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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2010
Volume 9 Issue 83

Santa Monica Daily Press

B-BALL PLAYOFFS BEGIN
SEE PAGE 3

We have you covered

THE NOTHING BUT NET ISSUE



TAKE THAT, EAST COAST

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

People gather along Santa Monica beach to watch the sunset on Tuesday afternoon. Santa Monicans enjoyed temperatures in the 70s and can expect the same today according to the National Weather Service. Enjoy it. It could rain Saturday.

Kid busted by the food cops

BY NICK TABOREK
Daily Press Staff Writer

PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY Next time you're about to sneak a snack while riding on a Big Blue Bus, you may want to think twice.

Eating on the bus system isn't just bad manners, it's also against state law, as one 14-year-old boy found out first hand this month when two undercover officers escorted him off a No. 4 bus and wrote him a citation for unlawfully eating Cheetos.

Kaivon Simab, a student at Paul Revere Junior High School in Brentwood, was heading to his home in Westwood when he and another minor were cited by Santa Monica Police Department officers for the offense. Since the Feb. 1 incident, Simab's mother has filed a complaint with the SMPD, arguing

SEE BUS PAGE 9

Chamber event to promote buying local

BY NICK TABOREK
Daily Press Staff Writer

SM CHAMBER With tourism lagging and the economy still struggling, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce is hoping its latest business expo, which takes place today, will provide local businesses with a needed boost.

Beginning at 5 p.m., about 70 exhibitors including merchants, non-profit organizations and City Hall departments will gather at the Sheraton Delfina Hotel near the Civic Center for the ninth annual Business & Consumer Expo. Several hundred attendees are expected to circulate among the booths during the three-hour event, which is free to the public.

With many businesses suffering, Laurel Rosen, the chamber's president and CEO, said the hope is to bolster the local economy by helping businesses tap into their most natural clientele: consumers who live and shop in Santa Monica.

"This year it's really about buy local," Rosen said.

Another aim, though, is to promote City Hall as having "a business friendly climate."

"Now more than ever [City Hall] realizes that the businesses help support the crucial services," she said. "There's never been a better relationship between the chamber and [City Hall] as there is now."

Several City Hall departments will be exhibiting, including the Planning Department, which will have staff on hand to field questions about the Land Use and Circulation Element, the long-studied general plan update expected to go before the City Council for approval this year.

This year the event is all about networking, but Rosen said the chamber is already working on revamping next year's Expo by adding an educational component through a partnership with Santa Monica College. She said she envisions workshops to help small businesses adapt sustainable practices and take advantage of social media.

In light of the difficult economy, Rosen

SEE CHAMBER PAGE 9

Bayside ambassadors get positive reviews

BY MIRIAM FINDER
Special to the Daily Press

DOWNTOWN Walking down the Third Street Promenade in a dark blue jacket emblazoned with the words "Santa Monica Downtown Ambassadors," Shana Gadlin approached a group of tourists huddled around a map.

After a minute of talking and pointing, the group thanked Gadlin for her directions and moved along. Being a de-facto tour guide is just one of the many duties Gadlin and the other 25 ambassadors recruited to walk the streets of Downtown perform as part of the Bayside District's ambassador program.

"I feel they're very essential to the promenade," said Alex Acuna, former ambassador and Bayside District Corp. operations manager.

The ambassador program, which costs $1.2 million a year, is funded by an assessment approved by district property owners in 2008. The ambassadors took to the streets in June to service the area's three zones — the promenade, Second and Fourth streets

SEE AMBASSADORS PAGE 8


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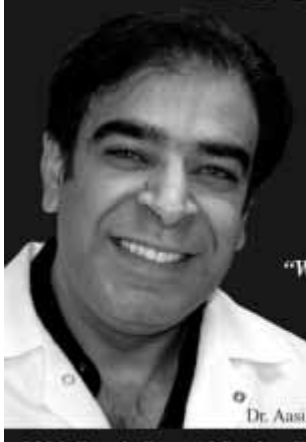
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Saint Monica Catholic High School

DATE	TEAM	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME
BOYS BASKETBALL				
Feb 17	Var	DIV 5AA Championship		7pm
GIRLS BASKETBALL				
Feb 18	Var	DIV 4A Championship		7pm
BOYS GOLF				
Feb 22	Var	Practice	Rancho	4pm
Feb 23	Var	Practice	Penmar	4pm
COED TRACK				
Feb 22-24	Var	Try-outs	Reed Park	3pm

Santa Monica High School

DATE	TEAM	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME
BOYS BASKETBALL				
Feb 17	Var	QUARTZ HILL	SAMO HIGH	7pm
GIRLS BASKETBALL				
Feb 18	Var	Arcadia	SAMO HIGH	7pm
BOYS GOLF				
Feb 22	Var	Hawthorne	Hawthorne	4:30pm
COED WRESTLING				
Feb 26	Var	CIF Masters		TBA
COED TRACK				
Feb 20	All	All Comers Track Meet		10:00am

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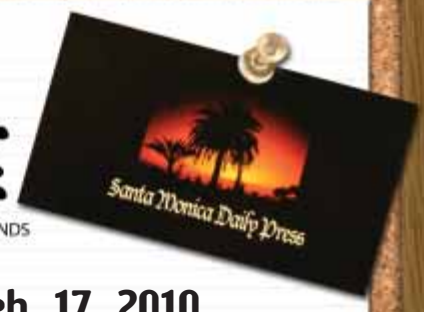
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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010

Business and consumer expo
Sheraton Delfina
5 p.m. — 8 p.m.
This annual trade show and mixer showcases the "who's who" in local business and is an opportunity for residents to promote products and services to the broader community. The event includes raffle giveaways and product demos, networking opportunities and information on various issues for business owners.
Admission is free.

""Carnival in Venice Italy, The Grand Masquerade'
Flying Saucers Caffeine and Art Gallery
306 Pico Blvd., 9 a.m. — 5 p.m.
Artist Jon Beau Lee presents his artwork depicting the Venetian Carnival. The exhibit is open daily throughout the rest of February. Admission is free. Call (310) 868-8361 for more information.

Quilt for a cause
Edgemar complex
2433 Main St., 6 p.m. — 8 p.m.
The Urban Craft Center is coming together to raise money for charities assisting those affected by the devastating earthquake in Haiti. The center is putting together a series of collaborative quilts followed by a charity raffle on Feb. 27. All proceeds will be donated to Partners In Health, a non-profit organization that provides much needed medical services and supplies in Haiti. Sewing nights will continue weekly on Sundays and Thursdays.

Climb to fight breast cancer
Santa Monica REI store
402 Santa Monica Blvd., 7 p.m.
At this informational meeting, residents will learn how they can climb mountains while raising money for breast cancer research. Peaks include Mount Adams, Mount Baker, Mount Hood and Mount Rainier in the Pacific Northwest as well as Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro, Russia's Mount Elbrus and the volcanoes of Mexico.

Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010

'Rent'
Santa Monica High School
601 Pico Blvd., 7 p.m.
Santa Monica High School theatre presents the Tony-award winning musical "Rent." The show runs Feb. 18-20 and 26-27.
Admission is $15 for adults and $10 for students.
Call (310) 395-3204 ext. 239 for more information.

Thursday evenings with L.A. Opera
Main Santa Monica Public Library
601 Santa Monica Blvd., 7 p.m.
This Thursday marks the fifth of a free series of presentations about five upcoming operas designed to encourage viewers to head out and see the shows. This week will introduce the Ring Cycle & Gotterdammerung. Call (310) 458-8600 for more information.

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

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CYBER SPACE

App connects community

Santa Monica residents can now use their iPhones to report problems in the community — without ever making a phone call. With the new GORequest app, citizens can alert officials of an issue they encounter simply by taking a picture.

iPhone-toting residents who see things like graffiti or trees that need trimming can open the app, choose an issue, snap a picture and submit the report.

The iPhone's built-in GPS pinpoints the location and sends that information, coupled with the photo, to a staff member who can fix the problem. The app also allows senders to receive updates on the status of their requests.

"So far it's working very well," said Jory Wolf, chief information officer. "People love it."

Wolf said the app has sparked a lot of community interest, as well as enhancing communication between Santa Monica residents and city officials.

The app is expected to make city employees more efficient by quickly and precisely reporting community maintenance issues. It is the newest facet of GO Santa Monica, City Hall's online government outreach program.

The new program can be downloaded for free by searching GORequest in the iPhone app store. City officials hope to have similar programs available for other phones soon.

DAILY PRESS



GETTING CRAFTY

Photo courtesy The Urban Craft Center

(From left to right) Devon Lott, Rhea Tepp and Shanon Kors working hard last week at the Urban Craft Center in Santa Monica on a collaborative quilt that will be auctioned off along with others to help raise money for Partners in Health, a nonprofit providing medical care and supplies to Haiti for over 20 years. Those interested in joining the collaborative quilt effort can do so Wednesday, Feb. 17 and Sunday, Feb. 21.

