

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTO

SUPER LOTTO PLUS

22, 45, 31, 36, 21

Megabonus: 10

Jackpot: \$13 million

FANTASY 5

17, 15, 18, 3, 21

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 3, 8, 4

Evening picks: 6, 6, 0

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 6, Whirl Win

2nd Place: 3, Hot Shot

3rd Place: 10, Solid Gold

RACE TIME: 1:48.44



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Brenda and Ronald Sager of Mount Pleasant Township, Pa., filed a lawsuit against Wal-Mart in January for their pain and suffering after a plastic grocery bag broke open and its contents fell on their toes. The Sagers said the allegedly overstuffed bag contained a 32-ounce jar of Miracle Whip, a 46-ounce bottle of ketchup, three 15-ounce cans of fruit, an 18-ounce bottle of ranch dressing, and a 12-ounce jar of mustard.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"You're free. And freedom is beautiful. And, you know, it'll take time to restore chaos and order — order out of chaos. But we will."

— George W. Bush
Washington, D.C.
April 13, 2003



INDEX



Horoscopes

Cancer, consider your options ... 2



Local

Big Blue Bus changes ... 3



Opinion

Sexism in the headlines ... 6



State

Wine industry improves ... 10



National

No fight for veep seat — yet ... 11



People

Christian singer trashes idols ... 16

Superintendent waters down gift proposal

Donations would be taxed on a sliding scale

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

DISTRICT HDQTRS. — Hoping to garner support for his controversial school gift policy, Santa Monica's top educator released an amended version Friday that lets the wealthiest schools hold on to a little more of the cash they raise.

Under the new proposal, the district would take 15 percent of the first \$100,000 collected by individual schools. After that, the amount taken would drop by two percentage points for each \$100,000 raised. As with the prior proposal, money taken by the district would be redistributed to schools based on their size and need.

Under the new proposal, a maximum of \$64,000 in donations would be taken from a school by the district — if the school raised \$800,000. Donations in excess of \$800,000 would go directly to the school in their entirety.

Superintendent John Deasy said he's optimistic the proposal will earn

See PROPOSAL, page 4

City Hall-run valet stand folds its umbrella

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — When City Hall opened its first valet stand in parking structure No. 5 on Fourth Street last year, they hoped to alleviate the snarled parking situation in downtown Santa Monica — a known deterrent for shoppers.

But after only 66 cars were parked, funding was cut off and the valet stand was shut down. The

reason? It took 45 days to attract the 66 cars.

Privately run valets in front of restaurants and other businesses downtown average 40 to 80 motorists a day, various valet attendants reported Friday. City Hall's pilot program, on the other hand, averaged 1.46 cars per day.

"The program has been determined not to be feasible, so it's been terminated," Elana Buegoff, an analyst for City Hall, recently told officials.

Though it was funded by City Hall, the valet stand was manned by a private contractor. Motorists would enter the public structure through the normal route off of Fourth Street, push the button for their parking ticket and then have the option to hand their keys over to a valet attendant or find a spot for themselves. The valet, if contracted, would then take cars out of the public parking lot and into a private lot under Broadway Deli.

Kathleen Rawson, executive director of the Bayside District Corp., said the pilot program failed because the hours for the stand were limited to between 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. Those hours were chosen because officials worried expanding them might lead to further congestion at the structure's entrance, Rawson added.



John Wood/Daily Press
Private valet stands like this one abound downtown. The first city-run valet stand bombed after serving less than two cars a day.

Doggin' it up



Ross Furukawa/Daily Press

The Oscar Mayer Wienermobile cruises through downtown Santa Monica recently.

"It was the first time we gave it a try and ... I think we sort of sabotaged ourselves with the limited hours we had to work with," she said. "It's still a really good idea, and it could really work, given the right circumstances."

If the valet stand were to be continued, Rawson said she'd push for hours that start earlier in the day, when more people are downtown and might opt for the

more convenient alternative. She'd also push for the valet to be open until at least midnight.

Private valet attendants were in agreement that the restricted hours on the city-run stand likely led to its untimely demise.

Parking downtown has long been a key concern of local officials, residents and tourists. The

See VALET, page 4

Vivian Rothstein: Fighting for 'what's right' in SM

Community profiles is a weekly series that appears each Monday and delves into the people who live, work and play in Santa Monica.



BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

Vivian Rothstein has seen a lot of injustices throughout her life.

The California native has been a driving force behind the living wage movement in Santa Monica for the past seven years and has long been an activist for human rights. The daughter of German immigrants, Rothstein has spent most of her life fighting for a better one for all walks of life — African Americans, Native Americans, women, renters, the homeless, the poor and low-wage workers.

She grew up in a Los Angeles commu-

See PROFILE, page 5



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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)

★★★★ You might be required to repeat what you've already done. In fact, stay with the rote, and you'll do well. Don't instigate anything new for today. Clear your desk; attend necessary meetings. You could be surprised by how much you'll get done, especially if you choose to steer clear of others. Tonight: Check in on an older relative.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Do research, though you might need to recheck your information. Something is running amok. Do not listen to office gossip, because there is an element of misunderstanding or hearsay running through it. Soon you'll get the whole story. Tonight: Buy a new CD.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Work with a partner, but clarify each piece of information. You might need to repeat a conversation you are having right now. Listen to a child or loved one who has much to share. Get down to the basics right now. No hemming and hawing. Tonight: Be a duo.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ You know what you want and where you are going. Carefully consider your options surrounding a child or loved one. Others seek you out. Don't buy into each piece of information. What you are hearing might be wrong. Tonight: Let your popularity lead.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ All work and no play does not make the Lion happy right now, but unfortunately that pattern is the case. You will clear out a lot if you rely on yourself and no one else. Stay on top of calls and messages. One easily could slip through the cracks. Tonight: Get some exercise.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ You think you got something clarified with a loved one or child. The operative word here is "think." Don't be surprised if you need to have this conversation one more time. You will be creative in finding the answer. Tonight: Play a little.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ If you have the inclination to stay home, do so. Sometimes you find it hard to get others to understand where you are coming from, especially right now. It would be best if you could work from home right now. Tonight: Remain close to the hearth.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ You easily say what you think. Laughter surrounds a conversation once it becomes clear everyone is hearing something different. Add more glee to your life by taking situations less seriously. Tonight: Out and about.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Though you know what you are doing, whatever you do probably will need to be redone. Stick with menial tasks, avoiding major decisions. You also will find that you have to have a conversation again that you have today. Tonight: Stay light and enjoy yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Let your personality speak. Right now seriousness has no place in your day, because major decisions cannot be made. Stop and network. Check in with those who make a difference in your life. Loosen up and enjoy. Tonight: Play away.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★ Conclusions you reach right now might not be grounded. Brainstorm, let your mind roam and allow your creativity to flourish. What you see and hear could be quite different tomorrow. Stay open. Tonight: A good night's sleep.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Join friends and associates, knowing that nothing much can be written in stone right now. You'll see life from a renewed point of view if you lighten up. Socialize and network all you want. Think positively. Tonight: Where your friends are.

