

WELL, WE SURVIVED ANOTHER VALENTINE'S DAY ALONE.

YES, BUT WE'RE NOT OUT OF THE WOODS YET.

ONLY 320 DAYS LEFT BEFORE NEW YEAR'S EVE.

The Other Coast

By Adrian Raeside

I'M ALWAYS GETTING GREAT IDEAS FOR A BOOK OR A NOVEL, BUT I FORGET THEM RIGHT AWAY.

SO NOW I CARRY A LITTLE NOTEBOOK IN WHICH I WRITE DOWN ALL MY BRILLIANT IDEAS.

AND WHEN IT'S FULL, I PLACE IT WITH MY OTHER BRILLIANT IDEAS NOTEBOOKS.

OH. IS THAT WHAT THEY ARE? I'VE BEEN USING THEM TO START THE FIRE.

Garfield

By Jim Davis

SNOW!

IT'S A BLIZZARD!

I'M FLATTERED

Dog eat Doug

By Brian Anderson

SQUEEE! SQUEEE! WEEE-AH! WEEE-AH! SQUEAK! EEEEE-AH! SQUEAK! SQUEEE!

HEY, GUYS? HOW ABOUT WE TAKE A BREAK FROM THE SQUEAKY TOYS FOR A BIT?

MAN, THIS SONG'S NEVER GOING TO BE READY IN TIME FOR HIS BIRTHDAY!

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Natural Selection

By Russ Wallace



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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Mystery Photo
The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to editor@smdp.com.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Some-thing's — Give"
 - 6 Swagger
 - 11 Camera creator Land
 - 12 Came up
 - 13 Fiat
 - 14 Blasé
 - 15 Winter topper
 - 17 Be decisive
 - 19 Fine, to NASA
 - 20 Beige
 - 23 Seal user
 - 25 Wrong
 - 26 Drink garnish
 - 28 Percolate
 - 29 China buy
 - 30 NFL measures
 - 31 Goose formation
 - 32 NFL scores
 - 33 Constant yakker
 - 35 Macho fellow
 - 38 Grue-some
 - 41 Stun
 - 42 "All My Children" vixen
 - 43 Prom rentals
 - 44 Swift
- DOWN**
- 1 "My word!"
 - 2 Un-matched
 - 3 Bag cinches
 - 4 Clock sound
 - 5 Dada, e.g.
 - 6 Wheel minder
 - 7 Fairway sight
 - 8 Curtain holder
 - 9 Apply
 - 10 Brother of Jack and Bobby
 - 16 Western howlers
 - 17 Nervous

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

Yesterday's answer

- 18 Intimi-dated
- 20 Motor-cycle gearshift
- 21 Packing heat
- 22 Russian refusals
- 24 Nile biter
- 25 According to
- 27 Less believable
- 31 Wind indicators
- 33 Stare
- 34 Glow
- 35 Millinery buy
- 36 Big bird
- 37 Painter Ernst
- 39 Here, to Henri
- 40 June honoree

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

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

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLION
3 9 24 29 41
Meganumber: 41
Jackpot: \$130M

Super LOTTO
12 15 37 39 47
Meganumber: 5
Jackpot: \$31M

Fantasy 5 2 3 12 30 36

DAILY 3 MIDDAY: 2 7 4
EVENING: 1 6 6

DAILY DERRY
1st: 10 Solid Gold
2nd: 12 Lucky Charms
3rd: 03 Hot Shot
RACE TIME: 1:41.29

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ **Easy Collars:** (1) Nicholas Raber, 19, was arrested in Annapolis, Md., in December for punching a police officer and dashing up a flight of stairs after yelling, "You'll never catch me." The officers were aware that upstairs exits were locked and so waited patiently for Raber to come back down and be handcuffed. (2) Mitchell Sigman, 22, was arrested and charged with robbing the Village Pantry in Elkhart, Ind., in November, after the clerk-victim identified him as a regular customer and one who had recently filled out an application to work there.

■ **Failures to Keep a Low Profile:** (1) College student Cory Shapiro, 19, was arrested in January after he flagged down a police officer to complain that he had been over-charged for drinks at the Athens, Ga., bar Bourbon Street. (2) Sunday school teacher Edgar Selavka, 49, was arrested after he reported to police in Northampton, Mass., in January that someone had stolen his backpack from church; shortly afterward, police found the backpack in a nearby restroom, with its contents on the floor, including at least 11 child pornography photos.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1898 the U.S. battleship Maine mysteriously blew up in Havana Harbor, killing more than 260 crew members and bringing the United States closer to war with Spain.

1564 Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei was born in Pisa.

1764 the city of St. Louis was established by Pierre Laclède and Auguste Chouteau.

1820 American suffragist Susan B. Anthony was born in Adams, Mass.

1879 President Hayes signed a bill allowing female attorneys to argue cases before the Supreme Court.

1933 President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt escaped an assassination attempt in Miami that mortally wounded Chicago Mayor Anton J. Cermak; gunman Giuseppe Zangara was executed more than four weeks later, on March 20.

1942 the British colony Singapore surrendered to the Japanese during World War II.

1961 73 people, including an 18-member U.S. figure skating team en route to Czechoslovakia, were killed in the crash of a Sabena Airlines Boeing 707 in Belgium.

WORD UP!

beau idéal \boh-ay-DEEL\, noun; plural beau idéals: A perfect or an idealized type or model.



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Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: DORIS LEVY CASE NO. SP007061

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of DORIS LEVY.

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by RONALD R. LEVY in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that RONALD R. LEVY be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's WILL and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The WILL and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act with limited authority. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on 03/09/07 at 9:15AM in Dept. F located at 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code Section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner WASSERMAN, TERRY K. A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORP. 3800 HIGHLAND AVE., #300 MANHATTAN BEACH, CA 90266 2/14, 2/15, 2/21/07 CNS-1087864# SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

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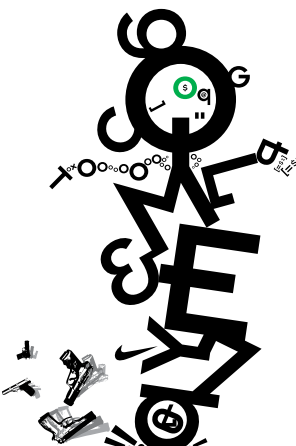
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