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Levys to City Hall: Wanna come play?

Conflicting statements suggest city planners may be fickle

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

(Editor's note: This is the last in an ongoing series this week on a lawsuit involving a 6-year-old's playhouse).

When Dr. David Levy tried to develop a relationship with city planners he soon decided they were as fickle as a first date on a Saturday night.

Conflicting statements within the city's planning department are the crux of the latest arguments in a lawsuit filed by a Santa Monica family whose 6-year-old son's playhouse was rendered legal,

then illegal, and then legal again.

Now the city says one of its former employees may have had a bad memory when he announced he quit the city in part because high ranking zoning officials reversed his determination that David and Beth Levy's backyard playhouse was legally built.

Mike Gruett, who served as the city code compliance supervisor until last February, approved Levys' playhouse, which is on elevated posts. He determined it was a single story structure, allowing it to clear the zoning code. But a few months later he was ordered by his bosses to slap a notice of violation on the playhouse. The move came after the Levy's neighbor, Tunde Garai, complained to then-mayor Ken Genser.

The Levys claim that Genser influenced

See PLAYHOUSE, page 3

Excessive fees, delays big money for city

City and local developers hash out their differences

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

City Hall's bureaucracy costs residents and professional builders thousands of dollars in what they describe as excessive fees and obstructive delays.

Officials and local developers met Tuesday to hash out the city's flawed building permit system, which some claim is nothing more than bureaucratic red tape designed to make the government big money.

"They are spending other people's money and not thinking of it at all," said Santa Monica Councilman Herb Katz, who is an architect. "They aren't thinking

of the user and how much it's costing them."

Katz said on a recent project involving a \$331,000 single-family home, the permits from the city cost more than \$18,000.

"This is insanity just on the cost basis alone," said Katz. "No average homeowner can afford that."

The process, which was set up by the city last October, was designed to avoid last-minute glitches and costly delays. It also was supposed to give builders the information they need before they even begin the approval process, officials said.

As part of the plan, a city manager is assigned to guide each project — from the largest developer in town to the do-it yourself homeowner — through the complex jumble of city building and zoning codes.

See FEES, page 3

A brief moment



Santa Monica's finest get briefed behind City Hall Wednesday before heading out to patrol the city's streets.

Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Armed robberies plague Santa Monica

Three crimes occurred within an hour of each other

BY TIM MURPHY
Special to the Daily Press

Armed robberies seemed to be the theme of the day in Santa Monica last week.

Four armed robberies occurred on Feb. 12, three of which occurred within an hour of each other.

Trouble started at 12:10 a.m. when a woman was held at gunpoint while she walked to her car near the 1300 block of 22nd Street near St. John's Hospital.

Santa Monica police responded to the scene and the victim, a 39-year-old Marina Del Ray resident, reported that she was approached by a man who demanded her back-

pack and wallet which contained \$80 in cash. The suspect ran north on 22nd Street.

At 9 p.m., robbers wearing black ski masks and scarves made off with \$1,000 from a pizza shop on Lincoln Boulevard. Police said two large men held Ameci Pizza employees at gunpoint while demanding that they open the cash register. After grabbing the cash, the suspects, described as black males about 6' tall, fled on foot.

A half hour later, two Beverly Hills residents were held at gunpoint while walking near the beach.

The victims, a 21-year-old female and a 20-year-old male, told police that they were approached by the suspect near the 1400 block of the beach. After showing the couple his gun, the suspect demanded their wallet and purse, wrist watch and black leather jacket.

Twenty minutes later, police

responded to the 1500 block of the beach, where a man, believed to be the same suspect in the earlier robbery, held a 30-year-old Oxnard woman at gunpoint. He displayed the gun and demanded her money. The value of the lost items is unknown.

The suspect is described as a black male between the age of 20 and 23 and roughly 5'8" tall. He was wearing a black hooded jacket and black baggy pants.

None of the victims were harmed physically in any of the incidents. That's probably because they gave up their belongings, a strategy recommended by police.

Santa Monica Police Lt. Frank Fabrega advises that victims of armed robbery should "comply with the perpetrators, then call the police afterwards."

It's advice that could save your life, he added.