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1427 Third Street Promenade, Ste. #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • www.smdp.com

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa ross@smdp.com
EDITOR
Carolyn Sackariason sack@smdp.com
STAFF WRITER
John Wood wood@smdp.com
CHILD DEVELOPMENT COLUMNIST
Margie Altman margiealtman@yahoo.com
ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Rob Piubeni rob@smdp.com
ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Steve Averill steve@smdp.com
ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Rob Schwenker schwenker@smdp.com
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Del Pastrana del@smdp.com

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II alex@smdp.com
ADMINISTRATIVE TRAFFIC MANAGER
Heather Rich heather@smdp.com
CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE
Mitch Troy mitch@smdp.com
CIRCULATION MANAGER
Robert DeAmicis robert@smdp.com
CIRCULATION
Keith Wyatt keith@smdp.com
CIRCULATION
Glenn Bolan glenn@smdp.com
SPECIAL PROJECTS
Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com
MASCOT
Maya Furukawa maya@smdp.com

LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Bus service scaled back today

By Daily Press staff

The Big Blue Bus will be operating on a modified schedule today in observance of Presidents' Day.

The bus operator will use the Saturday schedule, and riders should refer to that day's schedule for departure and arrival times for most routes.

Lines 11 and 13 will operate regular weekday service.

Super 7 and Super 12 will not operate.

Earlier service will be offered on lines 1,3,7,9,10 and 14. For detailed schedule information visit www.BigBlueBus.com or call customer service at (310) 451-5444, TDD (310) 451-5444.

Black History Month event canceled

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica College reported that it would be hosting four events in celebration of Black History Month.

The fourth event, scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 28, has been canceled. All the other events are still scheduled. The canceled event is Saturday, Feb. 28, at 6 p.m. in the SMC Concert Hall: "The Story of Black People from Africa to America through Poetry, Song and Dance."

Free tax help for small businesses

By Daily Press staff

Small businesses with unresolved federal tax problems might be eligible for free assistance from the Taxpayer Advocate Service, an independent branch within the Internal Revenue Service that represents the interests of taxpayers.

"Small business owners should know we stand ready to assist them when they have lingering tax issues. TAS is a resource for business taxpayers who need help resolving tough tax problems," said national taxpayer advocate Nina Olson.

TAS will assign knowledgeable advocates to help qualified small businesses navigate the federal tax system, understand what is causing their unresolved tax problems, and reach closure with the IRS.

"We have 40 TAS employees locally who are available to help small businesses in Los Angeles County," said IRS spokesman Victor Omelczenko. "Last year, these employees processed more than 2,400 new cases initiated by individuals and small businesses."

Payroll tax issues are among the most common tax problems faced by small businesses and can be especially challenging because of the potential for stiff penalties.

TAS recognizes the hardship that tax problems impose on a small business, and small business owners with unresolved payroll and other tax issues should not wait too long before seeking help, officials say.

Small businesses might be eligible for assistance from TAS if they have tried other channels to resolve their tax issues and still face:

- Economic hardships or significant cost due to their tax problem
- A 30-day delay to resolve the issue
- A response or resolution deadline that was promised by the IRS but not met.

Last year TAS' 2,200 employees nationwide processed more than 225,000 new cases initiated by individuals and small businesses. In addition, TAS recommends changes to improve the federal tax system and ensure problems do not resurface.

Small businesses can call toll free 1-877-ASK-TAS1 to request the assistance of a taxpayer advocate. They also can talk to their tax preparers about contacting TAS.

surf report

WNW energy came up another notch on Sunday putting many of the better winter breaks in chest to head high surf, while best breaks saw sets running a couple of feet overhead. Look for this swell to slowly wind down on Monday, level off on Tuesday and then new WNW swell will likely come back up again later Wednesday and into Thursday.

Outlook: The surf will taper off a bit into Wednesday, with a new WNW/storm swell mix building in the afternoon and best Thursday.

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break. Epic.

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58°

	LOW TIDES		HIGH TIDES	
	LOW ONE	LOW TWO	HIGH ONE	HIGH TWO
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SUNDAY	3:45 AM	4:36 PM	9:48 AM	11:02 PM
MONDAY	4:30 AM	5:08 PM	10:28 AM	11:37 PM
TUESDAY	5:23 AM	5:38 PM	11:14 AM	N/A
WEDNESDAY	6:30 AM	6:06 PM	12:15 AM	12:15 PM
THURSDAY	8:03 AM	6:48 PM	12:59 AM	1:47 PM
FRIDAY	9:43 AM	7:45 PM	1:54 AM	4:15 PM

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The Q-Line

Cell phone companies are pressuring City Hall into allowing them the right to install antennas and other infrastructure throughout Santa Monica to improve reception. Two of them — AT &T and Verizon — have sued City Hall because it doesn't have an ordinance in place to regulate them and therefore can't grant them permission.

In response, City Hall has created a draft law that aims to regulate where, when and how the industry will install equipment here. The proposed law will be

discussed by the City Council on Feb. 24.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Would you mind visible cell phone equipment in your neighborhood if it meant better reception?"

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response before Thursday at 5 p.m. We'll print them in Friday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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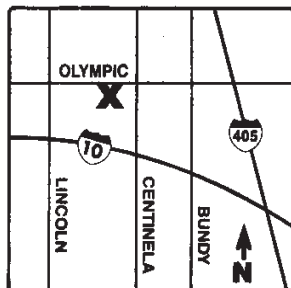
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Board will discuss revised gift proposal on Thursday

PROPOSAL, from page 1

the backing of the school board. Board members, who will discuss the new proposal Thursday, have already heard more than five hours of discussion on the matter.

The controversial policy has drawn fire from some school supporters, who say it unfairly taxes generous donors and will lead to reduced fundraising at area schools. Others maintain that sharing 15 percent of all donations does too little to help some area schools, which are able to raise far less than others.

To illustrate the discrepancy in funding, McKinley Elementary in Santa Monica raised about \$30,000 from donors last year, while Pt. Dume Elementary in Malibu accrued \$300,000 or more, school district officials said. At Malibu High School, the stated goal for fundraising is \$1 million.

"I believe that this is an essential and critical issue we try to begin to resolve in our community," Deasy said. "It is something that not everybody likes, I understand that. But I don't know anybody that likes the existing condition either."

Another part of Deasy's amended proposal is a clearer delineation of exemptions to the gift policy. Field trips, academic scholarships, scholarships for needy children and district-approved capital programs, among other things, would be exempt. Also, a voluntary donation fund would be set up under the proposed gift policy to run simultaneously with the mandatory fund.

Deasy said he hopes the changes will be well received.

"I think it keeps the integrity of the policy, as I proposed it, and solves, or tries to solve, the concerns that people have," he said.

Although school board members have made comments and asked pointed questions on the proposal, no formal positions have been taken. However, board member Oscar de la Torre said he would vote in favor of the proposal, and board members Shane McLoud and Mike Jordan have expressed deep reservations.

"I'm opposed to taking someone's gift and distributing it," McLoud said Friday. "It's simple — for me, it's a matter of not reallocating someone's gift. It was their intention to give it to their school, and I think we need to respect that."

