

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

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8 10 18 31 36
Meganumber: 15
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11 26 28 30 33

DAILY 3

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1st: 10 Solid Gold
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

Pigs Fighting for Respect: Pigs' personalities are distributed much like humans', according to patiently observant British researcher Niamh O'Connell (interviewed for a November story in London's Daily Telegraph). Except for the largest ones, pigs are of two types: pushy ones that always fight for food and choice sleeping space, and meek ones that avoid confrontations. According to O'Connell, the aggressive ones have higher stress levels and make poorer parents, and besides, they ultimately lose out when they challenge the alpha pigs.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 48th day of 2006.
There are 317 days left in the year.

On Feb. 17, 1801, the House of Representatives broke an electoral tie between Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr, electing Jefferson president; Burr became vice president.

In 1933, Newsweek was first published.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We are what we pretend to be so we must be careful what we pretend to be."

KURT VONNEGUT
AMERICAN AUTHOR

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Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Schools Superintendent John Deasy helped auction off a surfboard at a fundraising event for the campaign 'For the Arts' last spring. Deasy is expected to be moving on to head a school district in Maryland.

Schools super is moving on

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

SMMUSD HDQTRS. — Schools Superintendent John Deasy has entered into contract negotiations to become the top education official in Prince George's County, Maryland.

The board of education for Prince George's County Public Schools announced Thursday that Deasy, 45, was chosen as the top candidate for the chief executive officer position, beating out two other finalists from New York and Kansas, respectively.

"I am pleased to report that Dr. Deasy is the lead candidate as a result of being the clear consensus choice of the board and our many stakeholders," said Charles M. Dukes, chair of the board's personnel committee. "We look forward

to continuing our due diligence by visiting the Santa Monica area before finalizing an offer."

According to a report in the Washington Post, a source close to the negotiations called the decision to hire Deasy a "bold move" and said he impressed the board as an educator with "a young, energetic, creative mind."

The board for Prince George's

County will further investigate Deasy and enter into contract negotiations before taking a formal vote to hire him. The position will pay a minimum of \$250,000 per year — about \$100,000 more than what Deasy is currently earning at SMMUSD.

In an e-mail sent early

See DEASY, page 6

Up pier battle



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Tourists let their Segways do the walking as they make their way up the Santa Monica Pier.

Token pessimism: Officials say subway may be pipe dream

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

WILSHIRE BLVD. — Elected officials are telling residents to put the brakes on before getting too excited about the possibility of extending the subway to Santa Monica.

Would-be riders ditch the car keys at their own peril, for there is no guarantee that the Metro Red Line will be extended from the station at

Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue all the way to the coast.

That extension would cost an estimated \$4.8 billion and may not be completed until 2015, or longer, according to a report released Wednesday by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency (MTA).

While new tunneling technology,

See RED LINE, page 7

Samohi Symphony to drum up some Disney magic



Photo Courtesy

The Samohi Symphony Orchestra is set to take the stage at the Disney Hall.

BY JAYA GUPTA

Special to the Daily Press

The Santa Monica High School Symphony Orchestra has hit the big time.

After being chosen by the LA Philharmonic Association to be the first public high school ensemble ever to perform at the Disney Concert Hall in downtown LA, Samohi students will take the stage for a rare and noteworthy performance on Sunday.

Since opening in the fall of 2003, the Walt Disney Concert Hall has already had its share of

magical performances, with patrons experiencing the masterworks of artists from Beethoven to Mozart. Home to the world-renowned Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Disney stage commands from its performers immense talent, incredible work ethic and, foremost, a passion for their art.

Under the guidance of award-winning director Joni Swenson, the Samohi symphony orchestra will open a four-installment concert series entitled "Sounds About Town."

See SYMPHONY, page 10

Jacquie Banks

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HOROSCOPES

Mosey on home, Cancer

Santa Monica Daily Press



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)

★★★★★ Are you sniffing big changes in the wind? For good reason: Today your ruling planet changes signs. You feel renewed and less burdened by money matters. Others pick up on the new energy that emanates from you. Tonight: Follow another's lead.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ Some of your strong and sometimes combustible energy waves goodbye for a while. You might need to be more concerned about the practical elements of your life, OK? Remember not to get too far off track. Tonight: Consider a new gym.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Suddenly, you are the magnetic high-energy Twin that you like. You feel as if you are in your skin. You enter a special phase that will last the next few months. Projects initiated after the morning could be a huge success. Go for it. Tonight: TGIF.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ You know what works, yet you might need to think and regroup before you involve others. Watch for a self-destructive streak in the next few weeks. Take good care of your health, starting this very moment. Tonight: Mosey on home.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Problems with someone in charge could start evaporating in the next few weeks. What a blessed relief! You will be in a position to explore what you want and to get just that. Communication flourishes. Count on it. Tonight: Hang with friends.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ You have been working on taking in the big picture for several months. In the next few weeks, the time will come to act on what you know. No excuse will work anymore. Actions speak. Tonight: Out and about.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ You are the cat's meow, or would you prefer to say "top dog"? Keep this in mind, and you'll get way ahead. Your personality melts boundaries, making everyone much happier. You will gain a greater understanding of those you care about. Tonight: Whatever makes you smile.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Follow your instincts, especially with someone who might have a great deal of influence on your life. You might like what is going on. Think positively about someone who might be rather bellicose. Tonight: Vanish. Do for you. Ah, the power of mystery.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Others might become shockingly blunt later today, setting the trend for the next few months. You might want to rethink a personal matter. You're likely to get what you want if you stay on target. Tonight: Hang with crowds and pals.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Knowing when to bail out could be more important than you realize. Sometimes others could push you to your limit. Suddenly, you will find yourself careless and possibly accident-prone. Tonight: You are the centerfold, so to speak.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Split as soon as you can; you need the break! You think that someone understands more than they do. Let go and relax. "Detachment" is your key word for the day. Let ingenuity fill in the gaps. Tonight: Greet "different" with a smile.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Laugh and relax. You will be a lot happier than you think if you simply don't push. Look within for answers, and you will gain. Perhaps you need to work with a key individual more carefully. Tonight: Say yes to quality time.



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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 editor@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER

Ryan Hyatt ryanh@smdp.com

SANTA MONICA PARENTING

Nina Furukawa nina@smdp.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Fabian Lewkowicz FabianLewkowicz@aol.com

NEWS CLERK

Michelle Lanz michelle@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Robbie P. Piubeni rob@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Rob Schwenker schwenker@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Stewart O'Dell stewarto@smdp.com

TRAFFIC MANAGER

Connie Sommerville connies@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II alex@smdp.com

NIGHT EDITOR

Lori Luechtefeld lori@smdp.com

NIGHT EDITOR

Michael Tittinger MoNeY.TLaRoK@smdp.com

CLASSIFIEDS SALES MANAGER

Annie Kotok anniek@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Keith Wyatt

CIRCULATION

Glenn Bolan

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com

MASCOT

Maya Furukawa maya@smdp.com

LOCAL



Receiving the Lions' share



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

During the Lions Club of Santa Monica's 25th Annual Community Recognition Awards ceremony earlier this month at the Bel Air Bay Club, Jerry Bruver (right) recognizes and honors Eddie Guerboian, of Readers Fine Jewelers, for his community service.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Thousands of dollars just for signing up

By Daily Press staff

One of the largest hospitals in Santa Monica is looking for employment help. Saint John's Health Center will hold an employee recruitment drive Feb. 23 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the center's Employment House, 1328 22nd St., where officials from the hospital will be looking for nurses to serve in intensive care, operations, oncology, and other areas.

Nursing staff will be available to talk about the working environment at the center. A tour of the new inpatient facility also will be offered. Refreshments will be served.

Persons interested in working at Saint John's Health Center also will have access to:

- \$10,000 sign-on bonus
- Highly competitive pay rates
- \$6,000 referral bonuses (for each employee referred)
- Generous benefits package
- Tuition reimbursement
- Loan forgiveness program
- Free continuing education courses
- Career development and growth
- Generous vacation accrual from day of hire
- Lift team 24/7
- Merit awards
- Saint John's Nursing Endowment and Scholarships

Those interested in attending should RSVP to Marjorie Allen at (310) 829-8824.

For those who can't attend, and would like to speak to a nurse about nursing career opportunities and what it is like to work for Saint John's Health Center, call 888-807-3894.

Also at Saint John's community calendar is "Matters of the Heart," on Feb. 21,

See BRIEFS, page 6

SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	12"-36"	8:30am - 4:00pm	18	10/12
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed, Frozen Granular				

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	72" - 96"	8:00am - 4:00pm	35	6/6
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed				

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 5"	96"-120"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	150	20/28
CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed				

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	12"-24"	8:30 am - 10:00 pm	16	8/16
CONDITIONS: Machine Made, Hard Packed				

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SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	12"-36"	8:30 am - 4:30 pm	18	14/14
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed, Granular				

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	8"-18"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	10	3/11
CONDITIONS: Machine Made, Machine Groomed				

CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 58°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (2-4 FT)

Today is looking smaller with surf only knee to possibly waist high.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

Small NW for weekend, but rain...

Small SW Tuesday the 21st...

Small SW Friday the 24th...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

SATURDAY:	1:52AM	2.1FT	3:03PM	-0.8FT
LOW TIDE	7:55AM	5.8FT	9:31PM	4.0FT

SUNDAY:	2:24AM	1.8FT	3:27PM	-0.7FT
LOW TIDE	8:27AM	5.8FT	9:51PM	4.0FT

MONDAY:	2:54AM	1.6FT	3:49PM	-0.5FT
LOW TIDE	8:27AM	5.8FT	9:51PM	4.0FT

TUESDAY:	3:26AM	1.5FT	4:11PM	-0.2FT
LOW TIDE	9:26AM	5.4FT	10:31PM	4.2FT

WEDNESDAY:	3:59AM	1.4FT	4:30PM	0.1FT
LOW TIDE	9:56AM	5.0FT	10:52PM	4.3FT

THURSDAY:	4:36AM	1.4FT	4:49PM	0.5FT
LOW TIDE	10:27AM	4.5FT	11:14PM	4.4FT

FRIDAY:	N/A			
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The Q Line

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Some parents are outraged over what they feel was a weak response by school officials to a rise in tensions after racist graffiti was spotted at Santa Monica High School at multiple locations on campus. School officials say they are working to ease parent concerns and are conducting mediation and counseling sessions with students to discuss the graffiti, its impact and what can be done to foster better relations between different ethnic groups on campus.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "How should school officials deal with racial tensions at Santa Monica schools?"

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition. Please try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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EDITORIAL

Spend surplus to shed light, make clean sweep



It appears Santa Monica is rolling in the dough.

Thanks to a strong tourism base and real estate market, as well as unexpected money from the state, city financiers have uncovered an extra \$2.5 million to spend this year.

But discerning just where and how to spend it may prove much more difficult than actually earning it. Over the next 30 days, the City Council will ponder how the money should be doled out — and there are million and one ways to do it. Elected leaders heard this week from dozens of residents who gave their thoughts on how the surplus should be spent — a city-sponsored foosball league, a dog beach, crosswalks, traffic lights, the arts — you name it.

