



BOOSTING THE ECONOMY
SEE PAGE 3

Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE GOVERNMENT AT WORK ISSUE

Battle for trees rages on

Council denies appeal; Treesavers vow to take fight back to L.A. court

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL The Santa Monica Treesavers' bid to landmark a series of Ficus trees in Downtown Santa Monica got shot down on Tuesday by the City Council, but the battle doesn't appear to be over just yet.

While the Treesavers' four-month long campaign to landmark 153 Ficus trees along Second and Fourth streets failed after the council upheld a ruling by the Landmarks Commission last month to deny the designation, the matter of a court battle dating back to October remains alive.

The Treesavers filed a restraining order against City Hall in early October, alleging it had violated provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act when it failed to submit an environmental impact report (EIR) outlining the effects of removing 54 Ficus trees as part of the \$8.2 million streetscape improvement project.

Assistant City Attorney Joseph Lawrence said at the time that an EIR was conducted in 1996 and again in 1997.

A superior court judge issued the restraining order against City Hall just days before the project — which includes street lighting and sidewalk improvements — commenced in October, keeping the trees in place per court order while the rest of the project continued.

The restraining order has since expired but the court hearing was placed on hold

SEE TREES PAGE 13



File photo

DECISION: Activists' appeal of Landmarks Commission ruling denied by City Council.

Money talks at City Hall

A looming recession could impact city, affecting budget

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE — Stormy years could lie ahead in City Hall's financial future as Santa Monica, much like the rest of the country, might have to weather a recession.

The bleak financial forecast was presented to the City Council on Tuesday night during a comprehensive budget discussion that included a five-year outlook and the formulation of community priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

"The economy continues to be uncertain, although we're seeing a stronger indication and more prediction that we will in fact hit recessionary conditions this year," Carol Swindell, director of finance for City Hall, said at the meeting.

Affecting the financial picture of the city is recent downward trends in several tax revenue sources, including auto sales, which account for 20 percent of the total sales tax. During the quarter ending in September 2007, auto sales tax dropped 12.7 percent from the same quarter the previous year. Local sales are indicative of national auto trends, which in 2007, experienced the weakest year in 10 years. Experts predict 2008 will be a weak year as well, Swindell said.

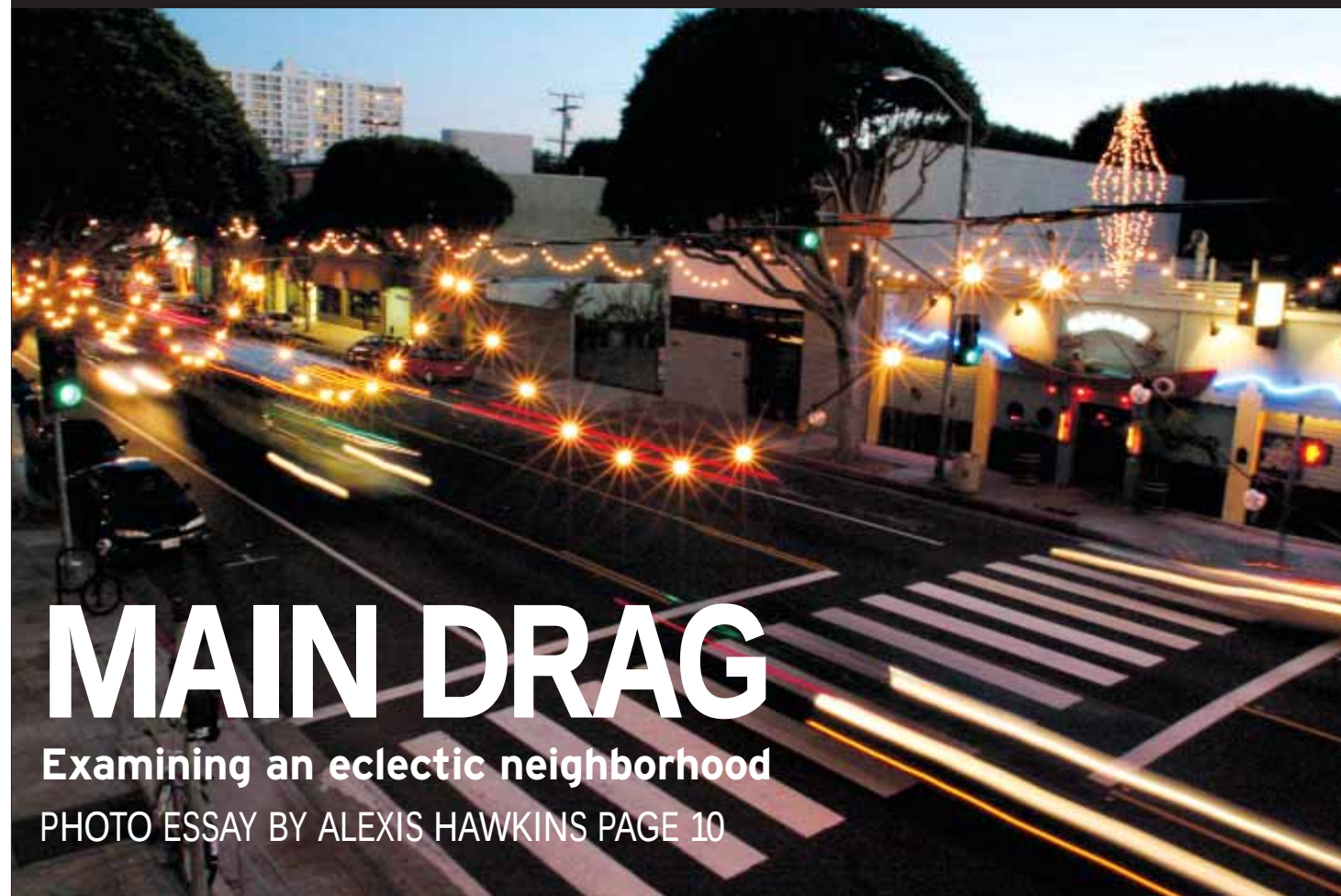
Thanks to the diversified tax base, some of the other tax sources that have experienced growth, such as the transient occupancy tax and business gross receipts, will be able to absorb the loss in auto sales, Swindell said.