Green projects benefit from stimulus funds

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EL CERRITO The Environmental Protection Agency is spending about $517 million in stimulus dollars to shore up the economy and create green jobs in California, a top federal official said Tuesday.

Jared Blumenfeld, administrator for the EPA's Pacific Southwest region, made the announcement while touring a rain garden in El Cerrito that got stimulus funds to plant landscaping that removes chemicals from stormwater runoff that flows into the San Francisco Bay.

Other major EPA projects in California have used stimulus funds to clean up toxic

SEE FUNDS PAGE 9

HIGH SCHOOL PLAYOFF ROUNDUP

Samohi boys host playoff game

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Fresh off an Ocean League title, Santa Monica's boys basketball team (20-6 overall, 10-0 in league) have earned the right to host a California Interscholastic Federation Southern Section Division 1A first round playoff game tonight at 7 p.m.

Quartz Hill, Samohi's opponent, finished the season 5-21 overall and 4-10 in Golden League play. Samohi is the eighth seed in the division.

ST. MONICA AT HOME FOR FIRST ROUND

St. Monica's boys basketball team will host a CIF-SS Division 4A first round playoff game tonight at 7 p.m. against Nipomo.

The Mariners finished 17-9 overall and 9-1 in Camino Real League play, good for a share of the league title with Pasadena's La Salle. Nipomo (11-15 overall, 4-8 in league) is an at-large team from the Pac-7 League. St. Monica is the 11th seed in the division.

CROSSROADS HITS THE ROAD

Crossroads' boys basketball team qualified for the CIF-SS Division 5AA playoffs as an at-large selection despite finishing the Olympic League portion of its schedule 1-9 (12-13 overall).

The Roadrunners will play Animo Leadership on the road tonight at 7 p.m. Animo finished the season as the second place team from the Harbor League.

PACIFICA CHRISTIAN EARNS AT-LARGE BID

Pacifica Christian's boys basketball team qualified for the CIF-SS Division 6AA playoffs as an at-large team from the Heritage League.

The Seawolves will play Marywood Palm Valley, the second place finisher from the Majestic League. Pacifica finished the season 9-15 overall and 3-7 in league.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Raising awareness

Editor:

I want to thank you for writing this article and bringing the persecution of the Bahais in Iran to the attention of our city ("Dozens pray for Bahai leaders jailed in Iran," Feb. 9). The article thoughtfully reported on an issue which has deeply affected the community of Santa Monica as well as the world at large. I want to congratulate the Santa Monica Daily Press for bringing light to this issue of social injustice and for inspiring readers to meditate on the impact of Iran's religious intolerance on our own city's Bahai community. Thank you again.

Sonia Sohaili
Santa Monica

Looking for another party

Editor:

I am unbelievably tired of the debate on health care being dominated by those who are politically timid and have health insurance.

There are those of us following the debate who have several conversations a day about health care's real impact on our lives. My family has two chronic illnesses. If I were to be unemployed for an extended period, we would lose our coverage and have no option for treatment. A close friend has a seizure disorder and can't get coverage. She lives in fear everyday that another seizure will send her medical costs through the roof and she will lose her house.

For Republicans, my only understanding of your position is a semi-hysterical rejection of the reasonable changes suggested in the Senate bill. You are obstructionist ideologues and I expected no better.

For Democrats, my esteem for you is dropping by the day as you ignore my needs and the needs of my community out of short-term political cowardice. There really is no other term for it. And yes, I'm talking to you Evan Bayh and Blanche Lincoln and Ben Nelson. You all know the suffering and dysfunction we are experiencing as a national community over the failures of our health care system, yet for short-term perceived political gain, you run from the bill you already voted for and committed to.

And you, House progressives, holding to some castle in the air notion of the perfect version of health reform. What planet do you live on? Can you put practical gain over ideology and just vote for the Senate bill? Because we need it!

There are millions of us out here hoping for the emergence of a collective conscience in our political representatives.

Please, shock us, stupefy us, surprise us to our bones and actually do something about health care!

If not, expect me and those like me to support a new political party — anyone who's neither a Republican or a Democrat.

Bill Wheeler
Venice





Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Can you handle the truth?

THE GREAT ARCHITECT AND VISIONARY city planner Frank Lloyd Wright once said, "The truth is more important than the facts." That quote kept running through my head as I listened to people from Saint John's Health Center and its representative, the Shane Miller Company, informing their neighbors about the progress of hospital construction at a meeting two weeks ago. For years, Mid-City residents who live near the site have seen increased traffic, reduced parking, and have put up with health issues from Saint John's sewage. These facts are generally accepted and totally undisputed — except in meetings with people from Saint John's and the Shane Miller Company.

For six months I've been working to find the truth behind what's really going on with Santa Monica's worst neighbor and most powerful real estate developer, Sister Sue Miller of Leavenworth, Kan. — and it isn't pretty. The truth is that the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth entered into an agreement with the city of Santa Monica to develop Saint John's Health Center, the Sisters have violated that agreement from the beginning, and our City Council has negligently abdicated its responsibility to hold the Sisters accountable; effectively rendering the people of Santa Monica totally powerless. It's time for council members and the organization that put most of them in place, Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights, to show the people of this city who and what they stand for.

When it comes to development agreements, city and state laws are unequivocal — even if the bodies charged with enforcing them are impotent. California Government Code Section 65865.1 requires "periodic review at least every 12 months, at which time the applicant … shall be required to demonstrate good faith compliance with the terms of the agreement." It goes on to say, "If, as a result of such periodic review, the local agency finds and determines … that the applicant … has not complied in good faith with terms or conditions of the agreement, the local agency may terminate or modify the agreement." California law also allows City Hall to "modify or suspend the provisions of the development agreement if the city determines that the failure … to do so would place … the residents of the city … in a condition dangerous to their health."

The Santa Monica Municipal Code largely mirrors state law. Section 9.48.190 states, "The City Council shall review the development agreement at least every 12 months" and it requires the Sisters to "demonstrate good faith compliance with the terms of the development agreement." Most importantly, it says, "If, as a result of such periodic review, the City Council finds and determines … that the applicant … has not complied in good faith with the terms or conditions of the development agreement, the City Council may commence proceedings to enforce, modify or terminate the development agreement."

So, make no mistake, both the state of California and the city of Santa Monica require our City Council to review the Saint John's agreement annually. Both require a demonstration of good faith compliance and both empower the City Council to effectively cancel the agreement if the Sisters don't comply in good faith or if they endanger the health or safety of city residents. Since there is no way to claim good faith compliance when the underground parking garage the Sisters agreed to build is nowhere to be found in any of their plans over the last 12 years; and since there is no question that the problems associated with the Sisters pumping and hauling their sewage twice a week are a danger to health, I'm left with some questions for our City Council and, by extension, SMRR.

Have you been reviewing the Saint John's Development agreement every 12 months? Did you know the Sisters were required to have their "parking operations plan" for the North Subterranean Parking Garage approved by the planning director before they were to be allowed to build the Keck Center (now completed)?

Did you know that the planning director doesn't have and didn't approve that plan, the Sisters have indicated they didn't develop that plan before they submitted their 2007 application for permission to defer building the parking garage for at least 10 years, they haven't developed that plan in the years since their application was submitted, and they don't intend to ever develop that plan? Did you know that the reason the Sisters are refusing to fix their sewage problems or honor their agreement to build the garage is that it would cost too much money?

I'm not inclined to waste another six months finding out that the (obvious) answer to all these questions is a resounding, embarrassing, and emasculating "No." So, let's just move on to solutions, shall we?

There is a provision in the development agreement that requires the Sisters to make annual cash contributions to a "Community Benefit Plan." The estimated cost of fixing the sewage problem and building the garage is about $40 million, and the cost of doing nothing is whatever it takes to buy land use attorney Chris Harding's conscience. The council should immediately begin proceedings to amend the agreement and increase that required annual contribution to $10 million. That way, Sister Sue and SCLHS President William Murray will have to take this seriously and the people of Santa Monica will have a reason to think our City Council has our back. As it stands now, they don't and we don't.

And that's the truth.

KENNY MACK is a multi-platform content provider with four-quadrant crossover appeal who is still surprised that compliance in good faith is so difficult for an order of nuns. His past columns are archived at www.ifyoumissedit.com and he can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com

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Your column here

Jason Clemens and Jon Coupal
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Is Prop. 13 to blame for California's fiscal crisis?

WHEN CALIFORNIA VOTERS APPROVED Proposition 13 by a landslide in 1978 they launched a nationwide revolt for lower taxes. Critics now blame that revolt for our current fiscal crisis. That charge needs to be considered in the light of actual data about property taxes in California.

Prop. 13 limits property taxes to 1 percent of the cash value of property or the market value of a property depending on when it was purchased, with subsequent annual increases limited to 2 percent. Prop. 13 also imposes a two-thirds majority requirement on the state Legislature for increasing taxes — either by increasing rates or changing the way taxes are calculated.