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ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 ★★★★★ Avoid pressure and stay away from a confrontation if possible. You don't need the aggravation, and it won't get you anywhere. Communication isn't anyone's strong suit right now. Do what you need to complete work. Tonight: Swap war stories with your friends.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ★★★★★ Expenses go way overboard. You cannot be surprised at someone's reaction or flack. You can't change what is happening. Stay even-tempered with those you care about. Remember, this too will pass. Tonight: Your treat.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ★★★★★ Your sense of what is going on with an associate or partner could be way off. Stay secure, making inroads with a boss or supervisor. You might want more acknowledgment from others. Don't kid yourself. You're going to have to work hard. Tonight: Make yourself happy.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ★★★★★ Step back from others, especially at work. You might need to rearrange your work in order to make your day more productive. Don't balk at the inevitable, and work within an established pattern or framework. You can't break any rules right now. Tonight: Early to bed.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ★★★★★ Others seem to be on the warpath. You might want to seek out a spot where you can observe but not be found. You could see someone reveal his or her worst side. Be more self-aware in your dealings. Avoid triggering others just now. Tonight: Hang with a trusted friend.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ★★★★★ Your vision of what might work could be sorely tested by someone. Rather than toss your hands in the air in frustration, assume the middle road. Negotiate rather than create an uproar. Give others time to see things your way. Tonight: Clear out some paperwork.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ★★★★★ The best intentions run amok right now. Know that someone is bound and determined to rebel against your ideas or thoughts. Be level and easy with this person. Your feelings won't be respected right now. Look at the long term and detach. Tonight: Relax to a good movie.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ★★★★★ Your sense of humor comes through with a loved one or a dear friend. At the present time, eye your assets with care, but realize that your personality and talents are also assets. Don't underestimate how much you have to offer others. Tonight: Go along with someone's ideas.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ★★★★★ You could be the source of your own problems. Don't be surprised by others' reactions right now. You might not think of yourself as difficult. Take another look. You want to eliminate problems in your life, don't you? Tonight: Do more listening and less talking.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ★★★★★ You could be having an adverse reaction to what is going on. Stop and think through a decision. If you can put it off until you feel more prepared, all the better. Trust a loved one's gesture. This person rarely fails you. Also listen to him or her! Tonight: Put up your feet and relax.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ★★★★★ A power struggle emerges in a meeting. You might opt to pull back and not get involved. Any suggestion you make will be "wrong." Do your own thing, even if it means going out for cards at lunch or buying something you want. Tonight: Smile away.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ★★★★★ Laugh and make it easy for someone to back off of his or her position. You don't need to inform this person that his or her ideas are preposterous. Soon enough someone will figure it out, especially if you make light of a suggestion. Tonight: Buy a special item on the way home.



WEATHER

Today ...	Mostly Sunny	High—81°F	Low—56°F
Tomorrow ...	Partly Cloudy	High—83°F	Low—56°F
Saturday ...	Partly Cloudy	High—74°F	Low—53°F

 **QUOTE of the DAY**

**"I don't care what is written
 about me so long as it isn't true."
 — Dorothy Parker (1893-1967)**

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LOCAL



Lawyers argue case should be tried in court

PLAYHOUSE, from page 1

city staff into reversing Gruett's decision. Genser claims he only passed on the complaint and asked if the playhouse was legal.

The city's latest revelation is a sort of "smoking gun" memo — an e-mail in which Gruett said he agreed with the city's ruling that the playhouse was illegal.

Gruett testified for the Levys this month that he disagreed with the city's reversal and said one of the reasons he quit was because the city was "selectively enforcing" the Levys. Chris Harding, the Levys' attorney, classified Gruett as a classic "whistle blower" at a recent press conference.

But city attorneys Wednesday produced an e-mail from Gruett to his supervisor, Tim McCormick. In the November 2000 e-mail, Gruett said he agreed the playhouse was in violation. The e-mail came two months after the Levys filed their suit and after the city council offered amnesty for the Levys by saying they could keep the playhouse, though it would

technically be "non-conforming."

"I feel the notice of violation issued to Levy is accurate and valid based upon the interpretation of the zoning administrator and principal planner," Gruett wrote McCormick. "As far as I am concerned, the notice of violation stands."

Gruett was unavailable for comment late Wednesday. But in an earlier interview, he said at the time he approved the playhouse, he wasn't aware of an obscure zoning code that relates to basements in the Sunset Park neighborhood where the Levys live.

Gruett ruled that the playhouse had no basement because the area under it wasn't enclosed and lacked a floor. But after Garai complained to Genser, planning department officials decided the space was a basement.