We here at the SMDP often suggest to City Hall where it is wasting taxpayer money, but we are equally capable of suggesting how to spend it. The expenditures must be noticeable, reasonable and should improve the quality of life here.

Whenever it's brought to light publicly about some misstep elected leaders have taken, a common excuse coming from City Hall is a lack of funding. And while we could search our archives for examples, we'll take two immediate needs that require attention: Downtown alleys and lighting at the Cove Skatepark at Memorial Park.

Skatepark lighting: While it cost \$550,000 to build, apparently the City Council didn't budget enough money so the public could actually use the Cove.

Park users last fall complained that it's only open two hours a day because there are no lights to illuminate it at night. Because the skatepark lacks lighting, users can only bike or skate until the sun goes down. Until there's staffing available to extend the hours, City Hall won't be adding any lighting.

At the time, City Council members said there wasn't enough money to hire another staffer to man the park for extended hours, but they would look into it. Whether they have followed up on it remains to be seen, but one thing is for certain — it should be put at the top of the priority list when considering how to spend \$2.5 million in the coming months.

There's no point in spending more than a half million dollars on a new park if people can't use it.

Alleys: Since only a small portion of the surplus would be spent at the skatepark, the rest of it should be invested in the alleys off of the Third Street Promenade — one of the first places tourists see after parking their cars in the public garages.

Downtown officials try to mask the fact that these main thoroughfares are really just alleys by calling them "passageways." But their odors and conditions are dead giveaways that they are an integral part of the gritty city.

The alleys smell like urine and feces. They also smell like garbage. That's because the alleys are full of both. First impressions are everything, and if we want to continue to compete with destinations like The Grove and Pasadena for visitors, we had better clean up our act.

While \$2 million would only make a dent, city officials could start by putting in more lights, painting the exteriors of all of the parking garages, adding more cleaning crews and patrols, enclosing the trash rooms and repaving alley surfaces.

Councilwoman Pam O'Connor said on Tuesday that the guideline for spending the surplus has to be based on themes presented by the public. Priority No. 1 is quality of life for residents. So, however our surplus is inevitably spent, it should improve our lives here.

We should feel very fortunate that we are a city so financially well off that our elected leaders face these types of problems. It must be a welcome change for Lamont Ewell, Santa Monica's new city manager who came from San Diego — a city embroiled in major budget problems that is cutting public services.

If the City Council finds itself not being able to make a decision on the surplus spending, we could always throw a gigantic community party and blow it one fell swoop. The memories might last longer than whatever else \$2.5 million would buy in this town.

GUEST COMMENTARY BY ALEX EPSTEIN

Muslim opinion be damned

As Muslim groups express outrage and issue death threats over cartoons depicting Mohammad, many Western leaders are responding, not with condemnations of the death threats, but with condemnations of the cartoons — and of the newspapers that published them.

This is the latest example of the apologies and hand-wringing that occur anytime there is any widespread display of Muslim anger. To listen to most of our foreign-policy commentators, the biggest problem facing America today is the fact that many Muslims are mad at us.

"Whatever one's views on the (Iraq) war," writes a "New York Times" columnist, "thoughtful Americans need to consider ... the bitter anger that it has provoked among Muslims around the world." In response to Abu Ghraib, Ted Kennedy lamented, "We have become the most hated nation in the world, as a result of this disastrous policy in the prisons." Muslim anger over America's support of Israel, we are told, is a major cause of anti-American terrorism.

We face, these commentators say, a crisis of "Muslim opinion." We must, they say, win the hearts and minds of angry Muslims by heaping public affection on Islam, by shutting down Guantanamo, by being more "evenhanded" between free Israel and the terrorist Palestinian Authority — and certainly by avoiding any new military action in the Muslim world. If we fail to win over "Muslim opinion," we are told, we will drive even more to become terrorists.

All of this evades one blatant truth: The hatred being heaped on America is irrational and undeserved. Consider the issue of treatment of POWs. Many Muslims are up in arms about the treatment of prisoners of war in Iraq and at Guantanamo — many of whom were captured on battlefields, trying to kill Americans. Yet these same Muslims are silent about the summary convictions and torture — real torture, with electric drills and vats of acid — that are official policy and daily practice throughout the Middle East.

Or consider "Muslim opinion" over the United States' handling of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in which the United States is accused of not being "hard enough" on Israel — a free nation with laws that protect all citizens, Jew and Arab alike — for Israel's supposed mistreatment of Palestinians. Yet "Muslim opinion" reveres the Palestinian Authority, a brutal dictatorship that deprives Palestinians of every basic freedom, keeps them in unspeakable poverty, and routinely tortures and executes peaceful dissenters.

So-called Muslim opinion is not the unanimous and just consensus that its seekers pretend. It is the irrational and unjust opinion of the world's worst Muslims: Islamists and their legions of "moderate" supporters and sympathizers. These people oppose us not because of any legitimate grievances against America, but because they are steeped in a fundamentalist interpretation of

their religion — one that views America's freedom, prosperity, and pursuit of worldly pleasures as the height of depravity. They do not seek respect for the rights of the individual (Muslim or non-Muslim), they seek a world in which the rights of all are sacrificed to the dictates of Islam.

The proper response to Islamists and their supporters is to identify them as our ideological and political enemies — and dispense justice accordingly. In the case of our militant enemies, we must kill or demoralize them — especially those regimes that support terrorism and fuel the Islamist movement. As for the rest, we must politically ignore them and intellectually discredit them, while proudly arguing for the superiority of Americanism. Such a policy would make us safe, expose Islamic anti-Americanism as irrational and immoral, and embolden the better Muslims to support our ideals and emulate our ways.

President Bush, like most politicians and intellectuals, has taken the opposite approach to "Muslim opinion": Appeasement. Instead of identifying anti-American Muslims as ideological enemies to be discredited, he has appealed to their sensibilities and met their demands — like sacrificing American soldiers to save Iraqi civilians and mosques. Instead of seeking to crush the Islamists by defeating the causes they fight for — such as Islamic world domination and the destruction of Israel — he has appeased those causes, declaring Islam a "great religion" and rewarding the Palestinian terrorist Jihad with a promised Palestinian state. Instead of destroying terrorist regimes that wage war against the West — including, most notably, Iran — he has sought their "cooperation" and even cast some as "coalition partners."

Such measures have rewarded our enemy for waging physical and spiritual war against us. "Condemn America," they have learned, "and American leaders will praise your ideals and meet your demands." "Attack America via terrorist proxy," terrorist states and movements have been taught, "and America will neither blame you nor destroy you, but redouble its efforts to buy your love."

Every attempt to appease "Muslim opinion" preserves, promotes, and emboldens our enemies. Every concession to angry Muslim mobs gives hope to the Islamist cause. Every day we allow terrorist regimes to exist gives their minions time to execute the next Sept. 11. America needs honest leadership with the courage to identify and defeat our enemies — "Muslim opinion" be damned. They should begin by declaring that militant groups and states that threaten anti-Western violence in response to free speech will be met, not with appeasement, but with destruction.

(Alex Epstein is a junior fellow at the Ayn Rand Institute in Irvine. The Institute promotes the ideas of Ayn Rand, best-selling author of "Atlas Shrugged" and "The Fountainhead.")



CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

Man kicks dog while it's down, slugs a cop

By Daily Press staff

On Feb. 6 at 8:45 p.m., a police officer was driving through the 2600 block of Main Street when he saw a male subject kick a dog. The officer approached the man and made contact with the dog's owner, who said that for some unknown reason the suspect kicked her dog in the stomach. As the suspect, identified as 55-year-old transient David McCray, was being placed under arrest, he punched the officer in the face with his fist. He was taken to the Santa Monica jail and booked for battery on a police officer and cruelty to animals. His bail was set at \$15,000.

On Feb. 5 at 9:59 a.m., Santa Monica police responded to the 100 block of Second Street regarding the illegal use of a credit card at a hotel. A hotel employee said a suspect checked into the hotel in the evening of Feb. 4. The credit card he used was in someone else's name. Police called the owner of the card and determined it was stolen. Officers went to the hotel room where the suspect was staying and arrested him for commercial burglary, the fraudulent use of a credit card and for violating his parole. The suspect was identified as Curt Edward Price, 37, a transient.

On Feb. 5 at 3:45 a.m., police were called to 22nd Street and Carlyle Avenue regarding a complaint that a man was exposing his penis to those walking by. There were two victims who said they saw the suspect walking with his penis hanging out of his pants. The suspect, 51-year-old Tommy Burton, was arrested and booked for indecent exposure and a parole violation. No bail was set.

At 1:45 a.m. on Feb. 6, Santa Monica police spotted a bicyclist riding with no headlights on the 2200 block of Lincoln Boulevard. An officer stopped the rider, Tito Gatewood, 47, a transient, and issued a citation for riding without a light. In the process, an officer conducted a search and found Gatewood to be in possession of two glass pipes with copper mesh. The pipes are commonly used to smoke narcotics, police said. Gatewood was placed under arrest and booked for possession of drug paraphernalia and a misdemeanor probation violation. Bail was set at \$10,000.

On Feb. 6 at 8:35 p.m. police responded to a call at the 100 block of Wilshire Boulevard regarding a suspect who refused to leave a local hotel bar. When officers arrived they contacted a hotel employee who phoned police and said a suspect, identified as Mark G. Lubaszka, 28, was drunk and was challenging employees to a fight. He was placed under arrest and booked for public intoxication, a probation violation and an outstanding warrant.

At 6:26 p.m. on Feb. 7, police responded to Ocean and Colorado avenues regarding a sexual battery investigation. When officers arrived, they spoke to the victim who said she walking and a suspect, later identified as Darrell Rideaux, 26, approached her and grabbed her butt. The suspect was later stopped and after being identified by the victim, he was booked for assault.

On Feb. 8 at 12:20 a.m. officers responded to the 2800 block of Main Street regarding a suspect slumped over his steering wheel. Officers questioned the man and smelled a strong odor of alcohol. After investigating, they placed the suspect under arrest for driving under the influence. The suspect was taken to a local hospital for a blood-alcohol test and transported to the Santa Monica jail where he was booked for DUI. The man's name is Gerald McDonald, 43. His bail was set at \$5,000.

At 3:32 a.m. on Feb. 8, police responded to the 800 block of Wilshire Boulevard regarding a dispute over cab fare. Officers arrived on scene and spoke with the taxi cab driver who said the passenger, Connie Tran, 24, refused to pay a fare of \$260. The cab driver said Tran asked him to drive from Santa Monica to Los Angeles, Beverly Hills and Hollywood in search of a hotel room. When they could not find one, they returned to Santa Monica. As officers investigated further they found that Tran was using a credit card that didn't belong to her. She had allegedly used the card to purchase \$2,900 in clothing from a variety of stores earlier in the day. The clothing was booked as evidence and Tran was jailed for using a stolen credit card. No bail was set.