These provisions have caused U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer, Nobel economist Paul Krugman, and a cadre of pundits to cry foul. The standard story is that these restrictions (a) force the state to rely more heavily on other taxes like personal income taxes because it can't raise enough from property taxes, and (b) they prevent the Legislature from raising taxes even in times of crisis. The actual tax data tell a different story.

First, the limits imposed on property taxes by Prop. 13 no doubt delivered benefits to homeowners for more than three decades. That relief, however, was mitigated when housing prices began to eclipse income gains early this decade. The run-up in housing prices and the accordant increase in property tax assessments for those purchasing homes post-2000 meant huge revenue gains for government. Any Californian who purchased a home in the last decade knows full well the burden property taxes place on their personal finances. Indeed, according to the latest census data, California ranks 19th in terms of the aggregate level of disposable income required to pay property taxes.

Boxer, Krugman and company are fundamentally mistaken when they argue that the state relies less on property taxes because of Prop. 13 compared to other states. Again, census data indicates that California ranks ninth-highest for its reliance on property taxes. Put differently, a full 41 states rely less on property taxes than California.

Specifically, local governments in California collect a little over one-third (34.3 percent) of their revenues from property taxes. Alabama, which ranks first, collects 44.4 percent of its revenues from property taxes. Contrast this reliance to some of California's neighbors: Arizona 36.4 percent, Nevada 34.8 percent, and Utah 38.8 percent. This refutes the notion that California is a low property tax state and that Prop. 13 has skewed the overall revenue mix in some bizarre manner.

California's heavy reliance on personal income taxes — 10th highest of the 50 states — simply cannot be a function of our light use of property taxes. Further, our heavy use of property taxes and personal income taxes hasn't meant low taxes in other areas; we have a fairly high corporate income tax rate and the highest state sales tax rate in the country. These high personal income, corporate income, and sales tax rates dismantle another popular assertion of Prop. 13 opponents.

They charge that the measure impedes the state government from implementing budgets, even in times of crisis. What the data actually show is that the state government and their local counterparts have had very little trouble raising taxes to the point of being markedly uncompetitive and dangerously eroding the incentives for work effort, savings, investment, and entrepreneurship. These form the bedrock of a prosperous economy, now little in evidence.

The state's budget crisis has continued unabated despite the many so-called fixes of the past two years. The state's Legislative Analyst's Office recently estimated that the state is facing a $20.7 billion shortfall. The state's bond rating was already the lowest in the country when Standard & Poor's recently reduced it again.

Blaming these fiscal woes on a lack of revenue because of Prop. 13 makes for an easy sound bite, but the charge is factually baseless and counterproductive. To overcome our current crisis, California needs a serious debate on solutions, based on actual tax data, not on urban legend and rhetoric.

JASON CLEMENS is the director of research and the coordinator of the California Prosperity Project at the Pacific Research Institute (www.pacificresearch.org) and Jon Coupal is the president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association (www.hjta.org).

The Q Line

History or view?
The Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corp. is considering creating a museum at the west-end of the historic structure to tell the story of the pier's illustrious past. It would replace a viewing deck that currently is open to the public and offers the best views of the bay, which at least one Coastal Commission member (Richard Bloom) says may be problematic.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:
Should pier officials build the museum or leave the viewing deck as is?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press.

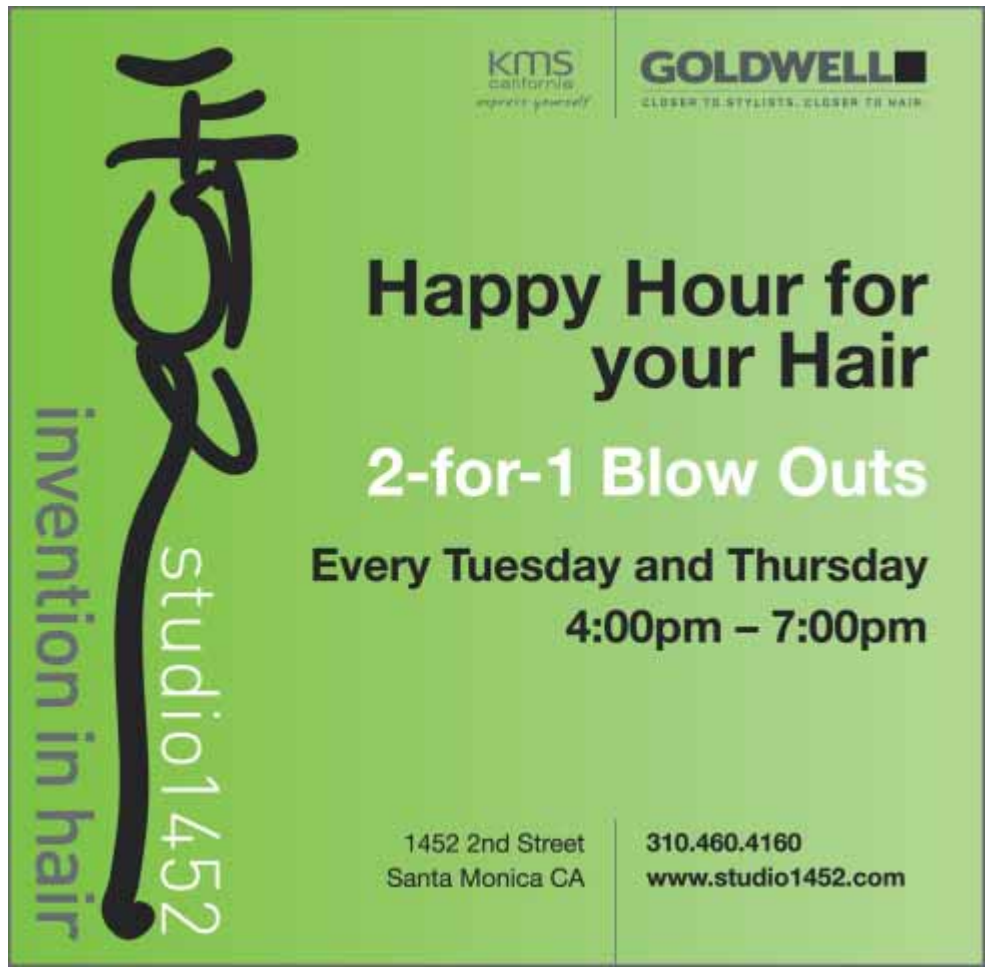


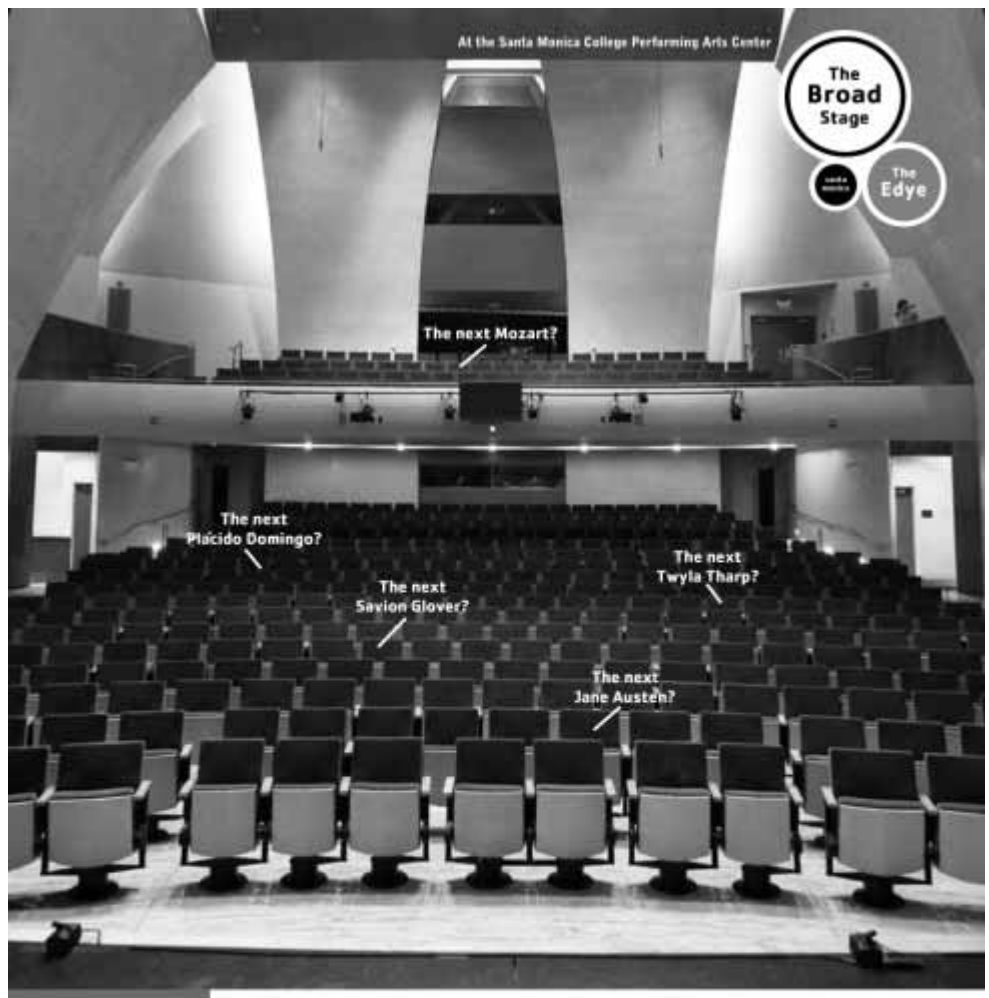

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ENTERTAINMENT

Icahn seeks more control of Lions Gate Entertainment

RYAN NAKASHIMA
AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES In his latest lunge for control of movie studio Lions Gate Entertainment Corp., activist shareholder Carl Icahn said Tuesday he's offering up to $79 million to boost his stake significantly.