"I had reason to suspect that someone was advising staff to interpret the code differently," Gruett said. "To have that technical knowledge of a section for that neighborhood that I didn't know about ... (The notice of violation) just didn't seem

Developers frustrated at city's slow system

FEES, from page 1

"The process in Santa Monica can be difficult," said Jay Trevino, the city's planning administrator. "The process is quite complicated. It's designed to keep Santa Monica the special place it is, but the by-product can be a complicated (building) approval process."

Developers, architects and general contractors say the new system has generated nothing but more hassles for them. About 50 of them showed up to Tuesday's meeting and were clearly frustrated that the new system has failed them.

"The people it has helped so far has been first-time users, but those are usually last time users too," said Peter Schechter, a Santa Monica architect. "They are typically only fixing up their home and not doing multiple projects."

Under the new plan, city officials are supposed to grant new permits in about two months.

"We want to track the process from beginning to end," said Trevino. "We established turnaround times because there was a lot of concern over the amount of time it was taking us to process things.

And time is money."

For professional builders with complex and detailed plans, the new system has brought an already slow system to a crawl.

"The (city's) planners are already over worked, and to expect them to take on more work is almost incomprehensible," said David Hibbert, a Santa Monica-based architect.

Hibbert said on one recent project the city forgot to pass along the plans to the mechanical engineer for review. When the plans were finally returned, he said they had to send them right back again.

"They haven't been any help to us and they haven't been very helpful for us so far," he added. "There is tremendous pressure to make the (deadlines) and the quality of their fact-checking hasn't been very good."

But Trevino argues the new system, though flawed, is working and the city is continuing to make the approval process faster.

"We are meeting our target time 75 percent of the time," he said. "But we still need further improvement."

"(Plaintiffs) have become addicted to their self-generated limelight and have forced everyone to watch their act too long. It is past time to turn out the lights. Plaintiffs must be told unmistakably that their show is over."

— CITY'S MOTION

practical or rational."

However, Gruett said top zoning officials Jay Trevino and Amanda Schacter — who reversed his decision — have more knowledge and expertise than he did. Sunset Park, a neighborhood in southeastern Santa Monica, has many homes which have basements that top out three feet above the ground.

City attorneys argue that Gruett's testimony not only lacks credibility but is inadmissible because it's hearsay.

"... Gruett now says that he was told by someone who was told by someone that improper 'pressure' was put on city staff in effect to harm the Levys," according to court papers. "If this is all they have, plaintiffs have nothing, in spades. Their 'evidence' is little more than the old game of telephone."

Such strong language, together with a press conference staged by Harding, suggests that the case is now playing to the public as well as a judge. The city said the Levys and their attorneys are using the press and are "demanding center stage" by orchestrating a press conference in which Gruett's testimony was used as the highlight.

"Plaintiffs time and again have proved unable to control themselves," court papers say. "They have become addicted to their self-generated limelight and have forced everyone to watch their act too long. It is past time to turn out the lights. Plaintiffs must be told unmistakably that their show is over."

Such artistic language is rarely seen in a motion intended to be read by a judge only.

Harding declined to comment until he reads the latest motion, filed Wednesday.

The city wants the lawsuit dismissed. The Levys want their playhouse with no conditions. A judge is expected to rule Feb. 25.

Judge eases Poundstone's probation conditions

By The Associated Press

A Santa Monica judge on Wednesday praised Paula Poundstone's progress, easing her probation terms in a child-endangerment case and allowing the comedian to have non-monitored work days.

However, the 42-year-old will still be monitored when she has daytime visits with her three adopted children. Poundstone lost custody of her foster children and she is banned from fostering or adopting more children.

"You have done so exceedingly well," Superior Court Judge Bernard J. Kamins said. "It is rare for me to see someone ... strive so hard for the purpose of getting kids back ... I recognize someone who is putting in an A-plus effort."

The judge also extended the time she can take for travel for stage or club performances as long as she submits an itinerary to her probation officer. She had been limited to three-day periods and now will be allowed five days.

Poundstone returned to work Dec. 14 with an appearance at the 700-seat Rio Theater in Santa Cruz. She also had a recent show in Anaheim.

Poundstone pleaded no contest to one felony count of child endangerment for driving while drunk with children in her car and one misdemeanor count of inflicting injury to a 12-year-old on three occasions. She was sentenced in October to 180 days a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, and five years probation.

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NATIONAL

ODDS & ENDS

Is city a 'folder' or a 'scruncher?'