"I don't think we should alter someone's charity," he added. "I think we

"It is something that not everybody likes, I understand that. But I don't know anybody that likes the existing condition either."

— JOHN DEASY
Superintendent of schools

should — instead we should be recognizing it, honoring it and asking for the spirit of that contribution to voluntarily help the schools that really need it."

McLoud, who teaches fifth grade at Figueroa Elementary School in South Central Los Angeles, said he has received over 60 letters and e-mails from parents and others opposed to the gift policy. He said he would like to see a well-organized — but strictly voluntary — effort by parents to raise money for the poorer schools.

McLoud's perspective on the matter is different than some of those at wealthy schools in Malibu. He said the Parent Teacher Association at his school, which is part of the LA Unified School District, raises a mere \$200 or \$300 a year.

"I see an environment where I would love to be able to see my students receive more money," McLoud said. "But I don't think the solution is to be found in altering someone's generosity ..."

"What I hear from the people who want this is there's a need for it ... and that's absolutely true — this just isn't the way to solve this problem," he added. "What I would rather see is voluntary contribution and a well-organized effort. And I think we need to look at the state, to look at the way it distributes funds."

De la Torre, on the other hand, said he will fight for the proposal.

"We know that social economic status is a contributing factor to low academic achievement," he said Friday. "The fact remains that some families in our community have more resources than others. It is a moral imperative and an economic necessity for us to support equity in our school district."

Valet stand a thing of the past

VALET, from page 1

aging parking garages are overused, causing frustration for everyone who drives downtown. Officials want more parking — fast — to help stem the loss of shoppers who sometimes choose other malls because they're easier to access.

No plans for another City Hall-run valet are in the works, officials said.

While officials decide whether to try

again, Rawson said directing thousands of cars through downtown everyday is as difficult as finding parking for all of them.

"Our parking situation is far from ideal, but there is parking downtown," Rawson said. "We do know, though, that traffic circulation is as much of an issue as parking."

"I think whenever you go to an area that's busy and lively, it's going to be difficult to park."

Do you have community news?

Submit news releases

Email to: sack@smdp.com or fax 310.576.9913

LOCAL



Community Profiles

PROFILE, from page 1

nity made up almost entirely of Nazi Germany refugees and came of age in a time when activism was alive and well — the '60s.

Rothstein has traveled the country in search of getting people the treatment she believes they deserve. The experiences of her father, a window decorator, and her mother, a rent-control activist, might have been the starting point in shaping her political and philosophical views. Most of her family died in the Holocaust, and it wasn't until recently that she realized how much impact it's had on her.

Rothstein is the deputy director of LA Alliance for New Economy, a nonprofit organization devoted to improving conditions for low wage workers. She also heads Santa Monicans Allied for Responsible Tourism, a project of LANE.

After years of failed attempts to pass a living wage in Santa Monica, Rothstein went before the City Council last month to introduce a new proposal that if passed would entitle all city workers and employees employed by private companies on contracts with City Hall of \$25,000 or more to earn a minimum of \$11.51 an hour and receive upgraded health benefits.

For nearly five years, SMART has pushed for a living wage — most recently \$12.25 an hour without benefits — targeted largely toward workers in the tourism industry. The current proposal isn't designed to meet that goal, but it's just the beginning of a larger effort to get a higher wage for the 3,500 low-wage workers in Santa Monica.

The battle over the living wage began in 1999, when SMART first recommended to the City Council that tourism workers be paid a higher wage. Hoping to find a different solution, hotel and tourism groups in 2000 put Proposition KK on the ballot. But many argued that measure did too little to promote wages and more to protect businesses against future wage increases. KK was overwhelmingly defeated at the polls, 79 percent to 21 percent.

Half a year later, the City Council approved SMART's living wage, but the issue was forced to the ballot by opponents, who gathered thousands of signatures against it. In November of 2002, Proposition JJ failed by a mere 1.7 percent. It would have guaranteed workers at businesses near the beach that gross more than \$5 million a year a wage of \$12.25 an hour without health benefits or \$10.50 with benefits. The law didn't apply to unionized businesses. This gave the large companies an incentive to organize their labor.

And throughout all of it, Rothstein — who is partly paid by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union — has been the target of much criticism by her opposition — big business, the tourism industry and the chamber of commerce. She is steadfast in promoting workers' rights issues and defending her stance, which some describe as rigid and non-compromising. It's something Rothstein is unapologetic about because she believes the other side can be just as inflexible — they just have different philosophies on

workers' rights and compromise seems unlikely.

She recently sat down with the Daily Press to discuss where she's been and where she's headed.

How did you get involved in the living wage movement?

"My parents were refugees from Nazi Germany. They lost most of their families during the war. I think from their experience, I've become very conscious of how minorities get treated in society and how that could affect me. In Germany, people couldn't believe it was happening and slowly but surely, their rights were being taken away until they had absolutely nothing left. I grew up in Los Angeles in a community who were mostly refugees. I didn't think for years that had any impact on me. It wasn't until six or seven years ago that I suddenly realized why I feel the way I do."

Have you been involved in activism before?

"I went to Berkeley and studied psychology. Berkeley was a big place, and you look for a community, and I found one there. I got involved in the civil rights movement in San Francisco and Berkeley in 1964. There were demonstrations for African Americans to give them access to jobs in the auto industry and the hotel industry. I was also drawn there because of the people in it, and because they were the most interesting and humane. At the time, if you were really committed and you wanted to develop skills as an organizer you went south."

Where did you go?

"I went to Leake County, Mississippi. It was a little rural town, and I worked on voter registration and school integration. I was in a place called 'Red Dog Road.' The South at the time, the paving stopped when the black community started. This was a dirt road, and there was nothing in that community. We went door to door to see if there were people interested in getting their children integrated into the schools."

What did you learn from that experience?

"I learned that ordinary people have a lot of wisdom about what they need and they have extraordinary leadership abilities. An organizer is someone whose job it is to provide those opportunities to get that leadership and recognition. I was down there for three and a half months. The whites were then admonished to go back to the north and start organizing in our own communities. So I went to Chicago to work on a community organizing project, and I was there for 10 years."

What was that project?

"It was called 'Jobs For Income Now.' It was a community organization in a very poor area of Chicago that had a Native American population from West Virginia and Kentucky who couldn't get jobs, as well as an African American population. We worked on welfare rights and housing rights. We tried to get stop signs and street lights in their communities. We were trying to build a power base for poor people in Chicago. At that time, poor people having any equal power was very difficult. These people were barely surviving. The

See PROFILE, page 8

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Team Captains responsibilities:

- Organize a team of 15-20 people and distribute team member's packets
- Attend the Captain's meetings (there will probably be 2 including one where registration fees will be collected)
- Attend the Bank night 2 weeks before the event (Bring the money raised by your team)
- Create a team name and select your team's campsite
- Be enthusiastic and urge team members to Fundraiser: Most of the money will come from fundraising.

The next team captain's meeting for Relay For Life will be held at Santa Monica Place in the Community Room located on the 3rd floor. The meeting will be on Thursday, February 26, 2004, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Parking is free.