The move could throw a wrench into the company's interest in potentially buying faltering rival studios.

Icahn is offering $6 per share in cash for up to 13.2 million outstanding shares. If enough shareholders sell, his stake in the company could grow to just under 30 percent.

Shares rose 4.6 percent to $5.47 on the news.

The billionaire 74-year-old has been adding to his position since late 2008, tussling for control with his former chief investment adviser, Mark Rachesky, who owns nearly 20 percent and is a member of the board.

The move comes as Lions Gate has publicly expressed an interest in bidding for the faltering Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. studio, and the Walt Disney Co.'s Miramax Films division.

Either transaction could cost the studio hundreds of millions of dollars if not more than $1 billion.

Analyst James Marsh of Piper Jaffray & Co. said Icahn's move could be intended to handcuff the company's potential spending spree.

"Icahn's tender is conditioned upon them not doing a material transaction," Marsh said. "The whole point of it is to slow that process down."

Icahn tried to buy up convertible bonds in the company last year, but few were willing to sell. And despite already controlling 18.9 percent of the company, he has yet to get a seat on the board.

The Vancouver-based company operates out of Santa Monica and was behind the Oscar-nominated movie "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' By Sapphire." It also owns the TV Guide network.

Lions Gate has said if any one shareholder increases his stake above 20 percent, it could trigger a default on its $340 million line of credit given to the company by JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Icahn said in a statement such a default could be avoided through a waiver by the lenders or through prepayment of the debt.

FINANCE

Foreigners cut Treasury stakes; rates could rise

BERNARD CONDON & MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON A record drop in foreign holdings of U.S. Treasury bills in December sent a reminder that the government might have to pay higher interest rates on its debt to continue to attract investors.

China reduced its stake and lost the position it's held for more than a year as the largest foreign holder of Treasury debt. Japan retook the top spot as it boosted its Treasury holdings.

The Treasury Department said foreign holdings of U.S. Treasury bills fell by a record $53 billion in December. That topped the previous record drop of $44.5 billion in April 2009.

Private analysts, though, were split over the significance of the decline. Some doubted that the drop in foreign holdings of short-term Treasuries signified growing unease about holding U.S. debt. They noted that net purchases of longer-term Treasury debt rose in December by $70 billion.

But other economists saw the decline as a warning signal. They fear that foreigners, especially the Chinese, have begun to worry about record-high U.S. budget deficits and are looking to diversify their holdings.

A sustained drop in foreign demand for dollar-denominated assets could lead to higher U.S. interest rates and falling stock prices. Those trends could threaten the U.S. recovery. But economists said they see no such evidence yet.

The Treasury report showed that China reduced its holdings of Treasury securities by $34.2 billion in December.

Alan Meltzer, an economics professor at Carnegie Mellon University, said China's shift should be a wake-up call for Washington.

"The Chinese are worried that we have unsustainable debt levels, and we do not have a policy for dealing with it," Meltzer said.

He said the Chinese worry that confidence in the U.S. government's ability to repay its debt could erode. That would cause the value of Treasurys and the dollar to fall — and lead to losses on Beijing's' U.S. debt holdings.

The Obama administration on Feb. 1 released a budget plan that projects the deficit for this year will total a record $1.56 trillion. That would surpass last year's record of $1.4 trillion deficit.

The recession helped drive up the deficits. Tax revenue fell as the economy slowed. And spending undertaken to support the economy and stabilize the financial system worsened the budget gaps.

The administration has pledged to address the budget gaps. President Barack Obama has said he will appoint a commission to recommend ways to trim future deficits. But China and others have expressed doubts about the commitment of the United States to reduce the red ink.

Moody's Investors Service has warned that the U.S. government's top credit rating could be jeopardized if the nation's finances don't improve. Asked about this report, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said this month he was confident the United States "will never" loose its sterling credit rating. He predicted foreigners would keep buying U.S. Treasurys as a safe investment.

Some private economists warned against reading too much into December's drop in foreign purchases of short-term Treasury debt. They noted that the figures are volatile from month to month. They also pointed out that Europe's debt crisis has put pressure on the euro and boosted demand for U.S. Treasurys and the U.S. dollar.

REAL ESTATE

SoCal home prices fell 6 percent last month

JACOB ADELMAN
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES A boost in sales of foreclosures and other low-cost homes pushed the median home price in Southern California down 6 percent last month from December for the first month-to-month dip since May, a tracking firm reported Tuesday.

January's median home price in the six-county region of Southern California was $271,500, down from $289,000 in December, as higher-end home sales lost some of the momentum they had gained in recent months, San Diego-based MDA DataQuick said.

Foreclosures comprised more than 42 percent of resales last month, up from about 40 percent in December, while the percentage of sales that were in the region's lower-priced inland counties rose to more than 35 percent from December's roughly 32 percent.

"The January stats underscore just how atypical this market remains," DataQuick President John Walsh said. "Investors and first-time buyers continue to dominate many areas, while the move-up market has yet to kick in."

January's median, however, jumped about 9 percent over the year-ago median of $250,000, the second consecutive month of year-to-year increases.

Home sales crept up about 1 percent in January to around 15,400, from about 15,200 in January 2009, but sales plummeted more than 31 percent from December's 22,300, DataQuick reported.

The firm said that sales declines between December and January are normal for the season. Sales have fallen an average of about 28 percent since DataQuick began recording transactions in 1988.

January's sales were the highest total for that month since more than 18,100 homes sold in 2007, but sales were more than 14 percent below the January average of about 17,900.

"Whether significant new patterns are emerging in the market is unclear," Walsh said. "We try not to overanalyze one month's data, and historically, January and February haven't been the best indicators for the year ahead."

WALL STREET

Stocks gain on earnings, deals and hope for Greece

STEPHEN BERNARD
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK Signs that the economy is indeed strengthening gave investors a surge of optimism and sent stocks sharply higher.

The Dow Jones industrials soared almost 170 points Tuesday on upbeat earnings reports and corporate deals. Investors who have been anxious in recent weeks about economic problems overseas were able to put aside their concerns for the time being. They focused instead on the domestic economy.

The dollar fell as investors felt less of a need to stash their money in safer investments. Oil, gold and other commodities joined stocks as the beneficiaries of the market's renewed confidence. And the stocks of energy and materials producers were among the day's big winners.

European markets also rose following new plans by European Union leaders to push Greece to get its budget under control. European officials gave Greece one month to prove it can cut its deficits. Debt problems in European countries including Greece, Portugal and Spain have been a major factor behind weakness in global stock markets in recent weeks.

A strong earnings report from Barclays, a major European bank, also gave the market some relie. European banks have been slower to recover than their U.S. counterparts, and investors saw the bounceback at Barclays as an encouraging sign.

In the U.S., Kraft Foods Inc. and apparel retailer Abercrombie & Fitch reported earnings that beat expectations, while drugmaker Merck & Co. said profits jumped after the company bought its longtime partner Schering-Plough Corp.

Earnings reports over the past month have mostly come in better than expected, but problems in the global economy have overshadowed that good news and pushed the market lower.

"Earnings have been good, but pushed to the back seat," behind Europe's problems, said Alan B. Lancz, president of Alan B. Lancz & Associates in Toledo, Ohio. The strong reports Tuesday "superseded some of these worries."

Meanwhile a bold acquisition move by the nation's largest mall owner raised hopes that businesses are feeling more confident about the economy.

Simon Property Group has offered to acquire its ailing rival, General Growth Properties, for $10 billion. General Growth, the No. 2 mall operator, filed for bankruptcy protection last year.

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow rose 169.67, or 1.7 percent, to 10,268.81. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 19.36, or 1.8 percent, to 1,094.87, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 30.66, or 1.4 percent, to 2,214.19.

About five stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 1.08 billion shares.

In other deal news, JPMorgan Chase & Co. said it was buying RBS Sempra Commodities' global oil, global metals and European power and gas assets in a deal worth about $1.7 billion. The move nearly doubles JPMorgan's corporate client base for commodities.