By The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — The toilet paper stuck on streets and blowing in the wind isn't the work of teen-age pranksters.

City repair crews are using 170 rolls of toilet paper a day to help repair cracks in St. Louis streets. It's used to keep sealant in place while it dries.

City officials say toilet paper has several advantages over the materials used previously — sand, and sometimes leaf mulch. It's cheaper, it doesn't clog up the sewers and it doesn't stink like mulch.

Three citywide crack-filling operations use so much toilet paper that it's delivered to the street division headquarters on big, flatbed trucks.

The use of toilet paper for street repairs began in North Dakota years ago and is now starting to spread across the country, officials said.

Sheriff wannabe charged with murder

By The Associated Press

GRAYLING, Mich. — Don't expect Randee Craig Johnson to make many public appearances in his campaign for Crawford County sheriff. He's in jail, charged with murder.

Johnson, 41, is one of three candidates to replace Sheriff David Lovely, who last week accepted the county's offer of early retirement.

Johnson has been in the county jail since last July, awaiting trial on a charge of killing a man in what police say was a drug deal gone bad. Johnson says he is innocent.

In a letter requesting an application to enter the sheriff's race, Johnson said he has military experience, is familiar with the law and believes justice will be done at his murder trial later this year.

"I feel I would be an outstanding sheriff because I'm quite familiar with many people in our community and have gained the respect of many of the people that I came into contact with over the years," Johnson said in the letter, the Traverse City Record-Eagle reported Tuesday.

"I believe everyone deserves a chance to prove themselves."

Kitty food for the kids

By The Associated Press

CADIZ, Ky. — A Trigg County teacher's aide has been suspended over complaints that he gave middle school students heart-shaped Valentine's Day treats that turned out to be cat food.

The aide, in his first year as an assistant, was suspended last week pending an investigation.

"He exercised very, very, very poor

judgment," said Superintendent Tim McGinnis, adding that the name of the aide will not be released until the investigation is finished. "We don't know why he would do something like this. We're embarrassed, we're apologetic."

McGinnis said the employee took the treats from class to class Thursday afternoon and gave them to students, some of whom "sniffed, nibbled or took a bite" from the treats.

After school officials learned what the aide had done, children exposed to the cat treats were encouraged to wash their mouths out, brush their teeth and visit the school nurse.

There were no reports of illness.

Only in West Virginia

By The Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — A state senator is weighing in on the issue of whether the state should force obese

drivers to wear seat belts.

"I've seen individuals have trouble getting under the steering wheel, let alone put a seat belt on," Sen. Mike Ross said Tuesday.

State transportation officials are working out the details of a plan to improve West Virginia's poor record of seat belt use by allowing police officers to go directly after violators. Seat belt use now is mandatory, but police can only cite violators if they are pulled over for another traffic violation.

Ross, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, said legislators are ready to support the proposal if a few details can be worked out, like a waiver for people who are obese.

About 21 percent of West Virginians are considered obese, higher than the national average of 17 percent.

In 2000, West Virginians buckled up less than half the time, according to federal statistics.

School lets girl enter medical pot project in science fair

By The Associated Press

SANTA CRUZ — A Santa Cruz seventh grader will be allowed to enter her science project exploring marijuana's medicinal properties at a school fair.

Officials at Mission Hill Junior High School initially questioned whether "Mary Jane For Pain," a project that included marijuana-laced props, met science fair guidelines.

But over the weekend, principal Cathy Stefanki-Iglesias reviewed the 13 year old's research and decided it was fit for display at Wednesday evening's event — without props that included a marijuana-steeped rubbing alcohol and a pot muffin. "She had some good questions,"

Stefanki-Iglesias said. "The value is in what the student learned from the scientific process."

That process included a survey of five local women who say they use marijuana to treat various illnesses. Her aunt helps take care of a family friend who is seriously ill with cancer and each week produces a batch of marijuana muffins for a local group that gives pot to patients with prescriptions in line with California law.

The project falls under the fair's "social science" banner, Stefanki-Iglesias said.

The girl's father, Joe Morris, said his daughter might bake a parsley muffin to replace the confiscated props.



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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AMENDMENT TO THE HUD CONSOLIDATED PLAN (FY 2000-05)

Notice is hereby given that the City of Santa Monica has developed the Amendment to the HUD Consolidated Plan. The One-Year Action Plan, which is a component of the Consolidated Plan, is submitted annually to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It delineates the City's specific projects and activities for one-year use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds in order to meet the City's overall housing and community development needs as specified in the Consolidated Plan (FY 2000-05) adopted by City Council and submitted to HUD in June 2000. The City is seeking community comments on the Amendment.