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Deasy decision: Superintendent to depart

DEASY, from page 1

Thursday, Deasy informed parents, board members, district staff and others about his decision to move forward with the hiring process.

"I wanted each of you to know before you hear it in the media and before I make a public announcement," Deasy wrote. "My most conflicted emotions are about leaving this school district. I have been honored to have worked side by side with each of you and am beyond proud of your accomplishments and that of our students."

Deasy, who joined Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District in 2001, said the details of his transition have not been fully worked out, but he will be meeting with the board of education frequently in the upcoming week to prepare for his departure.

"Needless to say, the board is fully committed to the vision, mission and strategies established in our district and intends to see them through and to build on them," Deasy added. "This, of course, means that

your support is as crucial as ever ... in communicating that there is no 'trauma' over the transition and that we will easily stay the course on our initiatives."

Board members from Prince George's County should be visiting Santa Monica early next week, at which time they will conduct interviews with the school board and district staff, said John White, a spokesman for the Maryland school district.

Reaction to Deasy's possible departure was mixed.

"I'm thrilled for him," said SMMUSD board member Kathy Wisnicki. "I also feel it is a tremendous loss for Santa Monica. But the board is very committed to doing a thorough search and coming up with the best possible candidate because we believe that this is our No. 1 responsibility, the most important task that we are charged with."

Now in his fifth year at the district, Deasy's tenure has been one of many accomplishments, SMMUSD board member Julia Brownley said.

"When John came to the district he cre-

ated a structure that provided sharp focus on teaching and learning and closing the achievement gap," Brownley said. "Everything from the support to school sites to turning principals into little education leaders at their schools and working with teachers on their continuing to sharpen and develop their skills, all of this has lead to better student achievement across all grade levels and socio-economic backgrounds ... I'm sorry to see him go, but this is a great opportunity for John."

Prince George's County is located just outside of Washington D.C. and is home to Andrews Air Force Base, National Wildlife Visitors Center and the University of Maryland.

The school district there has approximately 133,000 students and is the nation's 18th largest. African-Americans account for 77 percent of the student body, a spokesman for the district said.

If hired, Deasy, who was picked from a contingent of 66 applicants, said his greatest challenges will be very much the same as those he faced throughout his career, but

on a much larger scale.

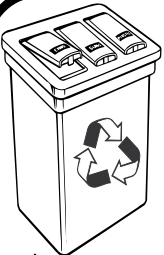
"There are issues of student achievement that will need to be addressed, along with chronically under-performing schools, the issue of teacher retention and tracking teachers," Deasy said. "And we certainly will focus on equity and access for all students."

Deasy would be the first schools chief in more than a decade who is not African American to head the mostly black school system. He said one of his first priorities will be to build bridges with the black community and others — similar to what he has done with parents here.

"It's just greater numbers and a larger community," He said. "But I'll still come with the same intensity."

Prince George's County has 199 schools compared to SMMUSD's 19.

"It's bittersweet," Deasy said Thursday about the possibility of moving on. "It's interesting, a day of excitement, but there's really kind of a sadness to the fact that I'm leaving a community I love. It's really hard."



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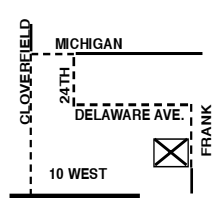
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and again on Feb. 22, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1008 11th St. Free programs feature cardiologists Robert E. Levin, M.D., Shahram Naiem, M.D., Shephal K. Doshi, M.D., and dietitian Sandy Andrews, R.D., discussing the latest information regarding nutrition, lifestyle choices, and prevention, and about an innovative procedure to treat atrial arrhythmias. Advance registration required. Call (310) 829-8453.

Environment a topic of discussion at SMC

By Daily Press staff

Spring is in the air at Santa Monica College and the environment is on the minds of many.

SMC's spring "Environmental Issues Lecture Series," featuring a wide range of topics from environmental-friendly bicycling to development issues begins Feb. 23 with the lecture, "Sustainable Works for You!"

All lectures are at 6:45 p.m. in room 123 of SMC's Bundy Campus, located at 3171 S. Bundy Dr. in West Los Angeles. They are free and seating is on a first-arrival basis. For information, call (310) 434-4743.

The series is sponsored by SMC's Center for Environmental and Urban Studies. The center, which is open to the public, features displays, a library and information center, video collection, native garden, and other services and activities related to environmental and urban studies.

The lineup for spring is:

- Feb. 23: "Sustainable Works for You"
- March 9: "Pico Community on the Move"
- March 16: "Veterans' Land Under Attack"
- March 30: "Our Energy Future"
- April 6: "Mountain Gorilla Coffee"
- April 27: "Cutting Waste and Cleaning Our Coastline"
- May 18: "The Future of Cycling"

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LOCAL



Light rail line should roll into town by 2010

RED LINE, from page 1

coupled with renewed vigor from Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa have raised hopes that a subway to the beach could become a reality, Santa Monica elected officials said it might be wiser for residents to focus on the Exposition Light Rail line that is set to pull into Santa Monica in 2010.

"New tunneling technologies mean a Wilshire subway to Santa Monica is feasible, but we mustn't lose sight of the closer goal — surface light rail via the existing Expo route," said City Councilman Kevin McKeown.

Other officials seemed to share McKeown's sentiments.

"I don't know if this (MTA) report is offering false hope or not," said City Councilman Ken Genser. "I hope (the Red Line extension) does happen eventually, but it's a much longer-term project and the council is focused more on the Expo line and getting that completed.

"With the Red Line, there's too much speculation right now," he added. "It could go as far as Westwood, and then getting to Santa Monica may be even harder."

According to the MTA report, extending the subway past Westwood into Santa Monica would cost an estimated \$1.6 billion in 2015, assuming the cost per mile will still be about \$300 million.

MTA officials don't know how many riders a subway would attract, while it has estimated that the proposed light rail along the Exposition right-of-way would have 43,000 people boarding daily between downtown and Culver City by the year 2020.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, who serves on the MTA board and represents the Westside, said the subway must be completed to ease traffic congestion on the west side of I-405, where it oftentimes takes up to an hour to drive from Lincoln Boulevard to the freeway.

"There is no other way to deal with mass transportation in the Wilshire corridor," Yaroslavsky said. "You have to go

underground."

The region's booming Westside has 1.5 million residents, 1 million jobs, many long-distance commuters and no rapid transit. Each weekday, some 500,000 cars and 100,000 bus passengers inch between traffic lights along Wilshire Boulevard, MTA officials said.

Yaroslavsky questioned the release of the MTA's report, considering it offered no new information to those who have been following the issue.

"I don't know why this is getting so much attention now," he said. "The cost is nothing of a surprise."

Before transportation officials can move forward, Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Los Angeles) must lobby his colleagues in Congress to pass a bill, H.R. 4653, which would lift a ban on federal funding for subway construction. The ban was put in place in 1986 after a pocket of naturally occurring methane gas exploded near the Farmer's Market on Fairfax Avenue. Waxman said he is seeking to lift the ban after a report released in 2005 found that drilling presented no significant danger.

Once that occurs, the planning and design phase can begin, but then comes the question of funding by the state — which is in a budget crunch — as well as county and cities who would be served by it.

There already is a growing opposition to the proposal, including concerns from county supervisors and the Bus Riders Union about the cost.

"There might be a conversation one day about creating a larger capacity transit service that can move people, especially on Wilshire," said Manuel Criollo of the Bus Riders Union, which has sued MTA for more bus service. "But to use \$4.6 billion for a project that won't be here in 20 years, which is just an estimate at this moment, just seems to us like a waste of money.

"We don't even need half of that money to massively improve our bus service."

Waxman's bill, which was introduced on Dec. 22, is currently awaiting debate in the Subcommittee on Railroads.

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STATE BRIEFS

Park Service still hasn't found what it's looking for

By The Associated Press

TWENTYNINE PALMS — The entrance fee is going up at Joshua Tree National Park.

Starting March 1, the entrance fee at the desert park straddling Riverside and San Bernardino counties rises from \$10 to \$15, and the annual pass jumps from \$25 to \$30. Fees haven’t been raised since 1997.

Dozens of national parks across the country are raising entrance fees this year, in hopes of generating about \$8 million in additional revenue for the National Park Service, officials said.

About 80 percent of the fees collected at Joshua Tree stay at the park to help repair, maintain and enhance rest-rooms, campgrounds and hiking trails, park superintendent Curt Sauer said in a statement.

Mane event: City embraces equine moniker

By The Associated Press

NORCO — The city is embracing a whinny-ing name.

The City Council voted 3-2 on Wednesday to make its nickname — Norco Horsetown USA — official. The vote was to support a resolution to trademark the slogan as its official logo.

Dissenting Councilman Hal Clark said he didn’t want the city to be known primarily as an equestrian community because some residents also raise chickens and llamas.

“We are an animal-keeping community,” Clark said.

The unofficial nickname was borne seven years ago. Chaparral Partners owner Bill West and former business partner Rob Gosnell came up with Norco Horsetown USA to reflect the close-knit community of Norco.

“What we talked about recently is to take this whole idea of Norco as Horsetown USA and brand the city with it as a campaign,” city economic development director Brian Oulman said. “It would not be for the purpose of changing the city’s logo.”

Norco’s logo will still feature the city’s motto, “City living in a rural atmosphere.”

Board finds teachers were expelled unjustly

By The Associated Press

ALISO VIEJO — Three teachers at Journey Charter School were illegally fired because they wanted to unionize, the state Public Employment Relations Board ruled.

Administrative Law Judge Ann L. Weinman, who made the finding last month, said the school must offer Paola Schouten, Marlene Nicholas and Stephanie Edwards their old jobs and pay them back wages.

It could cost the independent school, which has a \$1 million annual budget, nearly \$250,000. The Capistrano Unified School District oversees the charter but it is not required to help financially.

School administrator Tim Connolly said the school was appealing the decision.

The school, founded in 2000, provides a curriculum with an artistic focus and keeps teachers with the same group of students. Some 145 youngsters attend kindergarten through sixth grade.

Rainbow Rosenbloom, who worked as a consultant and mediator for the school in 2004, said Edwards and Schouten had a controlling leadership style and wrote an inflammatory letter to parents.

Desperate for denim: Thieves left license plate behind

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — With a bit of luck, police thwarted a \$100,000 denim heist.

Detectives arrested two men and recovered stolen Levi’s 501 jeans on Wednesday, less than 48 hours after thieves forced their way into a small blue jeans shop in the downtown garment district, Lt. Tom Brascia said.

The men, whose names weren’t released, allegedly drove a van onto the sidewalk, crashed through a plate-glass window of the vacant store next to the jeans shop, then closed a roll-down metal security door behind them for privacy, investigators said.

They then cut through the wall separating the two shops and loaded about 4,000 pairs of Levi’s 501s into the van, the lieutenant said. As they fled, however, the van hit the curb and knocked off the front license plate.

The plate was traced to a car rental company and the man who rented to van was arrested at his Bell condominium early Wednesday, Detective Clark Smith said.