Economic reports throughout the holiday-shortened week will also provide insight into the economy. Market were closed Monday for President's Day.

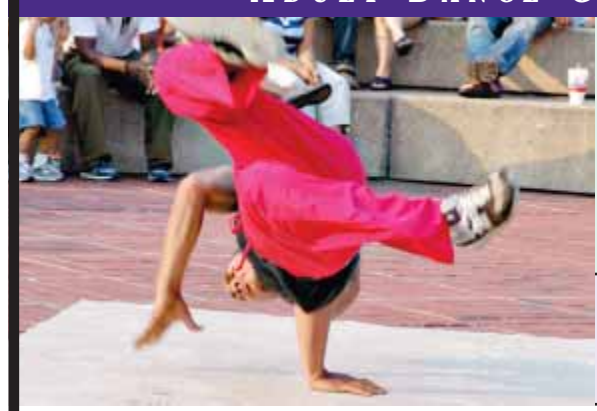
A report on manufacturing in the New York area was stronger than expected. The Empire State manufacturing index rose to 24.91 this month, compared with a forecast of 18, according to economists polled by Thomson Reuters. The index was 15.92 last month.

Reports on housing starts, jobless claims and inflation are due out later this week.

Merck rose 74 cents, or 2 percent, to $37.66. In addition to its earnings results Merck also announced details of the combined company's restructuring plans, the first phase of which expected to bring annual savings of up to $3 billion in 2012.



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Some concerned about program's cost

FROM **AMBASSADORS** PAGE 1

and Ocean Avenue, and Fifth through Seventh streets. Property owners on the promenade pay the highest price and get the most ambassador attention, with each subsequent zone paying less.

In addition to the ambassadors, the assessment also pays for enhanced maintenance and cleaning.

The idea for ambassadors existed before the assessment, which is expected to generate $3.7 million a year for the next 20 years. Andrew Thomas, Bayside District Corp. director of operations, said he and others visited many communities with similar programs, including San Jose, Long Beach and Denver, Colo. to brainstorm methods for keeping Downtown clean and competitive with other nearby shopping areas, like the Grove and Century City.

"We visited these communities and saw what they were doing," Thomas said. "We knew it would be a perfect fit."

There are 10 ambassadors on duty each day during the hours of 8 a.m. to 12:30 a.m., with hours extended to 2:30 a.m. on weekends.

Gadlin said ambassadors perform a variety of services, from routine maintenance to handing out maps to escorting Downtown employees to their cars at night. They deal with the minor — pointing a pedestrian to the nearest public restroom — and the major — helping a parent find a missing child. They also make recommendations for restaurants and stores while keeping the focus on Downtown.

"The businesses pay for it, so we have to make sure they're happy," Acuna said.

The ambassadors log all of their activities on iPod touches. Acuna said he hopes to consolidate this information into reports for businesses so they know how often patrons are sent their way, confirming that their money is being well spent.

In addition to businesses, the ambassadors, who help enforce no biking and no smoking rules on the promenade, have made an alliance with the Santa Monica Police Department. Sgt. Dave Hunscke said all ambassadors are trained by the police department on dealing with criminal activity. Although they are told not to get involved, they relay tips and information officers use to follow up on incidents.

"They're just extra eyes and ears for us and on the promenade," Hunscke said.

The ambassadors are also equipped with radios so they can communicate with each other if they are unsure of how to answer a question. Once, when unable to communicate with a Spanish-speaking visitor, an ambassador radioed Acuna, who speaks Spanish and was able to provide an answer. There are other bilingual ambassadors as well.

Thomas said the program has received mainly positive feedback from local businesses and the public.

"I think it's brilliant," said Patrick Fischer, manager of Angelo's Pawn Shop on Fifth street. "I think it's one of the best things the city did."

Jack Sarkissian, owner of Jack's Jewelers on Santa Monica Boulevard, similarly appreciates the ambassadors' efforts and referrals. Although the assessment did come at an expense to property owners, Sarkissian said he has not heard any complaints from his landlord.

"We get tremendously positive feedback about the ambassador program," said Kathleen Rawson, Bayside District Corp. executive director. "Generally, the community of Santa Monica is very pleased with them."

The program does have a cost, though, especially for non-profit groups forced to pay extra taxes with their already limited budgets. Emily Seiler, administrator for the Silvercrest Residence for senior citizens, said that she sees the safety benefits ambassadors bring and that the taxes are not raising rents for current residents. However, new tenants coming to Silvercrest will be charged higher rent to pay for the added expense.

Business owners could face similar rent increases. Moe Taherian, owner of Santa Monica Tobacco on Fourth Street, said he thinks the program shows that Santa Monica recognizes the importance of tourism, which he appreciates because his business is partially dependent on foreign patrons. Nonetheless, he did express concerns that his landlord will be forced to raise rent.

Some merchants believe negatives like these outweigh any positives.

"I don't see what the point is," said Martin Gonzalez of Ezai Floral Design on Fifth Street. "[There is] no benefit whatsoever as far as we can see." He said the ambassadors do come by to say hello and ask how they are doing, but he sees no advantage business-wise.

Still, ambassadors insist they do more than meets the eye. Gadlin said the same people who dismiss the program as nothing more than a map-distributing service are shocked when they find themselves being escorted to their cars under an umbrella during a rainstorm.

"Some don't understand," she said. But, Gadlin added, others "say, 'I'm so happy that you guys are here.'"



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

HELPING OUT: **Bayside District ambassador JD Simpson shows Italian tourist Emanuele Ajello around the Third Street Promenade earlier this month. So far, the ambassadors, part of a program to make Downtown more attractive, have been a hit with both visitors and businesses.**

WE GET TREMENDOUSLY POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM."

Kathleen Rawson,
Executive director of Bayside District Corp.

news@smpd.com

Kid gets caught orange handed

FROM BUS PAGE 1

her son's treatment was out of line with his offense.

She admits he broke the law, but says officers shouldn't single out youngsters when eating on the bus is a fairly common transgression that usually goes unpunished.

"We as parents do not feel comfortable with undercover officers escorting kids off the bus … . This was handled as if he was being arrested for a much more sinister act," Patty Simab wrote in a letter she sent to city officials.

While citations for eating on the Big Blue Bus are rare — just four of them have been issued in the past 12 months — they're a legitimate way to enforce the law, said Sgt. Jay Trisler, a spokesman for the SMPD.

Trisler said Kaivon and another student were cited after a bus operator had reported regular problems with students from Paul Revere who were disturbing other riders, eating and taunting the driver. The undercover operation was scheduled after the driver notified a supervisor about the problem.

Trisler said enforcing the no-eating-on-the-bus rule is "not something that we proactively pursue" but is nevertheless a citeable offense, especially when it's done to address a recurring problem.

Simab, for her part, said her son rarely takes the bus home from school and isn't guilty of anything but eating an unhealthy snack.

Two SMPD officers are assigned to the Big Blue Bus and regularly patrol the system for violations that include fare evasions, public intoxication, noise disturbances, unruly behavior and other offenses. Going undercover, Trisler said, is a routine part of the job.

"Our officers go undercover for many things that people might think of as minimal," he said.

In her letter, Simab said "using two officers for approximately one hour to cite a 14 year old [for] eating cheetos is a totally inappropriate allocation of resources" and demanded "a formal apology letter from the officers and the department."

It appears unlikely Simab will get what she's looking for.

"We have the jurisdiction to do it, we have the ability to cite. It's an appropriate use of our resources because the Big Blue Bus contracts for our employees," Trisler said.

nickt@smdp.com

Event promotes local businesses

FROM CHAMBER PAGE 1

said the Expo comes at the right time this year.

"People leave this event feeling very uplifted," she said.

Companies that participate say they see a range of benefits to taking part.

"It's a great opportunity to network with all of the different entities that support the goings on in Santa Monica," said Julia Cooksey, the Verizon's director of government and external affairs.

But there's also a more tangible upside.

"From a business perspective we definitely want to share the products and services that Verizon as a company has to offer," she said.

Santa Monica-based Rand Corp. is a first-time participant. And while the non-profit research organization doesn't have much a local customer base to reach, Iao Katagiri, Rand's deputy vice president of external affairs and the chair of the chamber's board, said there are plenty of reasons for being involved.

> **"PEOPLE LEAVE THIS EVENT FEELING VERY UPLIFTED."**
>
> **Laurel Rosen,**
> Chamber president and CEO

As a long-time chamber member, Katagiri said Rand has always seen itself as an important part of the Santa Monica community.

"It's a very participatory community and everybody has a role to play and we all ought to step up and be active in whatever way is appropriate for us," she said.

nickt@smdp.com

More than $25M alloted for vehicles

FROM FUNDS PAGE 3

waste sites and leaking petroleum storage tanks, as well as reduce air pollution from diesel engines, Blumenfeld said.

"There is still a huge gap between what needs to be done and the money that exists to do it," he said. "But this is a critical piece."