Copies of the Amendment to the HUD Consolidated Plan are now available to the public for a 30-day community review period ending March 26, 2002. To obtain a copy of the Amendment, please contact the Human Services Division, 1685 Main Street, Room 212, Santa Monica, CA 90401, telephone (310) 458-8701, TDD (310) 458-8696. Please send your written comments to the above address by March 21, 2002.

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NATIONAL □ STATE



Georgia crematory number of corpses reaches 191

BY PATRICIA M. LAHAY

Associated Press Writer

NOBLE, Ga. — Investigators on Wednesday worked to recover discarded corpses in six newly discovered vaults on the grounds of a north Georgia crematory and said the body count may rise by at least another 100.

Morning rain that threatened search efforts at the Tri-State Crematory let up, allowing workers to check the vaults, which were located in a shed. Dr. Kris Sperry, the state's chief medical examiner, said as many as 20 corpses could be hidden in each one.

That could bring the total body count to more than 300. Officials had counted 191 by early Wednesday, with 29 of them positively identified.

Meanwhile, families were turning over their loved ones' medical records and supposed ashes to help officials identify their relatives after dozens of corpses were found discarded in woods near a crematorium.

Of 130 sets of remains turned over so far, one was filled with dirt, fifteen were at least partially filled with concrete dust and others contained potting soil, Sperry said.

He said one container of remains was returned by a family whose deceased relative has been identified as one of the corpses found in the search.

"That family got back the remains of someone else," he said.

Untold numbers of partial skeletons also have been found, officials said, but only complete corpses are being included in the count for now. Sperry said 29 bodies had been positively identified.

Six bodies were found Tuesday at a second location about 150 yards behind the home of Tri-State Crematory operator Ray Brent Marsh, said Buddy Nix, director of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

Marsh, 28, is being held without bond on 16 counts of theft by deception for allegedly taking payment for cremations he didn't intend to perform. A bond hearing has



Mark Humphrey/Associated Press

A Georgia State Trooper guards an entrance to the home of Ray Marsh, operator of the Tri-State Crematory, near Noble, Ga. on Wednesday. The body count is now at 191 recovered bodies, most of which were found left to rot on the crematory grounds.

been postponed until Marsh has an attorney.

It's not clear who besides Marsh may be responsible for dumping bodies in the woods and stacking them in sheds and vaults on the property.

Marsh took over the business from his mother, Clara Marsh, and his ailing father, Ray Marsh, in 1996, but authorities say some of the corpses appeared to have been on the property for 15 years or more. The elder Marshes have not been charged.

Marsh has told investigators that he didn't cremate the bodies because the incinerator was not working, but Nix called Marsh "irresponsibility personified." Gas records have been subpoenaed in an attempt to determine when the crematory was last used, Nix said.

"Until something's done to the guy that did all this and something's done to make sure it doesn't happen to any-

one else, there will never be any peace for me," said Tom Shaw, who drove from St. Joseph, Mo., to this rural town 20 miles south of Chattanooga, Tenn., after his mother's body was found.

Shaw, a long-haul trucker who has only intermittent contact with his family, said he didn't even know his mother, Norma Hutton, had died on Dec. 31 before he heard television reports that her body had been found stacked in a shed at the crematory.

"(Marsh) deserves to be put to death and then thrown out in a barn," Shaw said.

About 120 people attended an hour-long memorial service Tuesday night at Oakwood Baptist Church in Chickamauga. Pastor Darrell Henry read the biblical story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead and encouraged the families to remain hopeful.

Two lawsuits alleging fraud have been filed against the Tri-State Crematory and at least one of the funeral homes that sent bodies there. An attorney in one of the cases said he was seeking class-action status for the lawsuit, which accuses the funeral home and crematory of negligent or intentional mishandling of corpses.

Authorities have said about 30 funeral homes in Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama sent bodies to Tri-State for cremation.

Walker County coroner Dewayne Wilson said he could not explain how bodies were dumped in the woods for years behind the crematory in a residential neighborhood without being detected.

Johnny Johnson, who lives next door to Marsh, said Tuesday he never saw, heard or noticed anything suspicious, even though bodies were found just 100 yards from his property.