Later Wednesday, detectives staking out another Bell home where the garments had allegedly been stashed got another break: A van weighed down with jeans pulled out of the backyard and the driver was arrested, Smith said.

Donors at UCLA go to head of the class

By The Associated Press

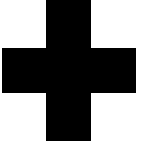
LOS ANGELES — More than \$3 billion was raised during a record 10 1/2-year fundraising drive at the University of California, Los Angeles. The money is being used to support research, student scholarships, recruit teachers and upgrade facilities at UCLA, Chancellor Albert Carnesale said Thursday.

“Through our donors’ generosity, UCLA has made strategic investments that advance our mission — to create and transmit knowledge, power and economic growth and social mobility, and enrich the lives of the people of California and beyond,” Carnesale said.

The money has been used to provide more than 30,000 scholarship and fellowship awards to students, endow 124 new professorships and create the Mattel Children’s Hospital, made possible by a \$25 million gift from the toy maker. The fundraising effort began in July 1995 with an initial goal of \$1.2 billion.

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STATE



Baja California governor sees dangers in U.S. canal stance

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Baja California Gov. Eugenio Elorduy accused the U.S. government Thursday of inaction on a controversial border canal project, warning of a political backlash in Mexico if this country fails to act.

"This situation will blow in our faces if it is not attended to by the U.S. government ... This is easy merchandise to be sold and handled by very antagonistic forces of the U.S. in our border, in my state," Elorduy said at a media round-table organized by the Center for Strategic & International Studies.

"We are astonished as to why the Department of Interior does not look into this situation and set up a working group to solve this situation," he said. "This must not be underestimated. When you get farmers in Mexico against their water it makes any farmer very mad."

An Interior Department spokesman, though, contended talks must proceed through normal diplomatic channels, including a meeting set for Friday between Elorduy and State Department officials.

At issue are plans to line 23 miles of the 80-mile All-American Canal with concrete starting this year. The canal runs just north of the eastern portion of California's border with Mexico, directing water from the Colorado River that runs along the California-Arizona border to farms in California.

An estimated 67,000 acre-feet of water per year is lost to seepage from the porous canal that was built in the 1930s, and the project aims to reclaim that water for American farmers. But Mexican farmers, wetlands and wildlife depend heavily on the water, leading to strong opposition.

Elorduy, a member of Mexico's business-friendly National Action Party (PAN), contended that impacts on Mexico have not been studied. His administration wants a delay until more work can be done.

Mexican President Vicente Fox raised the issue with President Bush in two meetings last year, according to Elorduy's staff, and Elorduy also discussed the canal with California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in September. Schwarzenegger promised a thorough review.

But Elorduy said the U.S. government has been unresponsive.

"The Department of the Interior and its

secretary, Gale Norton, have shut themselves out from this topic and do not want to talk about it," he said.

Interior Department spokesman Frank Quimby said he was aware of no current request from Elorduy for a meeting with Norton. He said the canal would be discussed at a meeting next month between Norton and Jose Luis Luege Tamargo, Mexico's environment secretary, as well as at Friday's meeting between Elorduy and Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Shannon.

"This is an important issue. Interior has been working on it consistently and constantly with the appropriate Mexican federal officials. "

FRANK QUIMBY
Interior Department spokesman

"This is an important issue. Interior has been working on it consistently and constantly with the appropriate Mexican federal officials. We're going to continue to work on it," Quimby said. "The appropriate forums are through the treaty-designated diplomatic channels, and we're following that course."

Mexicans will elect a new president in July and there are state elections next year. Elorduy's environmental secretary, Enrique Villegas, said opposition parties were using the plan to stir anti-U.S. sentiment.

"This is being fed to farmers as something that is one more gesture of the imperialist government of the U.S.," Villegas said. "This is a topic that, if not properly addressed, will weaken the perception of the good relationship that we do have with the U.S."

Construction on the \$135 million project, authorized by Congress in 1988, is supposed to begin later this year and wrap up in 2008. A federal district judge in Las Vegas last week ruled against environmentalists and Mexican agricultural interests trying to stop the plan.



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CASA ESCOBAR-This family owned institution in Santa Monica has been serving excellent food since 1965. A friendly bar and dinner house frequented by the "locals" and tourists alike. We feature the best Mexican dishes in town. Among the favorites are the crispy beef tacos, spinach enchiladas and our house-cut NY Strip steaks on the grill. Our full bar is home of the famous Casa Escobar Margarita-a winner! While at the bar, enjoy our classic piano bar along with cable TV. Valet Parking available. All major credit cards. Open lunch and dinner. 2500 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. (310) 828-1315.

OVERUNDER SPORTS GRILL-Located on the corner of 14th Street and Santa Monica Blvd., OVERUNDER features 12 draft beers and a fine selection of wine making it a great place to watch any and all of your favorite teams. The house specialty is the Philadelphia cheese steak. OVERUNDER also offers great burgers, salads, Mexican food and more. OVERUNDER is the viewing home for the Cleveland Browns and strongly supports the Lakers, Clippers, Dodgers, and Kings. Frequent food and beer specials are also offered at OVERUNDER Sports Grill. All football, baseball, and basketball games are televised via satellite for every team. 1348 14th Street, Santa Monica. (310) 576-9913.

THE OMELETTE PARLOR-For 28 years The Omelette Parlor has been offering the finest in breakfast fare. With high fluffy omelettes, super sandwiches, and the freshest of salads, it's more than breakfast. Enjoy your day on our garden patio and experience the friendliness of service. Quality and value prevail forever at The Omelette Parlor. We open everyday at 6am. Come early! Hours: 6am-2:30pm Monday-Friday, 6am-4pm Saturday and Sunday. 2732 Main Street, Santa Monica. (310) 399-7892.

THE SLICE-A true neighborhood pizzeria serving authentic New York pizza & buffalo wings. We also offer a selection of hot & cold subs, pastas and salads. You can also create your own calzone. Eat in, take out, or delivery. Catering is available. Hours: open daily 11am-9pm. Visit one of our three locations: 915 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica (310) 451-7542, 1622 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica (310) 399-4060, 13151 Fountain Park Drive, Playa Vista (310) 437-7499.

VIOLET-At Violet restaurant the atmosphere is casual, comfortable, and, like its cuisine, is uncluttered. Chef Jared Simons' flavorful small plate fare has something to suit everyone, from light eaters to those with a taste for a more robust fare. The Braised Short Ribs with Shallot Potatoes (\$14.50) melt apart while the Multi-Colored Beet Salad with Eel delights with Kumquat and Ginger Vinaigrette (\$9) and the favorite among the regulars is the Baked Macaroni and Gruyere Cheese with Serrano Ham (\$7.50). Unique selection of new and old world wines by the bottle, glass or flight as well as an impressive list of domestic & imported artisan beers. Hours: Lunch: Tuesday-Friday, 11:30am-2pm. Dinner: Tuesday-Friday, 6pm-10pm & Saturday and Sunday, 5:30pm-10pm. 3221 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. www.violetrestaurant.com (310) 453-9113.



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Entertainment

‘Free’ at last: Unoriginal thriller tests viewer patience

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press



THE MOVIE: Freedomland
THE DIRECTOR: Joe Roth
THE STARS: Samuel L. Jackson, Julianne Moore, Edie Falco

There’s a missing 4-year-old at the center of this cockeyed kidnapping caper, but what’s also conspicuously absent is the slightest semblance of restraint. It speaks volumes about the overwrought development of plot and character that the most moderated performance in director Joe Roth’s film is delivered by the notoriously histrionic Samuel L. Jackson (as man-of-the-poor-people police detective Lorenzo Council). Jackson’s co-star, Julianne Moore, offers an uncharacteristically hollow reading as the traumatized single mother who ignites a full-blown racial conflict when she claims, and not very convincingly, that her child was abducted by an African-American carjacker. The premise is unoriginal (remember Susan Smith?), and the statements Roth and

“Clockers” scribe Richard Price (who adapted for the screen from his novel) attempt to make on race relations in America also seem like warmed-over bits from Spike Lee’s far superior “Do the Right Thing.”

Moore’s Brenda Martin is totally unglued from the moment we meet her and remains so throughout the movie, making it nearly impossible to discern a real person to empathize with beneath the over-the-top hysterics. Moore’s weepy, wobbly woman in peril is the stuff of caricature, not character, and it represents a low point in an otherwise impressive career. She’s got company, too. There’s little joy in watching Ron Eldard ineffectively ape Sean Penn’s searing “Mystic River” performance, playing Brenda’s raw nerve of a police detective brother. Edie Falco’s turn as the leader of community group that finds missing children is overly constrained, though to her credit she comes correct in the film’s most convincing scene, in which she dredges up memories of her own painful past in an effort to cajole Brenda into confessing complicity in her child’s disappearance. Too bad that memorable moment doesn’t arrive for nearly 90 minutes, long after the point where “Freedomland” lost its way.

(RATED R. RUNNING TIME: 102 MINUTES)

Anti-Nazi heroine irresistible

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press



THE MOVIE: Sophie Scholl — The Final Days
THE DIRECTOR: Marc Rothemund
THE STARS: Julia Jentsch, Fabian Hinrichs, Alexander Held

A most deserving Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film, “Sophie Scholl — The Final Days” is an impressive feat of filmmaking highlighted by Julia Jentsch’s powerhouse portrayal of the intrepid title character, a 21-year-old university student who helped organize an underground resistance in Munich called the White Rose. To relate the true story of Germany’s famed anti-Nazi heroine, director Marc Rothemund judiciously narrowed his focus to the frenzied six-day period in 1943

during which Sophie and her older brother Hans (Fabian Hinrichs) were arrested for distributing anti-Nazi propaganda, interrogated, tried and convicted of high treason.

Rothemund and screenwriter Fred Breinersdorfer used the original minutes of Sophie’s interrogations by Gestapo official Robert Mohr (Alexander Held) to craft many of the film’s most compelling scenes pitting the unflappable young insurgent against the hard-line Third Reich heavy. Jentsch, who won Best Actress for the role at the 2005 European Film Awards, renders Sophie as a simmering cauldron of righteous idealism whose unwavering conviction to humanist principles ultimately has an unexpected effect on her interrogator. The Scholl’s sham of a trial is dispensed with quickly, the brutal efficiency with which their fate decided by one of Hitler’s minions chilling. But in the end, this heart-stopping drama is an uplifting portrait of courage and a testament to the efficacy of non-violent resistance. (In German with English subtitles).

(NOT RATED. RUNNING TIME: 117 MINUTES)

‘Eight’ proves more than enough

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press



THE MOVIE: Eight Below
THE DIRECTOR: Frank Marshall
THE STARS: Paul Walker, Jason Biggs, Bruce Greenwood, Moon Bloodgood

Disney may have miscalculated in marketing “Eight Below” as light-weight kids’ fare (see the “dog playing poker” clip in the trailer), for this super survival film has something to offer film lovers of all ages. A throwback to the days when the Mouse was king of

live-action animal pics, director Frank Marshall’s winter-bound wonder unabashedly exploits our unconditional love for man’s best friend. We’re talking “Old Yeller” to the eighth degree type stuff here, so be forewarned: you’re bound to shed a few tears, maybe even cry like a baby in the theater.