Teams are forming now!

For more information: Please call LaShawndra Pace at the
American Cancer Society (310) 348-0356 option 3/ext. 246 or
lashawndra.pace@cancer.org



Relay For Life



A Team Event to Fight Cancer

OPINION

LETTERS

Sexism still dominates

Editor:

Today I was appalled at a headline on the front page of the Santa Monica Daily Press (Feb. 9, page 1). Once, again, sexism seems to dominate the minds of reporters/headline editors. The headline reads, "Officials discuss ways to take the keys away from 'grandma.'" Yet, as the article cites, it was a man who killed shoppers at our farmers' market. In addition, it was an elderly man who killed a teenage girl at 21st and Montana Avenue a few years back; it was a male who killed teens on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and 15th Street a few years back; and it is, more often than not, men who view their cars as emblems of their masculine identity and avoid giving up their cars as age diminishes their vision and reaction time. Yes, women, just like men, need to evaluate their driving ability as they age, but can you cite a fatal accident in Santa Monica that was caused by a female driver? I suggest you buy a writer's guide for your staff and have them read the chapter on sexist language. Put the blame where it belongs.

Dr. Lila R. Fink
Santa Monica

City Council not hearing the noise

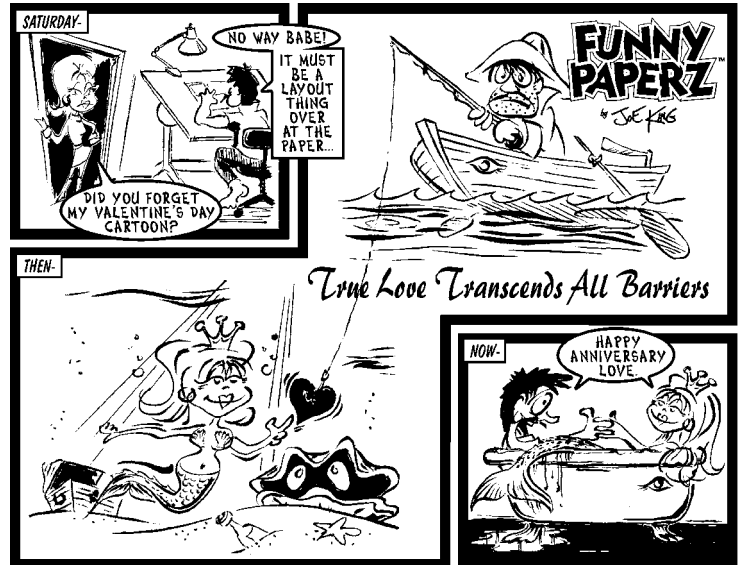
Editor:

Funny how the City Council is all fired up about noise in the city. Funny how they leap to do the people's will. Maybe there's so much noise in Santa Monica, that I've never heard anyone complain about it.

I can just see the person out measuring the noise levels at every turn. Where else can we waste the city's money? The city does not enforce laws already on the books, so they can add this joke to the list.

One thing they could do to ease the noise and pollution level — they could see to it that the leaf blower law on the books for ages is enforced. Leaf blowers are used in Santa Monica daily. If enforced, the noise level and pollution would go down, the fines required would put some money in the coffers. A win-win situation. That would help wouldn't it? What? I can't hear you.

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica



Member: AAEC, NCS, SCCS

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Elderly woman faces the cold, harsh realities of street life



(Editor's note: 'From the Street' is written by Janet Phelan, an educated woman with an extensive background in journalism. She has been living on the streets of Santa Monica for a year).

It is a windy winter evening in Santa Monica. Beverly stands at the Blue Bus stop on Colorado Avenue and clutches her sweater around her shoulders. Her hair is tied back in a loose, graying bun. She is small, bird-like, and unfashionably thin.

She is staying in a local hotel with her 35-year-old MS stricken daughter. The two came out recently from New York.

William, her daughter's fiancée and the financial support system for the two women, was killed in an auto accident

back East as he readied to come to California to meet up with the women.

Beverly's eyes become liquid as she says that she and Wendy have run out of money. "The hotel let us stay one more night, even though we didn't pay," she says.

Seventy-eight years old, Beverly is perched on the edge of the street.

Educated, well-bred, she avoids harsh words toward her ex-husband, a Beverly Hills resident and millionaire. "He is disinterested in our welfare," she says, choosing her words carefully.

She says she attempted to contact several synagogues for assistance. "They are the worst," she says sadly. "All that is offered is psychological counseling. We need a place to live."

Her meager Social Security check was consumed by the hotel bill. Her daughter's disability application is six months away from approval.

I tell her about the cold weather shelters and sandwiches at Ocean Park Community Center. The next afternoon, Beverly is in the clothes queue at the homeless agency. "I don't know what I'm doing here," she says. "Maybe I can get a

pair of slacks."

"We just need \$11, and we can buy another night at the Travel Lodge," she says. She has met with caseworker Cheri Valdez, who tried without success to access emergency funds for the two women.

There will be no \$11. Beverly fingers my Star of David necklace and smiles wistfully. She says, "It is hard to come from so much and come to so little."

We hug and I promise to call her at her hotel in a little while. When I call, she and Wendy have checked out, leaving no forwarding address.

I search in the food lines for the elderly woman, but I do not find her. I pray that she and her daughter have found shelter. The reality is that the agencies do not protect us. The churches and synagogues do not protect us. Our families and friends do not protect us. The streets are a large mouth and will eat us alive.

It is not only the possibility of rape that Beverly and Wendy face. It is not only the possibility of murder.

It is not only the erosion of hope, and the coldness of an indifferent world.

Beverly and Wendy face the problem

of finding a safe and legal place to sleep. They face the challenge of finding a place to go to the bathroom at 2 a.m. without getting ticketed by the police.

They face the difficulty of getting adequate medical care and the logistics of getting transportation to the doctor.

They face having their few remaining possessions stolen by predatory street thieves.

Worst of all, Beverly and Wendy now face invisibility, as the world of the successful and moneyed turns a blind eye on the desperation of being homeless.

I wonder if I should have given Beverly my Star of David. Or, considering what two frail women will face alone on the street, perhaps I should have given her my hunting knife. She will need both types of protection on the streets of Santa Monica.

(Janet C. Phelan is a university graduate and has been a free-lance writer for more than two decades at various publications, including the Los Angeles Times).

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OPINION



America needs a leader like George Washington

On Presidents' Day, Americans have an opportunity to reflect on its presidents — past and present — and particularly on those who have been great leaders. History is replete with examples of charismatic power-lusting "leaders" directing mindless and obedient legions on campaigns of suppression and destruction. But America's great leaders have been different.

America has often been blessed, in times of crisis, with principled, moral leaders, directing this nation against history's tyrants and in pursuit of freedom and the rights of man.

Now, once again facing a crisis, America searches for great leadership. Awash in a morass of moral compromise, poll-taking, and hesitation to offend world opinion, Americans desperately seize on any hint of strength, of moral certainty, of a refusal to swim with others in the swamp of compromise, empty rhetoric and threats that now passes for "leadership" in Washington, D.C.