The bulk of the agency's stimulus money was sent to the California State Water Resources Control Board and the California Department of Public Health, which together got $439 million to finance upgrades of drinking water infrastructure and fund water quality protection projects.

Other agency projects include a partnership with the California State Water Resources Control Board to spend more than $15 million to clean up underground storage tank petroleum leaks.

More than $25 million is being allotted to replace and retrofit engines in buses, heavy-duty trucks, locomotives and tractors in Los Angeles, the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, San Diego, the San Joaquin Valley and the San Francisco Bay area, officials said.

The agency is spending another $182 million in stimulus funds in Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii.

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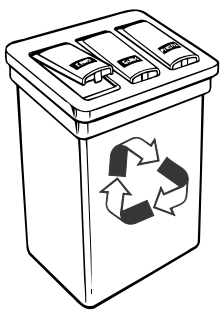
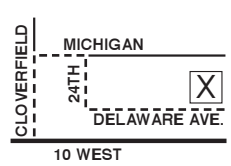
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Keeping streets clear of snow no easy task

MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO The forecast: a mighty winter blizzard sure to dump a record-setting blanket of snow that will grow from inches to feet overnight, just in time for rush hour.

When it happened this month in Washington, they called it "Snowpocalypse" and an overwhelmed city couldn't keep its streets clear. When it happened last week in Chicago, they called it "Tuesday" and kept the blacktop black from first flakes to final drifts.

"I'd take my plow drivers and put them up against anyone in North America," said Bobby Richardson, Chicago's snow removal boss. "Ten inches, a foot of snow? That's nothing for us. Nothing."

That's not the case outside of Chicago and other cities in the American snow belt, where the strategy for cleaning the streets of winter's wrath is often based on a calculated risk that snow won't fall where snow usually doesn't. Most years, that gamble pays off. But this winter, historic blizzards have struck cities where traffic-snarling snowfalls are rare or even unheard of, exposing the dangers of counting on the Big One not to hit.

"You won't see bare pavement for at least three weeks — and that's if we don't get another snow next week," Steve Shannon, an operations manager at the Virginia Department of Transportation, said late last week about suburban Washington's Fairfax County.

To be fair, the one-two punch of storms that socked the East Coast this month were record-setting, with snow falling so fast and deep that Washington pulled its plows from the road. A quarter were knocked out of commission entirely by the struggle of trying to move so much snow off the streets.

And yet Richardson and his legendary snow-clearing legions argue that keeping a city moving during such a blizzard isn't an insurmountable task. Should as much snow fall on Chicago as it did in Washington this month, the city's more than 500 plows and 1,000 workers — hardened by years of work in tough Midwestern winters — are prepared to wipe it all away.

"Chicago would get through such a storm, and while it would not be total normalcy, the city would still function," said Matt Smith, a spokesman for the city's Department of Streets and Sanitation.

Buried by snow this month, cities across the Mid-Atlantic states were forced to scramble to locate plows, hiring hundreds from private contractors and seeking help from neighboring states. No place seemed more unprepared for the weather than the Washington area: The federal government shut down for days as District residents complained of a spotty, haphazard response that left some streets all but abandoned.

And in the South, where even a light dusting is enough to paralyze commuters until the weather warms up and melts away the problem, most major cities have only a handful of plows — if any at all. In Dallas, a city of 1.2 million people but not a single dedicated snow plow, authorities count on snowflakes melting the minute they touch the ground.

That didn't happen last week, when the worst storm in nearly five decades dropped more than a foot of snow in northern Texas. All the city could do was send reconnaissance teams to identify slick spots and direct trucks to spread sand.

"Historically, that has handled every situation we face," city spokesman Frank Libra said.

So, which city is best at cleaning up after the Big One? Chicago, Buffalo, N.Y., or some other snowy locale? Those who study the business of providing such services say looking at comparable data is the only way to credibly assess whether one snow removal strategy beats another. But not only does such information not exist, the hundreds of variables involved complicate any effort to devise a master strategy.

For example, St. Paul, Minn., is far hillier than its Twin Cities counterpart of Minneapolis, which is filled with more alleys and more cars — obstacles that plows must dodge. Each snowfall is different, too: light, powdery snow falls when the temperatures drop close to zero, and wet, heavy snow comes when the temperature hovers around freezing.

"The snow and ice community has struggled with this topic for years as the methods, equipment, availability of resources and most importantly, level of service and winter severity, vary enormously from state to state, region to region," said Caleb Dobbins, a state maintenance engineer at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation.

What can be measured is preparation. With an annual average snowfall of 38 inches, Chicago maintains a fleet of 300 trucks that are specifically designed for removing snow and budgeted $17 million for the work this winter. Washington, with an average of 19.4 inches of snow each year, has 200 regular trucks that can be fitted with plow blades and a snow budget of $6 million.

Some Washington residents say the district is in a no-win situation: slammed for not being prepared when the Big One hits, but likely to face criticism if it spent much more on snow removal.

"I don't know how prudent it would be to throw millions of taxpayer dollars at a problem that may not rear its head in a century," said Mike DeBonis, a columnist for the Washington City Paper.

If the already cash-strapped city wanted to spend more on snow, he added, it would be forced to cut other, arguably higher priority services, such as garbage collection or tree trimming.

Head farther South and the preparation naturally gets even thinner. In Pensacola, Fla., there is no budget for snow removal. The city has a fertilizer spreader that can work with sand, but no snow-clearing master plan that in snow-belt cities typically includes target times for clearing streets.

"If we knew a cold front was coming in, I'd have to go to a pool company and buy some sodium chloride," said Pensacola public works director Al Garza. "Every time we take precautions, (we) stockpile some masonry sands in different locations and end up not using it."

Then comes a month like February, when snow covers some ground in 49 states; two-thirds of the nation's land mass had snow cover Friday. While Garza was safe, snow fell just 40 miles north of Pensacola last week. After brief respite over the weekend, it was snowing again in Washington on Monday.

The consequences of failing to clear that snow can be deadly. Each year, more than 1,300 people are killed and more than 116,000 injured in vehicle crashes on snowy, slushy or icy pavement, according to the U.S. Federal Highway Administration. A storm that shuts down roads also closes the door of business, costing communities hundreds of millions of dollars in lost sales taxes and revenue from income taxes.

Mardi Gras parties on despite cold snap

MARY FOSTER
Associated Press Writer

NEW ORLEANS Pete Fountain, clarinet in hand and looking dapper in a white tuxedo and fedora trimmed in gold, kicked off Mardi Gras with his "Half Fast Marching Club" the way they have for 50 years: with beads and jazz.

"We're slower than we were, and older than we were," Fountain, 79, said with a laugh. "But on Mardi Gras none of it matters."

Tuesday, the final day of Carnival, was sunny and cold with high temperatures hanging around 50 degrees. That didn't do much to chill a party that has been rolling since the New Orleans Saints won the Super Bowl Feb. 7.

"I have plenty of antifreeze with me if I need it," said Jessie Grace, 57, playfully waving a flask from his pocket. "If Mardi Gras doesn't warm you up, nothing will."

Grace and about 30 family members and friends staked out their spot on St. Charles Avenue at 2 a.m., setting up chairs and tables. By 7 a.m. gumbo was cooking in a big pot and ribs were on the barbecue grill.

Many along the parade route wore Saints jerseys. One group of cyclists was costumed as flying pigs, which long-suffering fans had always said they would see if the Saints won the big game.

"Hell froze over," said Sandra Bell, 51, shivering under a blanket. "Can't you feel it?"

"It's a big, big deal," said Glynn Brown, 55, who joked he had taken out a second mortgage to pay for the Saints gear he and his family were decked out in. "But Mardi Gras is our heritage."

The Saints were toasted as kings, invited by krewes to ride floats across the city. Quarterback Drew Brees, coach Sean Payton and owner Tom Benson served as monarchs of parades, while players Devery Henderson, Charles Grant, Deuce McAllister and others rode a float built by the Krewe of Zulu.

They sparked huge cheers, especially when they tossed small foam footballs to the crowd.

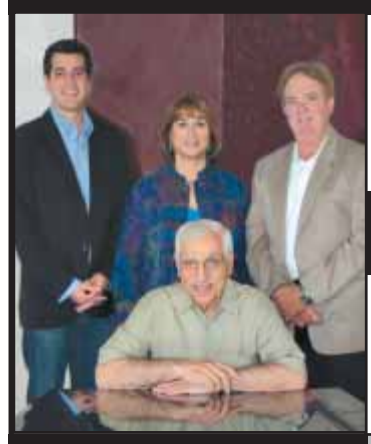
Mayor Ray Nagin and other city officials rode on horseback to the reviewing stand where they watched the parades and toasted the krewes who organize them. Nagin, making his last ride as mayor, wore a jacket saluting the Saints.

By afternoon, crowds on Bourbon Street in the French Quarter had grown. The cold also didn't stop the tradition of people on balconies tossing beads to the crowd below in exchange for a glimpse of flesh.