Paul Walker (“Into the Blue,” “Timeline”) stars as Jerry Shepard, a survival guide stationed at a remote outpost in Antarctica who is forced to abandon his beloved team of eight sled dogs in the wake of a devastating winter storm. Having reluctantly returned to the U.S., Jerry is determined to return to the outpost to save the presumably doomed dogs, but nasty weather and an empty bank account conspire against him. Good thing, too, because this film is at its best when we’re with the pooches, who do some incredible things in order to survive for nearly six months in the harshest climate on earth. They don’t give Oscars to animals and their trainers, but if they did, the entire canine crew would be a lock.

Walker acquits himself surprisingly well as the rugged leading man in a winning cast that also includes Jason Biggs, Bruce Greenwood and fresh-faced newcomer Moon Bloodgood (a former model and LA Laker cheerleader). But the undisputed show-stealers are the huskies and malamutes, who make “Eight Below” a film worth wagging our tails over.

(RATED PG. RUNNING TIME: 120 MINUTES)

‘Sounds About’ right: Samohi symphony set to play Disney

SYMPHONY, from page 1

“We began prepping in September as soon as school started,” Swenson said. “We found out about the invitation about a year ago. We’ve been thrilled ever since.”

Intended to showcase premier youth ensembles throughout the LA-area, the goal of “Sounds About Town” is to nurture tomorrow’s performers by providing them with occasions to perform today.

“Basically, the point is to champion youth ensembles” said LA Philharmonic spokeswoman Sabrina Skacan. “The Santa Monica ensemble was chosen for their long-standing tradition of musical excellence.

“We decide upon ensembles based upon their merit and availability instead of them auditioning for us,” she added. “There are hundreds of organizations that want to work with us. Unfortunately, we have to narrow it down to four every year.”

With a century-long tradition of symphonic superiority backing them, each member of the ensemble will be asked to redouble their efforts to couple their natural talent with hard work.

“Every student is aware that they are a part of a historical program,” Swenson said. “There are many well-known alumni of this program out there. I don’t think the history puts pressure on them. Really, it is more inspiring.”

As Sunday night’s performance draws near, Swenson and her students this week have been working tirelessly to hammer out the final kinks in their repertoire.

“It’s been tiring,” said Samohi senior Devon Pratt, who plays the French horn. “We are well-prepared. There is some anxiety, but we are looking forward to it.”

Comprised of 97 students representing ninth through 12th grades, the symphony orchestra is slated to perform a program featuring “Procession of the Nobles” from Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera-ballet entitled Mlada. In addition, Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 2 in C minor; Op. 17 “Little Russian” and Gershwin’s “An American in Paris” also are on the bill.

In light of their long-standing success as an organization, Swenson heartily credits the community and parents for their involvement and support. “One thing is that the school district really supports the arts,” she said. “Having strong programs in the elementary schools really helps at the high school level. There is a lot of community support and tremendous parental help. They work hard to raise money so we can travel and participate in different events.

“The success of the symphony orchestra is a culmination of many elements.”

As spring break commences at Samohi, symphony orchestra students will travel to China to participate in a 10-day cultural and musical exchange with the students of Hangzhou High School of Performing Arts, Beijing and Xinghai conservatories.

Previously, the Samohi symphony orchestra has traveled to cities such as Vienna, Valencia (Spain) and Prague, where they played at the Rudolfinum, a venue on par with Carnegie Hall for world renown.

The orchestra played at Carnegie Hall in New York in 2002.

There is limited availability for tickets, which can be purchased through www.LAPhil.com or via credit card phone order at (323) 850-2000. Tickets also can be purchased at the Walt Disney Concert Hall box office. Prices range from \$16 to \$37. A limited number of \$10 rush tickets for senior citizens and full-time students may be available two hours prior to the performance. Valid identification is required to enter the venue.



SANTA MONICA ART PALETTE

MAKING ARTS AND CULTURE COME ALIVE IN SANTA MONICA

Welcome to the Santa Monica Art Palette for the weekend of Jan. 19. The goal of the Art Palette, created by City Hall's cultural affairs division, is to showcase the many eclectic arts and cultural opportunities available in Santa Monica every week, highlighting one or more of the many happenings within our borders.



Did you forget to take your sweetie on a romantic evening on Tuesday? Well, here's your chance to make up for it. Santa Monica is at the center of the cultural universe this weekend with everything from the most cutting edge performance art in California, exquisite classical music from Santa Monica's newest musical ensemble, enchanting theatre for the elementary school set, visual art designed to challenge the viewer's concept of Latino art, and spontaneous theatrical performance written, staged and presented in less than 11 hours. This is the weekend that offers each and every one of us a chance to prolong our Valentine adventures for two more days.

Start your weekend off with a bang and a sizzle on Friday night at Pop Tarts. This avant-garde performance laboratory presents Southern California's best performance artists performing experimental works in the intimate environment of Highways Performance Space. Curated by Marcus Kuiland-Nazario and hosted on Friday night by Sid and Nancy's Chloe Web and on Saturday by the notorious John Fleck, both evenings promise to be full of surprise and adventure.

And if the hottest performances in town aren't enough for you, get there at 7 p.m. for the opening night gallery reception for Santa Monica's favorite assemblage artist Cindy de Santis — the hit of the 2005 Santa Monica Festival — and open studio of the famed cardboard cobbler and Jewish lesbian folk singing Tupperware lady PHRANC who will not only be displaying her latest cardboard creations but also will be crooning new tunes on stage. Both artists will be selling their wares at prices even you and I can afford so who knows, you might even find a special Valentine's Day gift for the object of your affections.



Marnie Castor
Highways Performance Space and Gallery
18th Street Arts Center
1651 18th St.
24-Hour Reservations Line
(310) 315-1459<http://www.highwaysperformance.org/>

Pampas Tangos Dreams & Prayers



Maria Lazarova

Alberto Ginastera
Danzas Argentinas, Op. 2 for piano
Dos Canciones, Op. 3 for soprano & piano
Pampeana No. 2, Op. 21 for cello & piano
Sonata No.1 Op. 22 for piano
Eduardo Delgado, piano
John Walz, cello
Maria Lazarova, soprano



Donald Foster

Astor Piazzolla
Adios Nonino
Eduardo Delgado
Tango-Etude No. 3
Joel Pargman, violin
Little Urchin of the Greasy Spoon (Chiquilin de Bachin)
Denali Quartet with Eduardo Delgado, speaker

Osvaldo Golijov
Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind
Denali Quartet with Donald Foster, clarinets



CINDY DE SANTIS

If you're looking for a more peaceful, yet enchanting evening with a high probability for romance, then Jacaranda, our newest classical music company, is your best bet for Saturday night. Jacaranda designs their evenings for those who are looking for a way into classical music and those who simply want to experience this rich music genre in a more intimate venue. Saturday night's concert will celebrate the 90th birthday of composer Alberto Ginastera and offer a musical lineup that will lure you from the peaceful shores of Santa Monica into the arms of an Argentine caballero.

Jacaranda
Saturday, Feb. 18, 8 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church of Santa Monica
1220 2nd St.
Parking is available across SECOND Street in parking structure No. 2
www.jacarandamusic.org
Tickets: \$20 general/\$10 students

If your valentine has to be in bed by 8 p.m., perhaps you'd like to take in a morning show at the Morgan Wixson Theatre where they're presenting Junie B. Jones and a Little Monkey Business, based on the must-read series of children's books by Barbara Park.

Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m.
(310) 828-7519
www.morgan-wixson.org

If it's visual art that arouses your paramour, head over to the Santa Monica Airport's Arena 1 Gallery for a look at Latino art that goes beyond the stereotype. Leaving Aztlan presents the work of contemporary artists who, while embracing the Latino/Chicano artistic legacy, break out of those confines to create what can only be described as a new, Post-Ethnic, sensibility. Join other art lovers at the opening reception on Saturday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. .

ARENA 1
A project of Santa Monica Art Studios
(310) 397-7456
<http://www.santamonicaartstudios.com>

And though the relationships between actors, writers and directors are always passionate — if not amorous — the Ruskin Theatre will throw together 10 actors, five writers and five directors for 10 hours or 'til death do them part on Sunday. Starting at 9 a.m., these 20 artists will pull together to write, stage and perform five one-act-plays with the theme "Til Death Do Us Part" at 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. This has got to be the fastest theatre in town. For only \$10, you and you paramour can watch the end results.

(310) 397-3244
mike@ruskingrouptheatre.com



If you would like to subscribe to the Santa Monica Arts Palette via e-mail, please send a blank e-mail with the word "Subscribe" in the subject line to artpalette.mailbox@smgov.net

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

Wishes made for the ages

By Daily Press staff

The first leg of the I-Wish Project has come to a conclusion as a Santa Monica artist has captured wishes and images on Venice Beach for an online documentary and book. Conceptual artist and photographer Philip Warbasse said he knew he would meet some interesting people that would make for great photographs when he first decided to document people displaying their written wishes on Venice Beach. He was not prepared, however, for the emotional journey that the I-Wish Project became.

“I met so many incredible folks that left me to ponder the preconceived notions we have about one another,” said Philip Warbasse, director/photographer of the I-Wish Project. “My hope is that we can learn from each other and begin to replace some of the illogical fears we have about one another with understanding.”

The I-Wish Project was created to celebrate and document, in an unscripted setting, the common thread of hope we all share. Each participant was asked to display their wish written on a poster board as part of their portrait. They also were given an opportunity to talk about their wish, creating a multi-media presentation which may be experienced by previewing a portion of the book online at <http://www.i-wish.org/bk1.html>. The I-Wish Project serves to break down the stereotypes people have about one another, as well as to document and preserve the social climate of each location for generations to come.

Visitors can learn more about the concept, view a limited number of photographs from the Venice shoot and even find ways to help in the local community through the volunteer opportunities featured on the site.

“After the Venice shoot, my goal is to tour this project in select cities form the United States to Europe,” Warbasse said. “From the feedback I have received so far, I think it is really going to resonate with people from all walks of life.”

The I-Wish Project is entirely a volunteer effort. Partial proceeds from the sale of the books and T-shirts will benefit local non-profit organizations and agencies in the cities where each project is shot.

Pianist jazzes it up at church

By Daily Press staff

Pianist Louis Durra will play a jazz concert with his trio on March 12, at 7 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica, 1260 18th St. A donation of \$10 will be accepted at the door.

The trio will be performing jazz standards and their original music. Durra will be performing on the church's seven-foot New York Steinway.

Durra has performed extensively on CDs, in live performances, and on radio and TV. Artists he's recorded with include Susan Krebs, Eric Anders, and Moris Tepper. Artists he's performed with include Martin Short, Jason Alexander and Ruben Blades. Venues he's performed at include the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Ford Theater, the Jazz Bakery, KCRW, KPFK, and KCET.