"It wasn't going on while we were here, so it must have been happening while we were at work," Johnson said.

"That's what's got me so messed up about this," he said. "I just don't know what motivated him to do this."

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer testing distribution of movies online

BY SIMON AVERY

AP Business Writer

SANTA MONICA — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. launched a test program Wednesday to deliver movies online, in what amounts to the first attempt by a major Hollywood studio to let customers download films over the Internet.

MGM has teamed with CinemaNow Inc., an Internet distributor of feature films and shorts, to offer two motion pictures over the Internet as part of a 30-day trial.

"The idea is to throw it out there and see what happens," said Stacey Studebaker, a spokeswoman for MGM Home Entertainment.

MGM and several other leading studios already "stream" some of their films over the Internet. But MGM's latest endeavor will give consumers the choice of either streaming the films or downloading them for higher quality playback.

Hollywood faces numerous challenges in bringing its content to the Web, including slow Internet connections. It takes nearly 25 hours to download a 90-minute

film using a dial-up modem and more than four hours with a broadband connection.

Another obstacle is the threat of piracy.

As part of the trial, MGM will test CinemaNow billing and security software. Customers will only be able to play the films in the 24-hour period after they download them. Also, electronic locks in the software have been designed to prevent copying once the movies are downloaded.

MGM had earlier partnered with four other Hollywood studios to distribute films online. But Movielink and a second industry venture, Movies.com, have run

into problems, including an antitrust probe by the Justice Department.

MGM is testing the waters cautiously with its latest venture. Of the two films the studio is putting forward, one was a box-office flop. The other has already been gathering dust in home video for years.

"What's the Worst that Could Happen?" was a critically savaged comedy starring Martin Lawrence and Danny DeVito. It cost about \$45 million to make and only earned \$32 million before debuting on video in December.

United Airlines strengthens its cockpit doors

By The Associated Press

CHICAGO — United Airlines will reinforce cockpit doors on 93 of its passenger jets, a move prompted by a passenger's attempt to force his way into a cockpit during a flight to South America earlier this month.

Modifications to the upper and lower portions of cockpit door frames on United's Boeing 767-300 and 777 aircraft will be complete within two weeks, Capt. Hank Krakowski, the airline's director of flight operations, said Tuesday.

During a Feb. 7 flight from Miami to Buenos Aires, officials say a passenger from Uruguay demanded to speak to the pilots, then kicked in the bottom of the door and got his head and upper body inside the cockpit before the co-pilot struck him on the head with a crash ax.

United officials said they were surprised the man was able to penetrate the door.

The doors were designed to flex at the bottom, such as during hard landings, "but you shouldn't be able to kick it in," Krakowski said.

The rest of United's fleet is equipped with different types of cockpit doors that do not need the same type of temporary reinforcement, officials said.

The Air Transport Association, which represents the major airlines, said it was not aware of other airlines

specifically fortifying the doors in those two models of planes. However, other airlines have added other temporary security measures, such as bars inside cockpit doors.

The airlines will have to make major changes to their

cockpit doors over the next year. The Federal Aviation Administration set an April 2003 deadline for their planes to be equipped with armored cockpit doors and bulkheads that can withstand assaults by hand, gunfire and grenades.

CA doctors want smoking age to be 21

BY ANDREW BRIDGES

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Members of the California Medical Association are seeking to raise the state's smoking age from 18 to 21, which would be the highest in the nation.

The association, which represents 35,000 state physicians, will vote on the proposal Tuesday during its annual session, which draws 400-plus delegates to Anaheim.

If passed, the resolution would direct the association's lobbyists to support any legislation that would change the legal age to buy, possess or receive tobacco products and paraphernalia. No such legislation is pending.

The association may also amend the proposal to directly sponsor such legislation, which requires a legislator to author the bill. Such a bill, if signed into law,

would also make it illegal to sell tobacco products, including cigarettes, to those younger than 21.

"This is hopefully a proposal that might discourage and make it more difficult to purchase tobacco products, especially among older teen-agers and college-age kids," said Dr. Leonard Klay, a Santa Rosa obstetrician and gynecologist who will introduce the proposal on Saturday.

Passage of the resolution is not assured: Klay said physicians within the district he represents, which stretches from Marin County to the Oregon state line, split nearly 50-50 on the issue before forwarding it to the association for debate and a vote.

All 50 states set a minimum age of at least 18 to buy tobacco products following a 1992 directive from Congress. In three other states, Alabama, Alaska and Utah, the legal age is 19.