Where can Americans turn to witness the spectacle of great leadership?

On Presidents' Day, this country should look for inspiration and conviction to America's greatest leader, George Washington.

Washington, in company with the other Founding Fathers of America, was a son of the 18th century Enlightenment. His vision of America was one of responsible, independent, free, and hard-working citizens, prospering in a system of political and economic freedom. He

believed that America would become a beacon of liberty and justice to men everywhere.

In the first 40 years of his life, Washington developed his guiding vision through hard work, the acceptance of military and entrepreneurial risk, and constant study. When the revolutionary crisis arrived, Washington had achieved economic, military, business and social success. But much more important, he had achieved character. He was a man with a serene confidence in his own judgment, and with an implacable bedrock of principled moral conviction. All the personal prerequisites of great leadership were there, awaiting a national stage. And when, in 1775, the occasion arose, Washington displayed the greatest of his virtues, the one that has placed him, to this day, as "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

George Washington was a man of impenetrable and towering integrity. He did not just espouse a vision; he acted in order to achieve and defend it.

Integrity is the virtue of remaining loyal to one's rational convictions and values. A man who is able to hold to a principled course of action, to pursue his values relentlessly, without compromise, and to do so under duress and the scorn of others, deserves our deepest respect.

This is what George Washington can

give to America on Presidents' Day — the spectacle of vision and moral certainty, backed up by action. He realized the importance of freedom and individual rights, and he pursued these values rather than power, approval or prestige. And when we realize that human life was at stake, and that he entered this battle on a world stage, and at the risk of his life and everything he loved, we know we are in the presence of a man who deserves our reverential awe.

Washington's integrity was on display, relentlessly and without interruption, from the time he accepted command of the colonial army until the end of his life.

We see him, at the beginning of his career, arriving in Cambridge to find a dispirited, sick and unruly army looking out on a Boston harbor full of the masts of the British armada. Six months later, through determination, discipline, personal example and effort limited only by fatigue, we find his army organized and ready to attack, watching Boston harbor empty, as the British withdraw.

In the middle of the war, we see him on that hazardous and fateful Christmas night, leading his army across the Delaware River to turn the tide of war. After a night-long march and the successful rout of a highly skilled enemy, he returns victorious across the Delaware.

Throughout his military career, we see

him lead his troops into battle and ride into enemy fire. Sporting bullet holes in his hat and tunic, he was ever the inspiration to his troops.

At the end of the war, we find Washington quelling, through character alone, an incipient officer revolt.

And through two presidencies, we see his commitment to liberty underscore all of his acts and explain why, remaining aloof from political partisanship and petty squabbles, his integrity led him to being "the indispensable man" in America's founding.

To rejoin — in spirit — Washington's army, America needs to rediscover the Founders' commitment to liberty, justice and individual rights.

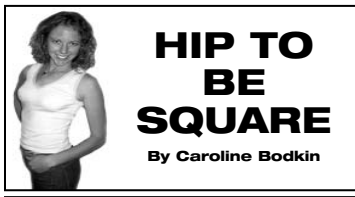
On President's Day, we should salute George Washington. The spectacle of his integrity can give us courage as we confront the tyrants who once again threaten our freedom and our lives.

(Dr. John Ridpath, a retired associate professor of economics and intellectual history at York University in Toronto, Canada, is a member of the board of directors of The Ayn Rand Institute (www.aynrand.org) in Irvine. The institute promotes the philosophy of Ayn Rand, author of "Atlas Shrugged" and "The Fountainhead". Send comments to reaction@aynrand.org.)

Guest Commentary

By Dr. John Ridpath

There's no pill for perspective, but it'll 'all work out'



HIP TO BE SQUARE

By Caroline Bodkin

I wish there were a pill for "perspective." The pill would give you the kind of wise view on your life that a grandparent or parent has when they look at you and say, "I'm not worried about you at all, it will work out. Things work out." I, at 24 years old, don't know what these "things" are. Not yet. I'm just young and troubled, unemployed for the third time since I graduated college in 2001, and lacking perspective.

The good news is that today, effectively my first day of this stint of unemployment, was actually going to be quite busy, as I had two interviews scheduled.

The first was an informational meeting with a prominent editor, a friend's father who took pity and agreed to see me. The second interview was for an actual job. I

was to meet with the principal of a film production company in hopes she'd want me to be her newest, youngest, least senior executive. Not a dream job, but if I've been on a ladder for the past 2 1/2 years, this would be a real step up.

The catch about the job: The boss is reportedly terrifying.

Last week I sat down with this woman's vice president for a preliminary interview, which went like this: We spent the first 20 minutes talking about me, and then the conversation shifted when he said, candidly, "Why would you have any interest in taking this job?" He then continued, "You've read 'The Devil Wears Prada'?" This would be Hell." She's a known tyrant of the least rational, most vicious kind.

And why might I have any interest in this? It's a job. It's a direction. It's something.

At 24 I feel overly educated, entirely without skills, but a master at worrying because I have no perspective. I have no way of knowing that everything's going to be all right. I worry little: bills, car, teeth. Then I worry big: Be all you can be.

The first interview, with Mr. Prominence, was informational. There

was no job at stake, only a free hour to ask questions of someone who'd clearly done something with his life. The second interview meant income and a step up in the strange entertainment-industry corporate ladder. It meant giving up your soul for a bit to climb hard, climb high ... but up the wrong ladder. I knew this job wasn't right for me, but at this age, where I'm so desperate for answers, is it possible I'd take any answer, even if it's the wrong one?

My good friend and former co-worker, Cara, looked at me on my last day of work last week and said "Caroline, you're going to be fine — more than fine. I have no doubt you'll make it." But she worries about her future as much as I do about mine. And, ironically, if she were in my situation, I'd say the same thing to her. She has a perspective on me, and I have a perspective on her that we seem to ignore when it comes to ourselves.

So this morning I went to the first interview hoping for a glimpse of light, some shimmer to guide me.

Mr. Prominence was a calm, pensive, smart man. The exact opposite of what I'd face later on. We sat and talked, and as the conversation continued and he let me ask question after question I forgot why I was

there. I just found myself interested in where he'd been and all he'd done, so when he asked me that dreaded question, "What do I want to do?" I didn't panic to answer like I usually do. I told him, and then I told him about the job interview I had later and as I described it to this man, I realized that the job, and that woman, had nothing to do with what I want to do. He nodded and asked me about the interview, and when I described the scenario, he offered his perspective. Then he added, "But things work out." And I believed him.

I came home and canceled the afternoon's interview. Without pause, without hesitation, and still, if only hours later, without regret. The truth is, if I'd listened to my heart in the first place, I never would have scheduled it.

It's okay if I can't get a non-prescription pill for perspective, it seems, if I can listen to someone else's heartfelt advice — as I learn to listen to my own.

(Caroline lives in Los Angeles and wonders daily if she'll miss her calling. You can e-mail her at hiptobesquarebybodkin@yahoo.com.)



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LOCAL

Community Profiles

PROFILE, from page 5

police actually shut us down."

So you are no stranger to opposition?

"No. The police force was pretty civilized compared to here."