Durra has performed with a number of dancers and dance troupes, including The Jazz Tap Ensemble, Savion Glover, Derek Grant, Sam Weber, and Eddie Brown. He toured Russia and the Baltic states last year with Just In Time, a jazz dance revue.

For more information, call (310) 403-8627.

Latin music strikes a chord for musical theatre

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica College will present a benefit concert for the SMC Musical Theatre that will feature songs by Latin American and Spanish composers and a guest performance by legendary flamenco dancer Carla Luna.

The benefit concert — featuring vocalist Perviz Sawoski and pianist John Sawoski — will be held at 8 p.m. on Feb. 24 in the SMC Concert Hall, 1900 Pico Blvd. Also on the bill will be guest artist and acclaimed tenor Dennis Parnell.

The concert will feature the songs of Villa-Lobos, Piazzolla, Gustavino, Rodrigo, Vitier and other Latin American and Spanish composers.

Tickets are \$10 for students. Call (310) 434-4323 or (310) 434-3000.

Emeritus to rock the SMC house

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica College Emeritus College Band will present its Mid-Winter Concert — an eclectic program that will include cowboy music, Bob Dylan melodies and more — at 3 p.m. on Feb. 26 in the SMC Concert Hall, 1900 Pico Blvd. Admission and parking are free.

The 60-member concert band, part of SMC's acclaimed Emeritus College for older adults, is under the direction of Wallace Umber.

One highlight of the program is Morton Gould's “Cowboy Rhapsody,” based on American cowboy songs and idioms including “Home on the Range,” “Bury me Not on the Lone Prairie,” “Trail to Mexico,” and more. The Bob Dylan melodies include the famous protest songs of the 1960s such as “Blowin’ in the Wind.”

Also on the program will be Tchaikovsky, Big Band music, Sousa marches and more.

For more information, call (310) 434-4306 or (310) 474-5271.





Alaska governor wants a 25-percent tax to be placed on oil company profits

BY MATT VOLZ
Associated Press Writer

JUNEAU, Alaska — Gov. Frank Murkowski wants to tax oil companies’ net profits at a rate of 25 percent as part of a new Alaska production tax, a Murkowski administration spokesman has confirmed to The Associated Press.

But spokesman Chuck Logsdon said the rate could still change before the proposal is sent to the Legislature.

Murkowski had planned to introduce his profit-sharing production tax bill on Thursday. At the request of the three major oil companies, however, that has been delayed to Tuesday, said the governor’s chief of staff, Jim Clark.

Murkowski spoke by telephone with the chief executives of Exxon Mobil, BP and ConocoPhillips on Wednesday. They or their senior managers will meet with Murkowski before Tuesday, Clark said.

The governor’s tax plan also would give the companies a 20 percent tax credit for whatever profits they reinvest in Alaska.

Murkowski’s lead oil and gas consultant, Pedro van Meurs, has estimated that the governor’s net-profits tax would bring the state about \$1.5 billion above the production tax system in place now this year, based on an oil price of \$60 a barrel.

Alaska took in \$863 million in production taxes last year. The state’s oil income last year totaled \$2.85 billion.

The price of North Slope crude closed Wednesday at \$55.35 per barrel.

BP spokesman Daren Beaudon said in a telephone interview that a profits-based tax could be supported if it’s clear, predictable, durable and reasonable, but he declined to speak about the governor’s proposed rates.

“When a statute is presented, I’ll have something to talk about,” Beaudon said.

Exxon Mobil also declined immediate comment, and ConocoPhillips did not return a call seeking comment.

The Murkowski administration has said tax adjustments are necessary before finalizing a natural gas contract with the three major oil companies. A contract setting long-range tax and royalty terms is a step toward constructing a North Slope natural gas pipeline, estimated to cost between \$20 billion and \$25 billion.

The net-profits tax would replace the state’s production tax and its Economic Limit Factor, or ELF, a formula that lowers tax rates for smaller and less productive oil fields.

The ELF formula is outdated, van Meurs has said. It does not account for satellite oil fields and has allowed the nation’s second-largest field, Kuparuk, to escape production taxes.

A profit-sharing production tax would tax oil companies more when the price of oil is high and tax them less when the price is low. The tax would be based on a percentage of the oil’s wellhead value minus the company’s operating costs, property taxes, royalties and capital costs.

Under the governor’s proposed rates, the net-profits tax would yield less in revenue for the state if the price of oil falls below about \$23 a barrel, according to van Meurs’ figures.

The bill will go to the Legislature, where House and Senate Democrats have already introduced their own version. Their proposed tax rate is 30 percent of the companies’ profits.

Rep. Les Gara, D-Anchorage, said based on van Meurs’ presentation, the governor’s 25 percent tax rate would still result in lower taxes for the oil companies when oil is at \$20 a barrel. Oil companies are still making large profits at that price, he said.

Washington marijuana harvest sets dubious record

BY JOHN K. WILEY
Associated Press Writer

SPOKANE, Wash. — Law enforcement officers harvested a dubious record last year: enough marijuana plants to rank the illegal weed as Washington state’s No. 8 agricultural commodity, edging sweet cherries in value.

The 135,323 marijuana plants seized in 2005 were estimated to be worth \$270 million — a record amount that places the crop among the state’s top 10 agricultural commodities, based on the most recent statistics available.

And like any agricultural product, marijuana is very much a commodity, Lt. Rich Wiley, who heads the Washington State Patrol narcotics program, said Wednesday.

“We’re struck by the amount of work they put into it,” Wiley said. “It’s very labor intensive. They often run individual drip lines to each plant, and are out there fertilizing them. It takes a tremendous amount of work.”

But the net results are worth the effort, said Wiley, who coordinates pot busts with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and local law enforcement agencies. A single plant can produce as much as a pound of processed marijuana, worth an estimated \$2,000, he said.

The estimated \$270 million value of the plants seized in 2005 ranked just above sweet cherries, which were valued at \$242 million in 2004, and just below the \$329 million the state’s nurseries and greenhouses produced. Apples are the state’s No. 1 agricultural commodity, bringing \$962.5 million in 2004.

The 2004 statistics, the most recent available, were released last year by the state Agriculture Department.

This is the seventh year in a row that record numbers of marijuana plants have been seized and destroyed statewide, the State Patrol said. The state’s known pot harvest, based on seizures, went from 66,521 plants in 2003 to 132,941 in 2004, then to 135,323 last year.

Most of the growing operations were in Eastern Washington, principally outdoors on federal or state land in remote locations near a source of water, the State Patrol said.

Chelan County produced the most domestic marijuana, as federal, state and county drug agents seized 37,086 plants last year. Grant County was second, with 20,521 plants seized. Thousands of plants also were seized in both Yakima and Franklin counties in Eastern Washington.

King County, in Western Washington, was third in

numbers of plants seized — 16,809 — many from indoor growing operations.

In recent years, marijuana grows have been larger and more sophisticated than in the past, law enforcement spokesmen said.

Douglas County sheriff’s Chief Criminal Deputy Robbin Wagg said while some “mom and pop” grows of 500 or fewer plants are still being found, most are larger and more sophisticated, with as many as 10,000 plants being irrigated and tended.

Marijuana eradication efforts have been hampered by cutbacks in Air National Guard budgets and personnel have been assigned to tasks related to the Iraq war, Wagg said. National Guard helicopters are “the most productive way” to spot marijuana patches in the county’s remote fields and draws, he said.

“...We used to get three or four days of flying time. Now, it’s one to 1 1/2 days,” he said. “They do a great job for us.”

Wiley said last year, three National Guard helicopters and three provided by the DEA flew for a month during the marijuana harvest season in late summer, before they were assigned to Hurricane Katrina duties. About 80 percent of the “finds” are made from the air, he said.

Facing their own budget restrictions, law enforcement agencies in north-central Washington estimate they find perhaps half of the pot being grown illegally.

“We get half if we’re lucky and good,” Wagg said.

Wiley estimated law enforcement agencies statewide seize about one-third of what is being illegally grown.

Law enforcement made 412 arrests and recovered nearly 400 weapons during marijuana raids last year.

The State Patrol and the Drug Enforcement Administration oversee the marijuana eradication program using about \$850,000 worth of federal grants that help pay for overtime and equipment and support the activities of multijurisdictional task forces, Wiley said.

The seizure totals don’t take into account the large quantities of potent marijuana smuggled into the state from Canada.

Border restrictions stemming from the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks helped boost domestic production, but old-fashioned supply and demand and lucrative prices for the product are driving the larger marijuana farms, law enforcement officials said.

“They work very hard at concealing it. They’re very innovative,” Wiley said of the growers. “Our informants tell us they overplant, knowing we are going to get a percentage of it.”

Climbers hoping to clear hurdle for ‘crown jewels’

BY STEVEN K. PAULSON
Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Calling it an opportunity to show off Colorado’s “crown jewels” of mountain climbing, a legislative committee gave its approval Wednesday to a plan that would allow property owners to permit people to cross their property without being sued for any accidents that might occur.

Access to Mount Lincoln, 14,286 feet, and five other “Fourteeners” covered partly by private land or mining permits has become an obstacle for peak-baggers — climbers who set out to reach all 54 summits.

More than 1,000 people have accomplished that feat since the early 1900s, and 10 to 40 more join the list every year, according to Colorado Mountain Club records.

Maury Reiber, who shut off access to Mount Lincoln last year after being warned by an attorney that he could be held liable for any accidents, warned lawmakers in a letter that he would continue to deny access unless lawmakers agreed to a series of conditions that included edu-

‘Teen’ a rock and a hard place

By The Associated Press

Six Colorado “Fourteeners” where access is limited by private property and liability concerns, according to Colorado mountain climbing groups:

- Mount Lincoln, 14,286 feet.
- Mount Cameron, 14,238 feet.
- Mount Bross, 14,172 feet.
- Mount Democrat, 14,148 feet.
- Culebra Peak, 14,047 feet.
- Wilson Peak, 14,017 feet.

cating the public of dangers, requiring the public to stick to trails, reminding people to not remove anything from private property and putting up trail markers.

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee called it a reasonable compromise and approved a bill (House Bill 1049) meeting the requirements. It now goes to the full Senate for debate.

“While this legislation will not guarantee continued access to some of these crown jewels, we can guarantee Coloradans will be denied access to them if we don’t do something,” said Grossman, who said he tried and failed to climb several of the mountains and would like the opportunity to try again.

Sen. Ken Gordon, D-Denver, said insurance companies are resorting to “spin” when they try to scare people over issues like this.



Woods tries to keep one streak, end another

BY DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES — Tiger Woods has a couple of streaks going in opposite directions.

The one getting most of the attention is his 2-0 start to 2006, playoff victories in the Buick Invitational and the Dubai Desert Classic that take expectations even higher. The last time he started off a year with two victories was

Groups contend parks are 'endangered' while glaciers keep melting

BY SUSAN GALLAGHER
Associated Press Writer

HELENA, Mont. — Glacier National Park in Montana and adjacent Waterton Lakes National Park in Canada should be declared endangered by the United Nations because climate change is melting glaciers and threatening the parks' environment, a dozen organizations argue in a petition.