Elaborate costumes filled the street, with heavy emphasis on the Saints: Two men dressed as the Lombardi Trophy — the totem of the NFL championship — and another group dressed as fleur-de-lis, the unofficial emblem of the city and the team.

The party traditionally wraps up at midnight when the police clear Bourbon Street and Lent begins.

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SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 58°

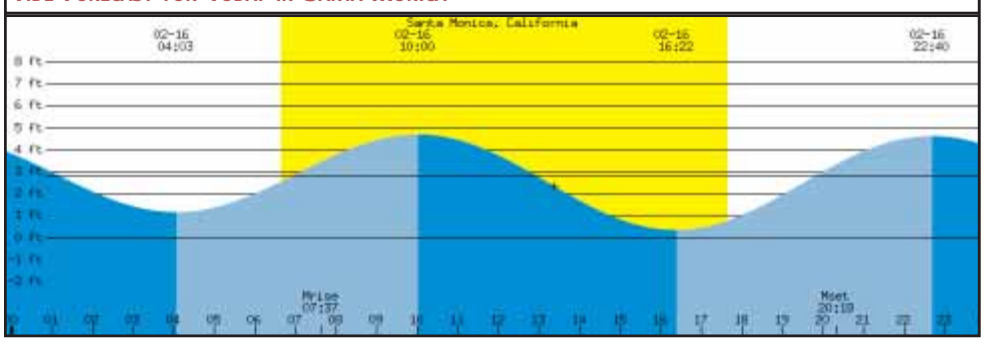
Swell Forecast

Looking like a chest to maybe head high day (max) for west facing breaks, with periods shorter (13 seconds), resulting in weaker waves.

Long Range Synopsis

Looking like a chest high day for west facing breaks as this swell backs off further.

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous 30 days up to the ending date of **February 9, 2010**

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

QUICK STATS (for the last 30 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 22
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 40 / 15
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 6 / 28

The Beach Report Card is made possible by: The Diller – von Furstenberg Family Foundation; simplehuman; SIMA

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

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

LEGEND

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

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

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

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

Heal the Bay

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NFL

Raiders agree to new deal with kicker Janikowski

JOSH DUBOW
AP Sports Writer

ALAMEDA Sebastian Janikowski and the Oakland Raiders agreed on a $16 million, four-year deal Tuesday that is the richest contract for a kicker in NFL history, the team said.

Janikowski will be guaranteed $9 million in the deal, a person familiar with the contract said on condition of anonymity because the team did not announce terms. ESPN first reported the contract Tuesday.

Janikowski was eligible to be an unrestricted free agent if the Raiders did not sign him to a contract or place the transition or franchise tag on him by Feb. 25. But the team was able to lock him up by giving him the same contract All Pro punter Shane Lechler got a year ago to stay out of free agency.

Janikowski is coming off the best season of his 10-year career. He made 26 of 29 field goals, with his only misses coming from 45, 57 and 66 yards. He made six kicks of at least 50 yards, including a 61-yarder that was the fourth longest in NFL history.

Janikowski also had 17 touchbacks on 58 kickoffs for the sixth best mark in the league last season.

The Raiders used a first-round pick to draft Janikowski in 2000, making him the first specialist in 21 years to go in the first round. Janikowski did not emerge as the game-changing kicker owner Al Davis hoped for at the time.

He missed 10 field goals as a rookie, and connected on only 76 percent for his first three seasons. But he has been very consistent the past two seasons, making 41 of 44 kicks inside of 50 yards. He became the all-time leading scorer in team history in 2008 and has 1,000 career points.

The Raiders have traditionally done a good job keeping their own free agents. They gave record deals last February to keep Lechler and star cornerback Nnamdi Asomugha and also gave a big deal to keep defensive tackle Tommy Kelly in 2008.

The focus now turns to defensive lineman Richard Seymour. Oakland traded a 2011 first-round pick to New England for Seymour before last season. He had four sacks, but two of the them came in the season opener.

If Oakland cannot sign Seymour to a long-term deal by Feb. 25, the team is expected to use the franchise tag to keep him for next season. Seymour, a five-time Pro Bowler, would be guaranteed $12,398,000 with a franchise tag.

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MOVIE TIMES

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

Double Feature/Gene Barry Tribute
War of the Worlds (NR) 1hr 25min
China Gate (NR) 1hr 37min
7:30 p.m.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Edge of Darkness (R) 1hr 48min
1:15, 6:55

Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus
(PG-13) 2hrs 02min
1:00, 4:10, 7:00

Legion (R) 1hr 40min
9:50

Sherlock Holmes (PG-13) 2hrs 14min
4:05, 9:35

Tooth Fairy (PG) 1hr 42min
2:00, 4:45, 7:20, 9:50

Up in the Air (R) 1hr 49min
1:30, 4:00, 6:35, 9:15

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

Avatar 3D (PG-13) 2hr 40 min
2:15, 6:00, 9:30

The Wolfman (R) 1hr 42min
1:30, 2:30, 4:10, 5:00, 7:00, 7:40, 9:25,10:05

When in Rome (PG-13) 1hr 31min
2:00, 4:20, 7:15, 9:35

Dear John (PG-13) 1hr 48min
1:45, 4:30, 7:10, 9:40

Dear John - Digital Presentation (PG-13) 1hr 48min
3:00, 6:15, 9:00

From Paris With Love (R) 1hr 35min
1:50, 4:45, 7:30, 9:50

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

An Education (PG13) 1hr 55min
1:55, 4:40, 7:30, 10:00

Crazy Heart (R) 2hr 07min
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 9:55

Last Station (Ein Russischer Sommer) (R) 1hr 52min
1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:45

Single Man (R) 1hr 39min
1:10, 7:20

Broken Embraces (R) 2hrs 23min
4:00, 9:50

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

The Blind Side (PG-13) 2hrs 6min
12:40, 3:50

The Book of Eli (R) 1hr 58min
11:30 a.m., 9:50

Celine: Through the Eyes of the World (NR) 1hr 57min
7:30

Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief (PG) 2 hrs
11:10 a.m., 12:50, 1:50, 3:40, 4:30, 6:20, 7:20, 9:00, 10:00

Valentine's Day (PG-13) 1hr 57min
12:30, 1:20, 2:20, 3:30, 4:10, 5:10, 6:30, 7:00, 8:15, 9:30

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

Fly solo tonight, Capricorn

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ You are able to mobilize another person's energy well. Try to detach and look at a situation as if you weren't a player. You might like what you see. A special effort goes a long way, especially if you don't expect a response. Tonight: Surf the Net. Watch a movie.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Deal with others directly and with a smile. What seems OK right now actually might not be. Work directly with a close associate or loved one. The end results will be better. Refuse to delegate at this present moment. Tonight: Relate on an individual level.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Keep pushing for different answers and solutions. Though you might not be the final person making the decision, ask questions. Clearly, someone cares a lot about you; decide what you want to do here. Tonight: Sort through the possibilities.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Do your work, but also diligently court someone's favor. On some level, you might be resentful for having to play this game. Someone admires your style, even if you are frustrated. Tonight: Go home and relax.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Express an unusual playfulness, which might be stemming from too much energy. Try to plug some of this energy into your work, if you can. Anyway, a relationship will benefit from your attitude. You will create a lot of romantic interest if you are single. Tonight: Enjoy just being.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ If you can work from home, do. You could feel more relaxed in this atmosphere. Spend some time dealing with a domestic or personal issue before diving into what you must do. A gentle approach goes far. Tonight: Close to home base.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Keep conversations moving, and you might be surprised by what comes up. You might want to invest more effort in convincing a sibling or a neighbor to follow your lead. Take a proactive stand in order to make a situation work. A meeting or discussion could have some irritating features. Know that it all will work out. Tonight: Meet a pal and hang out.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Be aware of the costs of proceeding in a certain direction. You might feel that you need to try something very different or listen more carefully to what is being shared. News comes your way that could impact you financially. Tonight: Take a hard look at your budget, then decide.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ You are in prime shape and ready to take a stand. What you perceive, many do not. You need to be explicit about what you are seeing and the direction you are heading. Understanding grows to a new level if you keep dialoguing. Tonight: Try something different.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★ Know when you should back off or do something differently. Your humor and understanding might not be appreciated. Someone needs to see the issue by him- or herself. A partner or associate could be quite aggressive or assertive. Tonight: Fly solo.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Don't lose your focus, and you will be much happier. A friend or loved one pushes hard to get his or her way. Honor your own priorities, if possible. Understanding grows between you and someone else. Listening to this person's view doesn't mean you agree. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Open up to new possibilities, especially if they surround a boss or someone you respect. Though you feel that you are your own person, note that others frequently watch what you are doing and follow your lead. Go for a brisk walk if you're stressed out. Tonight: Don't count on an early night.

Happy birthday

This year, others could be reactive to your style. You will start looking at different ways of making money or enhancing your income. Some of you might decide to cut back. If you are single, check out new people carefully. Someone might not be all you think he or she is. Take your time establishing a bond. If you are attached, try to enlist your significant other in your projects more often. SAGITTARIUS has great ways to spend your money!