Where did you go from there?

"My husband at the time got a job with the union, and we went to Denver for four years and then to North Carolina. And then I came back here."

What drew you to Santa Monica?

"I moved here in 1982. I always wanted to come back to California. For one thing, it's physically beautiful, and it's one of the most interesting cities in the entire country. I've never really liked all that Eastern snobbism. I have two kids and really wanted to raise them in

Southern California. And my mother was here. She was an activist in the rent-control movement in Santa Monica. There is something about the culture here. You can be who you want to be in California. You can reinvent yourself, and it feels less rigid. The Midwest has great things about it, but it's rigid."

What did you do when you got here?

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to do here. The liberal majority on the City Council had just hired a city manager, and I knew some of the people on the council. They were looking for a community liaison for the city ... someone who could work with community groups in the city for policy making. I got that job and did it for five years. I had never worked for a government before."

How was that experience, working on the opposite side?

"It was really interesting. I think for a lot of people who were involved in the city at the time, it was a sort of change to

figure out how to do things differently. You can't ignore minority views. Santa Monica became much more open and transparent. We had all kinds of community groups that had interest and participation. They reviewed the Latino programs and figured out how the city could be more responsive to Latinos. There was the homeless task force that I worked on, mulling over city policy."

What were the politics like at that time and how involved was your mother?

"She was very involved. She was one of the first to be involved on the Commission on Older Americans. She was one of the first seniors affected by Prop. 13, promoted by landlords because it would relieve them of the rent-control tax burden. After Prop. 13 was passed, they started to evict people because property values were going up and they wanted to raise rents. It was really the seniors that propelled the rent-control movement, and my mother was one of the first seniors that they tried to evict."

"I worked a lot on the homeless issue. That was really starting to become a big issue. I worked with a coalition that worked with the Ocean Park Community Center, which was a real visionary nonprofit group. I really loved the organization because of how creative it was and how humane it was. In 1987, a job came up, and I was really more comfortable working in the nonprofit sector. I wanted to learn how to run something, like an organization. At the time, there was an election, and it was really politically volatile. It was really hard to affect any change."

What else was happening in Santa Monica then?

"Development was a huge issue. The city had negotiated a number of development agreements with large developers. It was really looking at the whole development arena in Santa Monica to redefine what kind of development the city wanted. The city was trying to figure out how to create a tax base and part of that discussion was, 'do we continue to go with the development of commercial building or do we start promoting the tourism industry?' The tourism industry revenues go directly to the city through the bed tax whereas the commercial development, the property tax goes to the state. It was a very long discussion and debate, and it was decided to promote the development tourism industry because Santa Monica has unique attributes, and because it had less negative impacts in terms of traffic flows and the revenue went directly to the city. We never thought about the people who work in the industry. So we all promoted this tourism idea. The convention and visitors bureau was funded, the city zoning was changed to encourage development by the ocean."

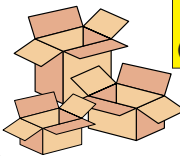
When did you get involved in the living wage movement?

"When I was at the community center and I was working with the homeless people, there were a lot of people who had gotten laid off. They were on the streets, they were very depressed. We would provide emergency services, shelter, job preparation skills and counseling. And all they could get were minimum

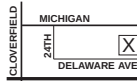
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LOCAL



Community Profiles

PROFILE, from page 8

wage jobs with no benefits. The living wage was not going up commensurate with the cost of living. And people kept coming back to our shelters. They just could not get a leg up. They couldn't save enough money for a security deposit. They kept dropping out of society. They couldn't get back to some kind of economic stability. So I felt like it was the economy, it was the market. That's when I got really intrigued with the living wage movement."

When was that?

"1997. I couldn't really become publicly involved until I left OPCC. The first thing was the Miramar. It was the only hotel with a union in town, and the company was trying to get rid of the union. We were introduced to the hotel workers, and we got to know them. People had worked there for 20 years and had the same wage. The company was trying to intimidate them to give up their union. We weren't even thinking about a living wage at the time. But we were just shocked that there were these horrible conditions in these hotels that we had all pushed to promote. The tourism industry was going to be a 'save Santa Monica.' This was our brilliant strategy, and it was

just humiliating and upsetting to realize what conditions were like. How could we have been so ignorant?"

Why haven't you given up?

"I think a lot of us feel responsible for the conditions in the tourism industry because it was the strategy we promoted. A lot of hotels think they got there because they're smart, but it was the whole plan and our vision. A lot of them got subsidies and breaks to develop here.

"If I didn't think we had the Santa Monica residents on our side, I would think it was hopeless. But people believe in this. The only way the other side has won is by tricking people. They have never won on the merits of their arguments. I feel like we owe it to the Santa Monica voting population to keep going forward. Wages have gone up in the industry since we started organizing."

What do you think has been the high point in the living wage movement here?

"Visibility to the hotel workers. The people that do the work and make the tourism industry work. When we did polling, we found that people in Santa Monica really care about hotel workers. They respect what they think. They think they are the best judge of what's good for them. Before, they were a completely invisible population. That identification people have with low wage workers is really an accomplishment."

The movement has been criticized that this is nothing more than an attempt to unionize the luxury hotels. What's your response?

"My view of it is we wanted to increase wages and benefits for hotel workers in Santa Monica. It would be great if it could be done with collective bargaining where workers are actually at the table, but if it can't be done by collective bargaining, it can be done by ordinance. Whatever way it happens. The other side tried to paint us as pro-union, and none of us pretended that we weren't. We told residents and people don't dislike unions in Santa Monica. And now with the supermarket strike, people have a better idea of what unions are fighting for."

Where do you shop?

"Bob's Market and Trader Joes."

What else do you do besides fight for a living wage?

"I take yoga, garden, write. Non fic-

tion, memoirs."

What went wrong with JJ and what lessons have you learned for the next campaign?

"One mistake we made was we didn't have much money for a direct mail campaign. We did four pieces of mail. We should have really used more mail. We also didn't expect the opposition to be so strong. They have spent \$2.3 million in the past 3 1/2 years. Who would have thought? It is still so shocking."

What's the plan for the future?

"We are going to have a retreat very soon so we can really talk about what the rest of our proposal is. We need to work out the details. We've studied the tactics of the opposition, the economic data, and we are working to refine our proposal. It's important for the city to go on record for its own employees and contractors."

Employment: LANE, deputy director. Lead organizer for SMART, a group of community members and clergy and a project of LANE.

Age: 57

Residence: Sunset Park

Family: Life partner, Marc Haeleley, a journalist for the LA Alternative Press and KPCC. Son, Jesse, 29, teaches labor economics at Princeton University; daughter, Leah, 27, an union organizer working on a campaign for low wage industry workers in Oakland, Calif.

Salary: Declined to give. Health benefits received from Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union.



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Signs of improvement in California wine industry

MICHELLE LOCKE

Associated Press Writer

BERKELEY — Three years ago, wine grower Stephen Schafer saw troubles in the industry as big as the bulldozers pulling out thousands of acres of Central Valley vines rendered worthless by a grape glut and cheap imports.