The Rocky Mountain parks, together known as Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, are covered by a 1995 treaty as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Now they should be designated as a World Heritage Site in Danger, the groups say.

Mechtild Rossler, chief of the U.N. World Heritage Committee's European and North American section in Paris, said the organization had received the petition, but has not yet reviewed it.

Glacier park has 27 glaciers, down from about 150 in 1850, said Dan Fagre, who coordinates global change research for the U.S. Geological Survey at West Glacier, Mont. The USGS says the mean summer temperature at Glacier park has risen by about 3 degrees Fahrenheit over the past century.

"We haven't seen any warming to this degree as far back as we can go, and we can go back about 500 years," Fagre said.

Erica Thorson, an Oregon law professor who wrote the petition submitted Thursday to the World Heritage Committee, said the effects of the temperature increase "are well-documented and clearly visible in Glacier National Park, and yet the United States refuses to fulfill its obligations under the World Heritage Convention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

Endangered status would require the committee to find ways to mitigate the effects of climate change, Thorson said. Better fuel efficiency for automobiles and stronger energy efficiency standards for buildings and appliances would be among the ways to reduce pollution that contributes to global warming, the petition says.

The proposal was called "a ridiculous idea" by S. Fred Singer, a retired University of Virginia environmental sciences professor who established a research nonprofit called The Science and Environmental Policy Project.

Singer disputes that greenhouse gases are warming the environment and that governments can curb glacial erosion by stiffening pollution controls. Of 20 major world glaciers that began shrinking around 1850, he said, about half had stopped shrinking by the end of the 20th century and some were growing.

However, other scientists have projected that the glaciers at Glacier park may vanish entirely by 2030.

"The United States and Canada must immediately reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to slow the damage," said Kassie Siegel of the Center for Biological Diversity.

The petition is one of four to be discussed next month at a Paris meeting on climate change and sites that hold World Heritage status through the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Other sites being considered for endangered status include Belize Barrier Reef in Central America; Huarascan National Park in Peru; and Sagarmatha National Park in Nepal.

in 2000, which has become his benchmark for dominance.

Making it three in a row means getting rid of another streak that is getting under his skin.

Woods is 0-10 at the Nissan Open, a record that dates to his PGA Tour debut as a 16-year-old amateur when he missed the cut. His record has improved only slightly since he turned professional, although the Nissan Open remains the only PGA Tour event he has played more than three times as a pro without winning.

"I just haven't played my best golf at the right time," Woods said Wednesday. "I've played some good golf, but not my best stuff. And this track, you've got to hit the ball well. You just can't get away with hitting it poorly around here and expect to win."

Not that he hasn't come close.

Woods is part of an All-Star collection of players in the hunt in 1999, the year Ernie Els pulled away from Woods, Davis Love III, David Duval and Nick Price to win by two shots. Woods needed a birdie on the 18th hole to force a playoff, but piped a 3-iron into a beer tent and made bogey.

The Nissan Open also is the site of his only playoff loss in an official tournament, to Billy Mayfair in 1998 when the tournament moved to Valencia Country Club while Riviera's greens were being rebuilt.

Even when Woods was at his best — 2000 comes to mind — Riviera knocked him down. He had a stretch from the end of 1999 to the spring of 2000 in which he finished first or second in 10 out of 11 events. The exception, of course, was the Nissan Open, where he tied for 18th.

His next chance starts Thursday, and if his winless streak at his hometown tournament is weighing heavily, Woods isn't saying.

"You don't ever try to force a win," he said. "You just take it as a process. It's 72 holes. You take it a shot at a time, and hopefully at the end of the week, you're on top."

One assumption seems safe — that it will be 72 holes.

A year ago, players spent five days at Riviera and managed to squeeze in only 36 holes because of rain that turned the fairways into swamps and gave bunkers the literal meaning of "beach." Adam Scott and Chad Campbell were tied for the lead, didn't play Sunday and returned Monday morning for a playoff, which Scott won on the first extra hole.

Because it was only 36 holes, it did not count as an official victory.

California is getting plenty of sunshine these days, however. Coming off a spectacular week at Pebble Beach, the forecast is for mostly dry conditions through Sunday. The course is in great shape, with fairways running fast.

And if a playoff also is in the forecast, perhaps that bodes well for Woods.

Both victories this year went extra holes — two at Torrey Pines before he outlasted Jose Maria Olazabal, and the 18th hole at Dubai when he beat Ernie Els. In fact, Woods' last four victories went overtime, including the American Express Championship at Harding Park and the Dunlop Phoenix late last year in Japan.

The field at Riviera is stronger than usual. Even without Phil Mickelson, Vijay Singh and Retief Goosen, the Nissan Open boasts 13 of the top 25 in the world ranking.

The welcome sight is Els, who is playing on American soil for the first time since the U.S. Open.

The Big Easy tore ligaments in his left knee during a holiday in the Mediterranean last July. He was the last one to fall off a tube and got tangled up with someone in the water, putting him on crutches and out of golf for four months. Els has played five times since returning in December, winning in South Africa and losing to Woods in Dubai.

Some see Dubai as another failure; it was the seventh time Els has been a runner-up to Woods. But the 36-year-old South African saw it as progress. His knee not quite 100 percent, and he did well to get into the playoff when Els made a 6-foot birdie on the final hole.

"I haven't played with Tiger, or in that kind of a field, for a while. And to play that well and almost win was quite exciting," Els said. "I'm looking forward to the year."

Better yet, Els got his traveling out of the way for now. In the past, he would leave Hawaii for places like Singapore and Australia and the Middle East, then head to Florida to begin his march to the Masters. The two Middle East tournaments were moved up this year, so Els will be in the United States the next two months.

He realizes he is getting older, but has no plans to cut back on his travel. Looking at his record, which includes three majors and six runner-up finishes, he sees no reason to change.

"Up to now, I've had a great career," Els said. "A couple of putts here and there, it could have been a lot better."

At least he has one thing Woods doesn't — a trophy from the Nissan Open.

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Mexican migrants contend absentee ballot apathy spotlights flaws

BY MARK STEVENSON

Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY — Fewer than 57,000 Mexican migrants have requested absentee ballots for the presidential election, officials said Thursday — a showing many say reflects serious flaws in the effort to include millions living abroad in the vote.

Migrants have argued they received little information about the program. They also complained that a requirement forcing them to register for a voting card in Mexico negated the benefit of being able to cast a vote from outside the country.

Many of the estimated 4 million registered Mexican voters living abroad, mainly in the United States, are undocumented and don't want to return to Mexico. Getting back into the United States can mean a dangerous crossing and having to pay a smuggler up to \$2,000.

Lawmakers have said they may make changes to the law. But the changes won't come in time for the July 2 vote to replace Mexican President Vicente Fox, who ended 71 years of one-party rule with his surprise victory in 2000. Mexican law prohibits Fox from seeking re-election.

Wednesday was the deadline for officials to determine the final number of absentee ballot requests. Javier Esquivel, a spokesman for the Federal Electoral Institute, said Thursday that officials had received 56,749 valid forms. The absentee ballots themselves will be sent out between April 15 and May 20.

With Mexico spending about \$26 million on the absentee voting effort, each vote cast by a migrant abroad will cost the country's electoral agency \$458 — about 25 times as much as each ballot cast in Mexico.

"It is unacceptable for a country with 20 million poor people to spend this kind of money," said Miguel Angel Jimenez, the leader of Mexico's Nueva Alianza party. "This is the most expensive voting process in the world."

Migrant activists view that as unfair criticism, in part because Mexicans sent \$20 billion last year to relatives living in Mexico. For them, the congressional vote to approve absentee ballots in June 2005 was a historic milestone that can't be measured in terms of cost.

"When (U.S. astronaut) Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, nobody stopped to count how much each step cost. Nobody complained about what little steps he was taking," said Raul Ross, a Chicago migrants rights activist.

Many say the absentee registration effort was too bureaucratic and restrictive, leaving migrants feeling as if the government that officially praises them as heroes doesn't really know them.

Mexican officials "aren't familiar with the difficulties we live with up north," said Marcia Soto, president of the Chicago-based Confederation of Mexican Federations, who flew to Mexico City in January to hand deliver 1,500 ballot applications.

As much as anything, it's a cultural clash. Migrant communities are held together by mutual aid and handshakes with fellow countrymen.

Mexico's electoral system, on the other hand, "was constructed on the basis of mistrust" following decades of voter fraud, said Rep. Juan Garcia Ochoa of the leftist Democratic Revolution Party.

Mexican electoral officials were initially loath to distribute voter registration forms through migrant clubs, fearing that local branches of Mexican political parties would give them only to supporters.

But when Mexican government efforts at spreading word of the new program faltered, migrant groups like Chicago's Casa Michoacan did things immigrant style.

They held an open house with free tamales, bread, coffee and hot chocolate donated by Mexican-owned businesses. A local Spanish-language radio station did live updates from the site.

Volunteers helped countrymen fill out the registrations, and activists offered to bear the cost of getting the forms back to Mexico — significant for many given the \$8 cost of sending them by registered mail, as required by the law.



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'Capote' star has sobering news

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Philip Seymour Hoffman, the favorite to take home the best actor Oscar next month, says he never would have reached such heights if he didn't get sober 16 years ago.

Hoffman, whose performance as Truman Capote in “Capote” has drawn enormous praise, speaks in an interview on CBS News’ “60 Minutes” to air Sunday about nearly succumbing to substance abuse.

The 38-year-old actor says that after graduating from New York University's drama school, he fell into a fast-paced city social life.

"It was all that (drugs and alcohol), yeah. It was anything I could get my hands on ... I liked it all," Hoffman says.

He changed quickly, however.

"I went (to rehab), I got sober when I was 22 years old," says Hoffman. "You get panicked ... and I got panicked for my life."

Hoffman's first notable movie role was "Scent of a Woman" in 1992. He gradually became one of the most critically acclaimed character actors after films like "Boogie Nights," "Happiness" and "Cold Mountain."

SAN DIEGO — Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates and talk-show host Oprah Winfrey visited a high school here, surprising some of its students. Gates and his wife, Melinda, spent about three hours Wednesday at San Diego High School and met with nine students for a coming segment of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" about the billionaire's school reform efforts.

The visit wasn't publicly announced and reporters weren't allowed on campus. Mark Toney, 42, said his 16-year-old daughter, Daejha, called him about the visitors.

“She said, ‘Dad, you’re not going to believe it. Oprah is here. I waved at her and she waved back at me,’” Toney said.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation gave \$11 million to the San Diego Unified School District in 2003 to reform three large high schools, said Music McCall, a spokes-

woman for the district.

The district used some money to divide San Diego High School into six smaller schools specializing in business, international studies, media, and science, among others.

The goal of the program was to increase the number of college-ready San Diego high school graduates, particularly among low-income and minority students.