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

Girls and Sports
By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



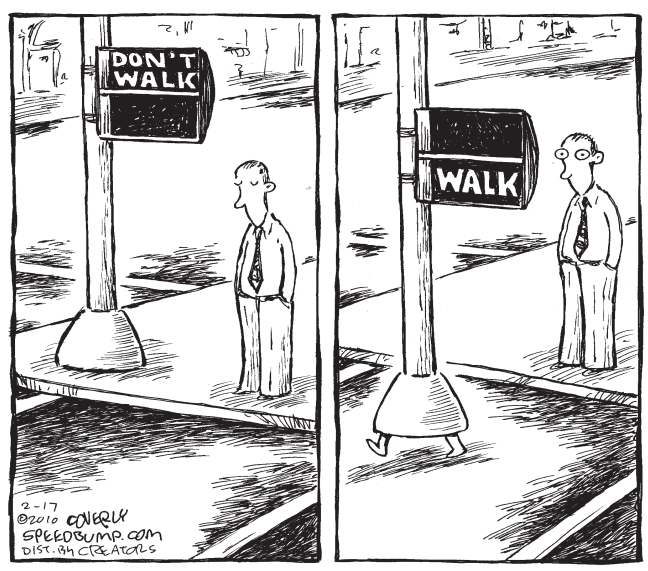
Garfield
By Jim Davis



Strange Brew
By John Deering



Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

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

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Castle circler
5 Redeem
11 La Scala song
12 Acropolis goddess
13 Collaborator with Engels
14 Form-fitting
15 Yale student
16 Bound
17 Is lacking
19 Designate
22 Pond growth
24 Owned by thee
26 Destitute
27 Liberal study
28 Blow one's top
30 Bridge forerunner
31 Harden
32 Mermaid's home
34 Place for a coin
35 Whale group
38 Car from a repair shop
41 Vanished
42 Confidential
43 Lot buy
44 Chinese-food veggie
45 Meaty dish

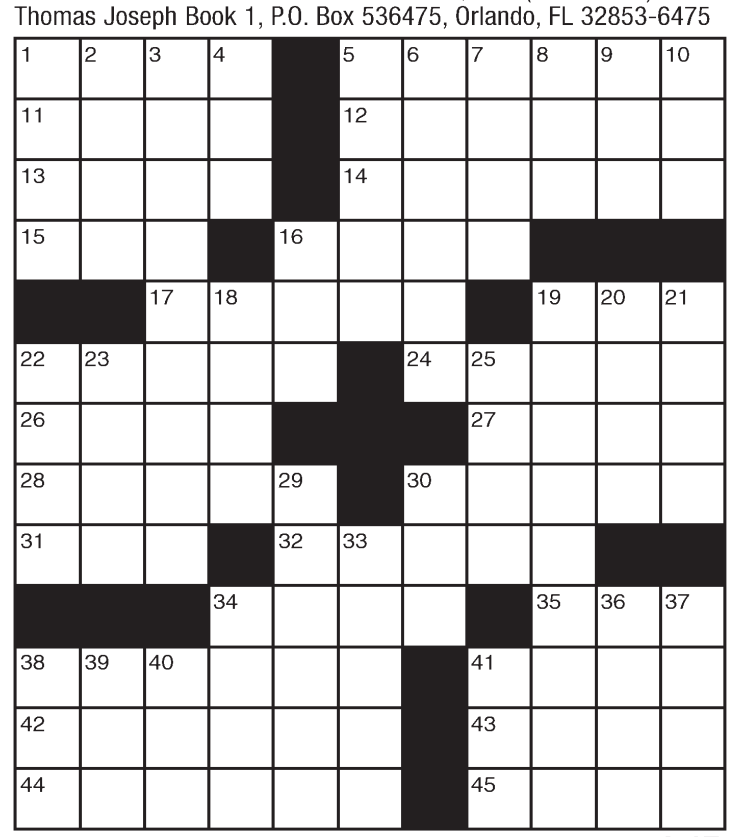
DOWN

1 Jerry Herman musical
2 Exam type
3 Discussing openly
4 Price addition
5 Packed up
6 Finally
7 Pack and send
8 Brood watcher
9 Quill need
10 Opposing vote
16 Victor at Fredericksburg
18 Tombstone lawman
19 Fatiguing
20 Crumb carriers
21 Nuisance
22 Some primates
23 Collected stories
25 "Very funny!"
29 Ohio city
30 Dripping
33 Prepared for the cobbler
34 Salon sound
36 Pay to play
37 Catty remark
38 Gloss spot
39 Low bill
40 Simile center
41 Xenon, for one

S	C	O	T	■	■	B	I	G	O	T
M	A	N	I	A	■	B	O	R	N	E
E	L	L	E	R	Y	Q	U	E	E	N
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S	T	E	P	S	■	■	T	E	E	S

Yesterday's answer

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2-17

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 14 16 17 33 47
Meganumber: 23
Jackpot: $56M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 1 7 11 39 46
Meganumber: 11
Jackpot: $9M

Fantasy 5: 18 19 26 33 35

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 9 1 6
EVENING: 6 5 5

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 10 Solid Gold
2nd: 12 Lucky Charms
3rd: 05 California Classic
RACE TIME: 1.44.98

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Computer-obsessed Japanese nerds' latest fancy is Love Plus, a Nintendo DS dating simulation that allows them a young, attractive, mouthy, teenage digital "girlfriend" who begs for attention. The touch-screen lover demands hand-holding, kissing and having sweet nothings whispered in her ear. How can men so easily become addicted to such vicarious experiences? Said one reluctant player, "Koh," to the BoingBoing blog,"(It) comes down to the fact that men are simple." (In December, Reuters reported that Japanese player SAL9000 had eloped to the Philippines with his Love Plus girlfriend, had himself photographed with her at romantic sites -- clutching the screen showing her image -- and then took her through a marriage ceremony.)

■ As vultures approach extinction in South Africa, they grow in value among local "traditional" communities for their magical abilities. Specks of a vulture's brain, sprinkled on mud and smoked, can supposedly ward off evil and bring winning lottery numbers. One Johannesburg vendor told Agence France-Presse in December that the specks even work when daubed on dogs' noses, enabling them to extend their already formidable scenting power.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1924 In Miami, Florida, Johnny Weissmuller sets a new world record in the 100-yard freestyle swimming competition with a time of 52-2/5 seconds.

1925 Harold Ross and Jane Grant found The New Yorker magazine; the debut issue is dated February 21, 1925.

1933 Newsweek magazine is published for the first time.

1933 The Blaine Act ends Prohibition in the United States.

1944 World War II: Battle of Eniwetok Atoll begins. The battle ends in an American victory on February 22.

1944 World War II: Operation Hailstone begins. U.S. naval air, surface, and submarine attack against Truk (Chuuk), Japan's main base in the central Pacific, in support of the Eniwetok invasion.

WORD UP!

inexorable \in-EK-sur-uh-bul; in-EKS-ruh-bul\ , adjective; 1. Not to be persuaded or moved by entreaty or prayer; unchangeable; inflexible; relentless.

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12746 Pacific Ave. unit 6 1+1 stove, fridge, dishwasher, wall ac, carpet, blinds, laundry,intercom entry, parking, no pets. $1200.move-in special $200 off (310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

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MAR VISTA: 11932 Courtleigh Dr. unit 9, $1025/mo. 1+1 stove, fridge, carpet, blinds, carpet, utilities include, intercom entry, laundry, gated, parking, no pets. $500 off move-in (310) 737-7933 jkwproperties.com

MAR VISTA: 12434 CULVER Blvd. unit 1 2+2 stove, fridge, AC, carpets blinds, laundry room, intercom entry, gated parking, no pets.$1350/mo $500 off move-in (888)414-7778 www.jkwproperties.com

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Name Changes

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Case No. SS019058
Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
Petition of MAURICE GOLCHIN for Change of Name
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner or Attorney: MAURICE GOLCHIN filed a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: MAURICE GOLCHIN to REESE GOLCHIN. 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: MARCH 18, 2010 Time: 8:30AM, 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: FEB 1, 2009
GERALD ROSENBERG
Judge Of The Superior Court
02/10/2010, 02/17/2010, 02/24/2010, 03/03/2010

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1328 Berkeley St #101
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$769,000
Front-Facing Townhome
Open Sunday February 21st 1:00 - 4:00 pm



847 5th Street # 206
2 Bed, 2 Bath
$688,000
N of Wilshire Condo!
Open Sunday February 21st 1:00 - 4:00 pm



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	Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
Santa Monica Canyon	$2,650,000	$4,802,500
North of Montana	$2,800,000	$1,150,000
Between Wilshire & Montana	$1,935,000	$739,498
South of Wilshire	$850,000	$653,000
Sunset Park	$997,000	$595,000
Ocean Park	$1,750,000	$654,000

Statistics Updated Every Monday

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