This year, he's seeing signs of quiet encouragement — work crews planting new vines in response to new demand from wineries.

California's wine industry is a long way from the run-and-gun '90s, but with preliminary crush report figures showing the 2003 harvest was down slightly, many hope they're seeing the beginning of a gentle upswing.

"The good news is there's less grapes around," said bulk wine broker Joe Ciatti.

"We are making steps toward that supply-demand balance," agreed Barry Bedwell, of Bedwell Growers Services.

According to preliminary figures released Tuesday by state agriculture officials, about 2.9 million tons of wine

grapes were crushed in 2003, down about 5 percent from the year before.

A smaller harvest is expected to mean better prices. Helping the situation, from growers' point of view are the new "supervalue" wines such as Two-buck Chuck, formally known as Charles Shaw wines, that are soaking up the glut.

However, the crush didn't drop as much as some growers were expecting — some estimates were as low as 2.75 million tons — and prices paid per ton were still on average below 2002 levels.

So, no one is predicting a quick end to California's wine woes.

"We're still seeing price declines," notes Robert Smiley, a University of California, Davis professor who follows the wine industry.

An exception was Napa, where the average price of \$3,000 a ton was up 3 percent from the year before.

Crush totals were up for the red wine grapes cabernet sauvignon and pinot noir, which is probably good news for bargain-hunters, said Karen Ross, president of the California Association of Winegrape Growers.

"From a consumer perspective, there's still an ample supply of California wine at good prices," Ross said.

For Schafer, good news has come in the form of wineries making inquiries about expected crop yields for next fall's harvest.

Schafer, who is in business with his father and brother, grows or manages about 1,500 acres of wine grapes. He pulled out about 300 acres of vines during the last three years, but this year he expects to plant new vines. Across the Central Valley region, an estimated 65,000 acres to 90,000 acres of wine grapes were pulled during that period.

This is Schafer's second experience with a boom-and-bust cycle — the first being the early '80s — and he's proceeding cautiously, planning to put in about 90 acres.

"Every time you go through one of these evolutions you come out on the other side a little wiser," Schafer said.

At the other end of the state, North Coast grower Andy Beckstoffer also sees signs of an upturn.

"Wineries are coming around asking about grapes yesterday and today. Last year at the time nobody would even answer your phone call," Beckstoffer said.

Norwegian woman eligible for deportation pardon

BY RUKMINI CALLIMACHI

Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. — A Norwegian woman facing deportation for a 12-year-old marijuana conviction is eligible for a pardon, a federal judge has ruled.

But Kari Rein's chance to prove that growing six plants of marijuana in 1992 is not an offense large enough to warrant losing her right to live in the U.S. will not come for another three months.

Rein, 42, an Oregon resident since

1988, is entangled in a web of laws dating to 1996, three years after she performed 240 hours of community service and paid a \$1,200 fine for growing marijuana in her Southern Oregon mobile home.

The new law calls for immigrants who have committed one of 40 minor crimes, including first time drug offenses, to be deported — even if they have already fulfilled their sentence.

But the law also allows for a trial before an immigration judge, to seek a permanent pardon for the earlier crime.

In December, Rein, 42, was separated from her husband and children at the Seattle airport, as they returned from a vacation to Norway.

It was her eighth trip back to Oslo since her 1993 marijuana conviction, but using new security technology installed after Sept. 11, that time her green card was flagged by custom officials.

She was shackled, handcuffed and sent to an Oregon jail where she waited for three weeks without bail, until a lawyer intervened.

Michael Bennett, the judge, said that media reports had incorrectly described the government's actions as tied to the Patriot Act.

"This is not a national security case — it's a perfectly ordinary case," he said.

The new technology installed at the nation's airports is intended to catch potential terrorists. But because it also brings up an immigrant's past conviction record, it catches people like Rein.

Norwegian newspapers, which have taken an intense interest in Rein, have used her case as an illustration of America's exaggerated vigilance.

"We have difficulty seeing how she can be a security threat to the U.S.," said Hallgeir Westrum, managing editor of ANB, one of two news wire services in Norway.

One of the main issues on the table,

said Bennett, is whether or not Rein's crime counts as an "aggravated felony" as defined for the purpose of an immigration hearing.

The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which oversees cases in Oregon as well, recently ruled that possession of small amounts of marijuana is not an aggravated felony.

"Growing marijuana is always different than possession," Bennett said.

Rein's attorney plans to argue that, like a possession of less than an ounce of marijuana, growing six plants is also too minor of an infraction to warrant deportation.

But prosecuting attorney Margaret Rosenat said, "It does still appear to be a trafficking offense on its face."

"It doesn't feel quite real," said Rein, flanked by her husband of 16 years, who is a U.S. citizen. "What people don't realize is that immigration laws have been continually tightened up. This new law is breaking families apart."

Both of Rein's children — now 7 and 14 — were born in southern Oregon, the family's home since 1988.

"If that's what we have to do to keep our family together that's what we will do," said James Jungwirth, Rein's husband, when asked if he was willing to move to Norway, should the pardon not be granted.

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NATIONAL



Veep seat holds no appeal until top spot is taken

BY SIOBHAN MCDONOUGH

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards wants to be president and says he won't settle for anything less — not even the No. 2 slot.

Thanks, but no thanks, he says. Flatly.

But when it comes to disowning interest in running for vice president, saying "no" can mean "check with me later."

Check with him later. Edwards' strong performance as runner-up so far has raised his prospects as a running mate. And politics has a rich history of people who think being on the ticket is a chump job, then chomp at the bit for it.

Nelson Rockefeller once called the vice presidency "standby equipment," then climbed on board. Al Gore called it a "political dead-end" in one election, then became Bill Clinton's running mate, and vice president, in the next.

Letting on that you will settle for the vice presidency is too risky for those bidding for the White House, says Erwin Hargrove, professor emeritus of political science at Vanderbilt University.

"It would take the heart out of their supporters if they said, 'I'm willing to settle for second place.'"

Besides, he says, "To do all this, psychologically you have to believe you're going to win. There's a certain amount of self-hypnosis that you convince yourself you're going to win."

Edwards even has started to back off his denials a bit. Campaigning near Los Angeles on Thursday, he was again asked about any interest in taking second place on a national ticket.

"I've made the case to be the presidential candidate," Edwards said.

That's different from saying he wouldn't do it.

"There's a certain amount of hypocrisy," says Hargrove. Or at least their head isn't in the possibility yet.

History has shown, time and again, that "no" doesn't mean "never." Secrets do exist.

In 1988, Gore, then a senator and one of seven presidential candidates, said, "Anyone who thinks that I am running for the vice presidency will find out differently. Anyone who thinks that this campaign is aimed at something other than the top spot at the White House is going to be surprised."

"I have no interest in it," he said then. "Might very well turn it down, indeed, and probably would. I have no interest in it. I think Vice President Bush will demonstrate again this year that it is a political dead end."

Four years later, he joined the ticket with Clinton.

In 1980, George H.W. Bush had announced the end of his two-year quest for the presidency and the only question remaining about the Republican ticket headed by Ronald Reagan was the vice presidential nomination.