LONDON — Elton John has accepted an undisclosed financial settlement of a libel lawsuit against the Sunday Times.

His lawyer, Hanna Basha, said in court the newspaper had repeated a false rumor that John had acted in a self-important, arrogant and rude manner by telling guests at a fundraising ball not to address him unless spoken to.

The 58-year-old rocker wasn't in court Thursday for the announcement of the settlement over the Sunday Times' report in June.

Times Newspapers Ltd. said it had agreed to pay damages to John, who will donate the funds to the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

“As soon as the defendant found out the story was untrue _ it had been picked up from another newspaper _ it immediately apologized to Sir Elton and it is happy to repeat that apology here today,” said the newspaper’s lawyer, Alastair Brett.

NEW YORK — Add Hillary Rodham Clinton to the pantheon of luminaries immortalized in Madame Tussauds' wax museum.

A figure of the former first lady-turned-senator had been on Tussauds' visitor request list for "a long, long time," museum manager Janine DiGioacchino said. But the looming Presidents Day holiday and the buzz surrounding Clinton's possible 2008 presidential bid sped up her addition to the collection.

The Clinton statue, crafted at the original Tussauds museum in London, takes its place in a wing dedicated to presidents and other public figures known as “the gallery.” There, the likeness of the Democratic senator joins statues of

Presidents Bush, Reagan, Kennedy, and her husband, Bill Clinton.

The museum in Manhattan's Times Square holds 182 figures, including depictions of Beyonce, Lance Armstrong and Teri Hatcher. Clinton's figure was to be unveiled Thursday.

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Smokey Robinson turned down the music and celebrated lesser-known black Americans while speaking in honor of Black History Month at the University of Memphis.

The singer best known for classic Motown tracks such as “Tracks of My Tears,” “Tears of a Clown” and “I Second That Emotion” gave some credit Wednesday to hip-hop music — with a caveat.

Rappers make “street poetry,” he said. “That’s how they view life. Some take it to a negative area. But the positive has always outweighed the negative.”

Young people know “the Beyonces and the Shaqs because that’s what they see,” Robinson was quoted as saying in *The Commercial Appeal*. He was referring to singer Beyonce Knowles and pro basketball player Shaquille O’Neal.

“They don’t realize for every one of those there are millions of kids who don’t make it,” he said. “Go to any church and you’ll find people who made marvelous contributions. Our kids need to know that.”

HONG KONG — Alec Baldwin is planning to shoot a movie in China about a joint Sino-U.S. operation to arrest a Japanese war criminal after World War II and subsequent treasure hunt.

The film, titled "The Forbidden City," is a \$12 million joint production among Meilin Media (Beijing) Ltd., Pieter Kroonenburg Productions Inc. and Britain-based Studio Eight Productions Ltd., China's official Xinhua News Agency said Tuesday.

Baldwin, 47, has appeared in movies such as “The Cooler,” “Ghosts of Mississippi” and “The Hunt for Red October.”



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In 1865, Columbia, S.C., burned as the Confederates evacuated and Union forces moved in. (It's not known which side set the blaze.)

In 1904, Giacomo Puccini's opera "Madama Butterfly" was poorly received at its world premiere at La Scala in Milan, Italy.

In 1947, the Voice of America began broadcasting to the Soviet Union.

In 1964, the Supreme Court ruled that congressional districts within each state had to be roughly equal in population.

In 1986, Johnson and Johnson, makers of Tylenol, announced it would no longer sell over-the-counter medications in capsule form, following the death of a woman who had taken a cyanide-laced capsule.

In 1992, serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer was sentenced in Milwaukee to life in prison (he was beaten to death in prison in November 1994).

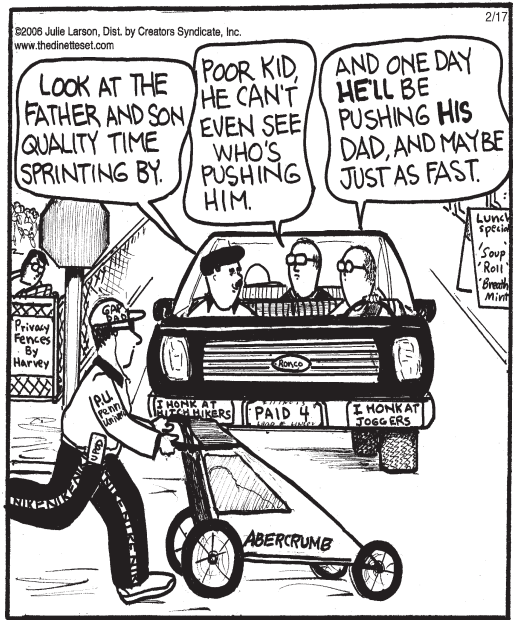
In 1995, Colin Ferguson was convicted of six counts of murder in the December 1993 Long Island Rail Road shootings (he was later sentenced to a minimum of 200 years in prison).

Ten years ago: World chess champion Gary Kasparov beat IBM supercomputer "Deep Blue," winning a six-game match in Philadelphia (Kasparov had lost the first game, won the second, fifth and sixth games and earned draws in the third and fourth). Tidal waves killed more than 100 people in Indonesia.



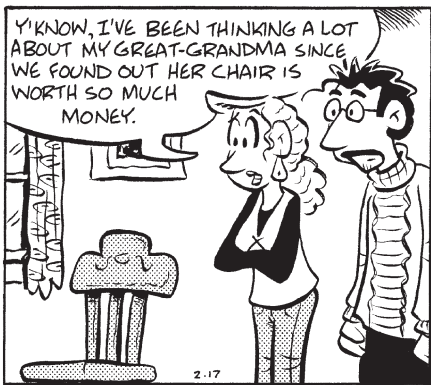
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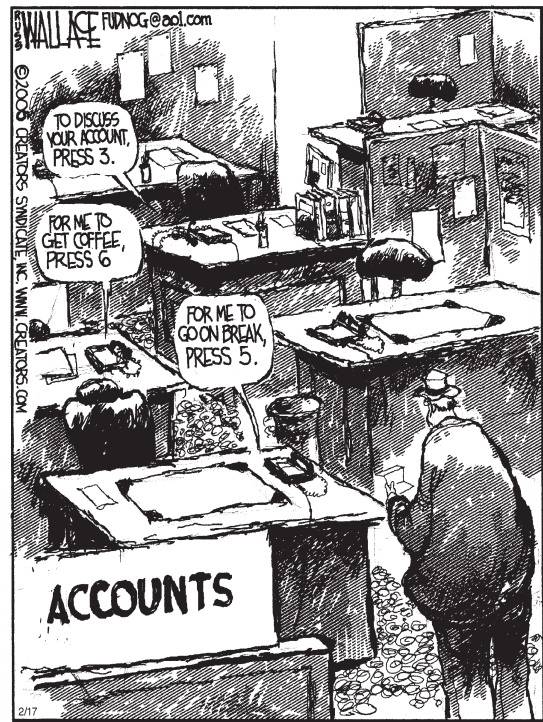
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Notices

ESCROW NO. 119188
NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF BULK SALE AND OF INTENTION TO TRANSFER LIQUOR LICENSE(S)
(Secs. 6101-6107 U.C.C.)
Notice is hereby given that a bulk sale of assets and a transfer of liquor license(s) is about to be made. The name(s), Social Security (or) Federal Tax Number, and mailing address, and Zip Code Number, of the Seller/transferor(s) are: LA VECCHIA CUCINA, 2654 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405

dba: LA VECCHIA CUCINA
The name(s), Social Security (or) Federal Tax Number, and mailing address, and Zip Code Number, of the Buyer/transferee(s) are: TRINACRIA RESTAURANTS, INC., 3928 Van Buren Place, Culver City, CA 90232
That the assets to be transferred are described in general as materials, supplies, merchandise, equipment, (or) inventory of stock in trade, fixtures, furniture, equipment, transferable government licenses and permits, customer lists, fictitious business names, trade names, trademarks, logos, copyrights, sings and advertising materials, telephone and fax numbers, web sites, URL names, e-mail addresses, vendor lists, goodwill, agreements not to compete, employee lists and information, computer and customer software

and are located at: 2654 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405 together with the following described alcoholic beverage license(s): ON-SALE GENERAL - EATING PLACE LICENSE NO. 47-365340

now issued for said premises located at (same address). That the total consideration for the transfer of said assets and of said license(s) is the sum of \$495,000.00, including inventory estimated at \$35,000.00, which consists of the following:
Checks - \$25,000.00
Demand Notes - \$470,000.00

That it has been agreed between said transferee(s) and said transferor(s) that consideration for the transfer of said assets and of said license(s) is to be paid only after transfer has been approved by Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, pursuant to Sec. 24073 et seq.

That the herein described transfers are to be consummated, subject to the above provisions, at WILSHIRE ESCROW COMPANY, 4270 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90010, on or after 10:00 A.M., March 8, 2006

All other business names and addresses used by the transferor(s) within three years last past, so far as known to transferee(s), are (if "none", so state.) LA VECCHIA, LA VEC and THE VEC, all at 2654 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405; and no others.

Name and address of escrow holder: WILSHIRE ESCROW COMPANY, 4270 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90010.

Date: January 26, 2006
LA VECCHIA CUCINA, Transferor(s)
TRINACRIA RESTAURANT, INC., Transferee(s)

Santa Monica Daily Press
CN749131 119188 Feb 17, 2006

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: JANE CHENOWETH CASE NO. BP096711

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

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by NICHOLAS D. MANZELLA AKA DANNY MANZELLA in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that NICHOLAS D. MANZELLA AKA DANNY MANZELLA be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

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

Notices

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 03/09/06 at 8:30AM in Dept. 5 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

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
RICHARD W. SHARPE
COMSTOCK & SHARPE, INC.
11100 WASHINGTON BLVD.
CULVER CITY, CA 90232
2/16, 2/17, 2/23/06
CNS-927623#
SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: EARL F. REINBOLD CASE NO. BP096738

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

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by LINDA LEE REINBOLD in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that LINDA LEE REINBOLD 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 . (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 03/15/06 at 8:30AM in Dept. 5 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

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
GARY K. OLSEN, ESQ.
LAW OFF. OF GARY K. OLSEN
10100 SANTA MONICA BLVD., #300
LOS ANGELES, CA 90067

CLASSIFIEDS



Notices

2/16, 2/17, 2/23/06
CNS-927626#
SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

Name Changes

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR
CHANGE OF NAME
Case No. SS014023

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
Petition of GEORGE COSMA for Change of Name
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner or Attorney: GEORGE COSMA filed a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: GEORGE COSMA to GEORGE COSMAS

The court orders that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing:

Date: FEBRUARY 9, 2006 Time: 9:00, Dept. A., Room 104

The address of the court is 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: Santa Monica Daily Press.

Date: DECEMBER 16, 2005

LINDA K. LEFKOWITZ

Judge of the Superior Court

01/27/06, 02/03/06, 02/10/06, 02/17/06



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