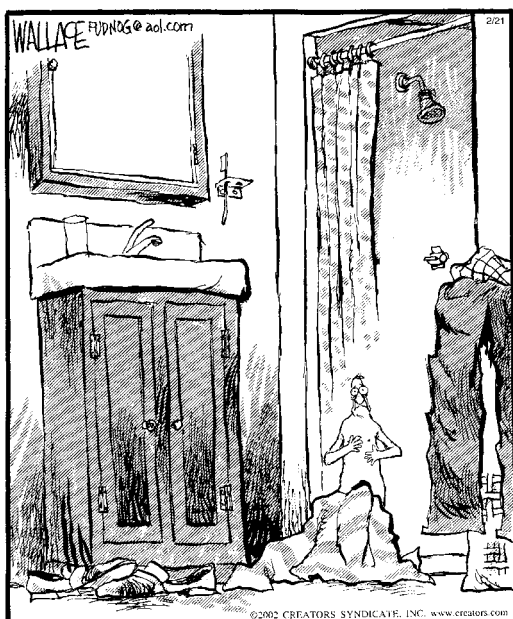


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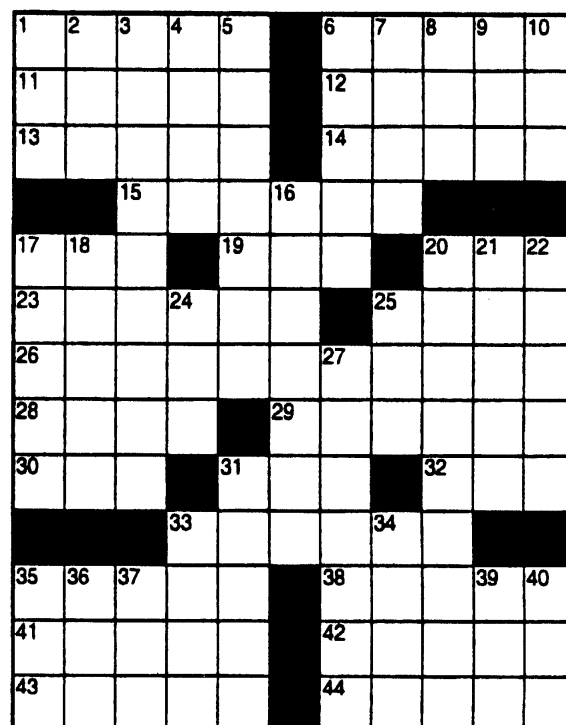
CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- Congress workers
 - Useful quality
 - Lusitania sinker
 - Ingenuous
 - Gaggle members
 - Vetoed
 - Shipwreck site
 - Winter ailment
 - The Grinch's dog
 - Reservoir creator
 - Tall tree
 - Writer Jaffe
 - Forest shrubs
 - Adolescent
 - More acute
 - Go astray
 - Old dance
 - Employ
 - Gain great amounts
 - November stone
 - Totted up
 - Idolize
 - Miniature
 - Push away
 - Private boss
- DOWN**
- Small dog
 - Jurist Fortas
 - Fails
 - Comfort
 - River boat
 - Add on
 - Uttered
 - News hour
 - Garden name
 - Co-worker of Mary and Lou
 - Asian capital
 - Champagne glass

SODAS		SAGS
TRUCE		SCREW
EBERT		PAULA
WIDE		GAMBIT
ETA		SEC ADS
DETAILED		
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ONEMAN		GALA
ACTIV		RECAP
SLATE		INANE
TEST		PESTS

Yesterday's answer

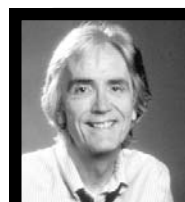
- Titanic, for one
- Australia
- Pot starts
- Skier Phil
- Comfy room
- Fish eggs
- Summer TV
- Eye color
- Steak order
- Brain-storm
- Road goo
- Keats creation
- Balloon sound
- Sch. subj.
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2-21