Bush said defiantly, "I'm not leaving the door open." Then he became Reagan's running mate and vice presi-

dent.

Nelson Rockefeller refused offers to be "standby equipment" as he referred to the nomination for vice president. But when he was asked to take on the role by President Ford in the summer of 1974, after the Watergate scandal, he did not hesitate.

In any event, Kerry hasn't tipped his hand on a running-mate choice if he wins the nomination, as he is heavily favored to do. Among his other rivals, Howard Dean, at one point, indicated he might take the job if offered, then said, "No, I've got to win first."

A candidate's choice of who'll join him on the ticket doesn't really make a difference, Hargrove says, adding, "Most of the time, the vice president doesn't affect the vote."

Lyndon B. Johnson was one exception, generally credited with helping John Kennedy win Southern states in 1960. Kennedy didn't think his chief opponent for the presidential nomination would accept. But he did.

Like LBJ, Edwards' strength as a running mate might be in attracting votes in the South, where Democrats struggle in presidential campaigns.

Bob Dole said on CNN's "Larry King Live" that Kerry might want to go with a governor, big-city mayor or someone with executive experience. "But I bet if he calls John Edwards, if he has a nomination sewed up, and said, John, you've got to do this for the country, I don't know how you say no."

Buffer zone between conference-goers and protesters suggested

By The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Mormon church officials have suggested the city establish a buffer zone separating church conference-goers from the street preachers who harangue them.

The next conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is in April and the church leaders say they will advise members attending the two-day gathering to ignore the protesters.

The church officials do not want confrontations such as those at October's conference, in which street preachers waved Mormon temple garments. Two Mormons

were arrested after trying to take the clothing from the protesters.

In a December letter to city officials, obtained this week through a records request, church attorney Von Keetch suggested the city revise its free-speech ordinance, The Salt Lake Tribune reported Friday.

He suggested separating the anti-church preachers from the counter-protesters, and keeping all demonstrators about 20 yards from Conference Center entrances. That still would be within earshot and eyesight of conference-goers.

He also called for further restricting noise levels and requiring permits for all

demonstrations.

"If the city fails to take appropriate action to regulate this situation, unfortunate consequences seem inevitable," Keetch wrote.

City Attorney Ed Rutan said the city is addressing the concerns.

Lonnie Pursifull, one of the street preachers, said, "We will not be put in a box. The Mormon Church is trying to do everything in its power to stop us from exposing them."

As for any violence, he blames conference-goers and says he has been accosted by them. "We don't get violent. We've never hit nobody. We've never assaulted

nobody," he said.

The church memo cited cases in which buffer zones established around abortion clinics to keep demonstrators away from women using the clinic have been upheld.

Rutan said the church's conferences are different.

"You do not have situations where the speakers themselves have physically assaulted the listeners in the past, as you do in the abortion cases," he said. "If the speakers have been in full compliance with the law, then you're not really in the position where you can justify any significant restrictions on the exercise of their speech."

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Christian singer Orrico talks trash on Spears, Aguilera

By The Associated Press

■ **SINGAPORE** — Christian singer Stacie Orrico says revealing clothing like that worn by Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera is “degrading” and makes them poor role models for girls.

“The reason that I don’t dress trashy is that I’m trying to set an example for little girls,” Orrico told reporters Saturday in Singapore while preparing for the MTV Asia Awards. “From the time they’re seven or eight years old, (girls) are being taught that the only thing that makes them special and beautiful is their sexuality, and I think that’s wrong.”

Orrico, wearing a loose, long-sleeved white shirt and jeans, said she doesn’t approve of the image projected by the pop superstars.

“I don’t think that’s sexy, I think it’s degrading,” the 17-year-old from Nashville, Tenn., said. “I think that a truly sexy woman comes from being confident and being classy, respectable and mature.”

Orrico’s self-titled album rose to No. 5 on Billboard’s Top Contemporary Christian Albums list this month.

■ **MACON, Ga.** — Little Richard attended funeral services for a Georgia musician who helped him get started in the recording industry and once supplied him with a shirt and a car for a performance at the Apollo Theatre.

Melvin C. “Percy” Welch offered Little Richard a place in his band in 1952.

“I didn’t have clothes,” Little Richard recalled Saturday at Welch’s funeral in Macon. “My mama had

12 kids. My daddy was a bootlegger, and the boot was empty that day.”

Welch, 75, died Feb. 8 of kidney failure.

Welch also coached Otis Redding and worked with Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Gladys Knight and The Drifters, according to friends.

Welch remained with family in Macon rather than seek fame in Hollywood. “He never did get what he should have gotten as far as his music is concerned,” Little Richard said.

■ **SANTA BARBARA** — Ray Bradbury, author of the science-fiction classic “The Martian Chronicles,” says President Bush’s proposal to put humans on Mars could open new worlds in much the same way European explorers discovered America.

“We have to imagine what they couldn’t imagine. Because of their exploration they created us — the greatest country in the history of the world,” Bradbury said Saturday after a book-signing.

“We’re going to go with real people and land on Mars in the next 20 years, and I’m going to be buried in a tomato soup can on Mars,” joked Bradbury, who is 83. “I’ll be the first one up there.”

■ **PASADENA** — And the Oscar winner is: Bill Tondreau.

Who?

Tondreau, 58, of New Mexico, received an Academy Award statuette Saturday for advancing robotic camera technology. He was among 23 people honored for scientific and technical achievements by the Academy of

Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in a ceremony at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

The first Oscar honors of the year lack the glitz and glamor of the acting awards that will be handed out on Feb. 29. So do the winners.

“The sci-tech guys have a lot of nerd heritage,” Tondreau said. “A lot of us have worn a suit maybe four or five times in our whole lives.”

The scientific and technical awards have been handed out since 1931. They include certificates and plaques. Only a few Oscar statuettes are presented.

■ **SAND SPRINGS, Okla.** — Darren McGrady, who served as personal chef to Princess Diana, spent Valentine’s Day cooking for a group of homeless and abused women.

McGrady prepared a lavish, three-course meal for 70 women and children living at a homeless shelter in Sand Springs, a suburb of Tulsa.

“I’m absolutely delighted to do it,” McGrady said. “If me giving up my weekend can bring some joy and pleasure to people who haven’t had the good fortune that I have, then it’s very well spent.”

McGrady’s menu included smoked mozzarella, asparagus and Parma ham on spring salad leaves with a lemon and thyme dressing; poached Atlantic salmon in mushroom sauce with spinach roulade and rosemary potatoes; and white chocolate truffles.

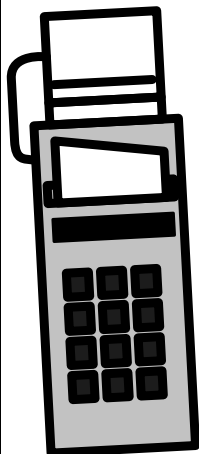
McGrady, who worked as one of 20 chefs at Buckingham Palace, became the princess’ personal chef shortly after she and Prince Charles separated.

DID YOU KNOW?: Britney Spears’ first hit, Baby One More Time, was a song originally written for TLC?

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