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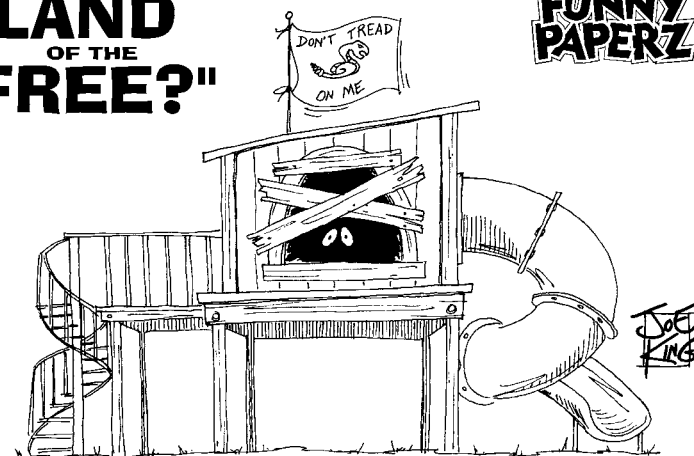
NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Mayor creates a 'Satan-free' zone

In November, Mayor Carolyn Risher of Inglis, Fla. (pop. 1,400) issued an official proclamation (and embedded copies in posts at four entrance points to the city) declaring her town to be a Satan-free zone. She said she was concerned with kids dressing "Goth," as well as DUI drivers and child molesters: "We are taking everything back that the devil ever stole from us." (In January, the Town Council ruled Risher's action was unofficial.) And in December, another Florida mayor, Greg Bittner of Howey-in-the-Hills (pop. 850), resigned after complaints from the Town Council over his repeated rants that the town should buy a machine to make "colloidal silver" supplements, which he believes kill anthrax spores and otherwise improve public health (despite government warnings of their toxicity).

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BACK PAGE

Officials hope grapefruit juice martinis revive sales

BY MIKE SCHNEIDER

AP Business Writer

LAKELAND, Fla. — When the girls from “Sex and the City” sipped grapefruit martinis to toast Carrie’s engagement, the Florida Department of Citrus saw a way out of a slump.

“This is a great opportunity to contemporize grapefruit juice.”

— MICHELLE CHANDLER
Florida Department of Citrus,
Deputy executive director of marketing

“After that episode ran, we all screamed, ‘Did you see that?’ They had been drinking cosmos on the show for so long,” said Michelle Chandler, the department’s deputy executive director of marketing. “This is a great opportunity to contemporize grapefruit juice.”

The Florida Citrus Commission, which oversees the department, has approved \$470,000 to help promote the drink — called the Ruby — at trendy clubs and bars across the country and sweeten the juice’s stodgy image.

The target market? Young, single, urban women like the “Sex and the City” characters Carrie, Samantha, Charlotte and Miranda.

The Ruby campaign also includes a Web site dedicat-

ed to the cocktail, a promotional trip to the Nightclub and Bar Trade Show in Las Vegas next month and a partnership with SKY Vodka so company representatives can pitch the drink to bars and pass out recipe cards.

The grapefruit industry has been battered by slumping grapefruit juice consumption. Every season, growers are forced to dump their crops in cow pastures.

Grapefruit juice sales in major stores are down more than 10 percent from last season, according to A.C. Nielsen supermarket data.

After the Ruby’s appearance on the show, the department’s advertising agency, Chicago-based Golin/Harris, came up with an official recipe for the cocktail: ruby red grapefruit juice, citrus vodka, a garnish of pink grapefruit and a glass rim dipped in sugar.

The agency also hired actresses Aida Turturro, Karen Duffy and Talisa Soto to promote the Ruby in two test markets — Chicago and Miami’s South Beach — in appearances on local TV shows, and at nightclubs and restaurants.

Filmmaker John Waters’ art show is storyboard of still shots

By The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Filmmaker John Waters said his art exhibit’s mission is to piece together clichés from different movies to create something new.

Waters, who directed “Cry Baby” and “Serial Mom,” scoured films for the photos he wanted, then arranged the frozen frames to create storyboards on exhibit at the Rena Bransten Gallery.

One grouping, called “Toilet Training,” features a series of movie stars sitting on toilets in scenes from different movies.

“It isn’t about which celebrity I found on the toilet,” Waters told the San Francisco Chronicle. “I don’t care

who it was. I just needed a bunch of celebrities on the toilet to show that this is a ridiculous, overused image.”

Waters created the pieces by coming up with an idea, then searching for the images with help from a researcher.

Another creation, called “Retard,” shows celebrities playing developmentally disabled characters.

“It’s Oscar bait, and it works,” he said. “I’m just showing another cliché that actors do to prove they’re serious.”

Waters said he is mocking the things he loves, and hopes people will simply have a good laugh when they see his show.

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