The finance director added that consumer spending could take a hit.

"Certainly, consumer spending is beginning to wane," Swindell said. "Consumer spending accounts for almost 70 percent of

SEE BUDGET PAGE 12

A DAY IN THE LIFE



MAIN DRAG

Examining an eclectic neighborhood

PHOTO ESSAY BY ALEXIS HAWKINS PAGE 10

Alexis Hawkins news@smdp.com

STREAKING BY: Main Street, with its unique mix of businesses, can be a pretty active place on any given Saturday night.

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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR 11TH STREET ARTIST LOFTS PROJECT



DATE: February 15, 2008

TO: State Clearinghouse, Agencies and Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: City of Santa Monica, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401.
Contact: Laura Beck, Associate Planner Telephone: 310-458-8341

The City of Santa Monica intends to prepare a focused Environmental Impact Report for the "11th Street Artist Lofts" Project. In accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City of Santa Monica has prepared this Notice of Preparation to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the proposal and its potential environmental effects. Environmental factors which would be potentially affected by the project are: Aesthetics, Construction Effects, Neighborhood Effects, Noise, Mandatory Findings of Significance and Transportation/Traffic.

PROJECT APPLICANT: Pacifica Equities, LLC

PROJECT LOCATION: 1639 11th Street, Santa Monica

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project involves the construction of a 45-foot, three-story building to accommodate 66 condominium artist studio units on a 36,187 square foot parcel located at 1639 11th Street. The building would be approximately 53,727 square feet over a subterranean garage with 163 parking spaces. The existing 28,416 square foot, two-story multi-tenant manufacturing building with offices would be demolished. The applicant has requested the following discretionary permits: Development Review Permit (DR 06-012) for a project exceeding 7,500 square feet of floor area; Design Compatibility Permit (DCP 06-008) for a condominium use in the M-1 District; Tentative Tract Map (TM06-027) for the air rights subdivision to create 66 condominium units.

REVIEW PERIOD: As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, the Notice of Preparation will be circulated for a 30-day review period. The City of Santa Monica welcomes agency and public input during this period regarding the scope and content of environmental information related to your agency's responsibility that must be included in the Draft EIR. **Comments may be submitted, in writing, by 5:30 p.m. on March 17, 2008** and addressed to: Laura Beck, Associate Planner; City Planning Division; 1685 Main Street, Room 212; Santa Monica, CA 90401. Fax: (310) 458-3380. E-mail: laura.beck@smgov.net

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de la preparación de un reporte sobre los posible efectos ambientales referente a la construcción propuesta de 66 condominios para artistas que trabajan y viven en sus unidades, lo cual puede ser de interés a usted. Para más información, llame a Carmen Gutierrez, al numero (310) 458-8341.

Calendar

2

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2008

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A newspaper with issues

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Calling all docents

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Finally, a use for that art history degree! The LACMA's Art Docent Council is seeking volunteers to lead tours of the museum's diverse collections. Information and applications can be obtained by e-mailing a request to Admissions@lacmadocent.org. Applications are due no later than February 22, 2008.

Improve eclectically

1323-A Third St. Promenade, 7 p.m. — 10 p.m.

Westside Eclectic's Level 1 Improv class is an introduction to the art of improv comedy. The intro covers core improv ideals, concepts and vocabulary such as hyper-listening, give and take, yes-anding, efficient communication and emotional response. The WE teaching staff creates a warm and open learning environment that facilitates establishing the foundation of a seasoned improviser.

What's new this week

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. — 2:30 p.m.

A free-wheeling review and discussion of the week's key news stories at home and abroad.

Friday, Feb. 22, 2008

What's in this Black Box?

12420 Santa Monica Blvd., West L.A., 8 p.m. — 12 a.m.

Charles Busch's legendary camp comedy, "Vampire Lesbians of Sodom," follows two vampire lesbians through time. We're not kidding, that's really the plot. For information, call (310) 712-5711.

Getting wild on the Westside

Noon — 5 p.m.

For the first time, the true crime archeologists of the 1947project have set their sights on points west of Robertson Boulevard, and the results are truly astonishing. In this new tour spotlighting some of the weirdest, most horrific and downright unbelievable crimes of historic West Los Angeles, you'll thrill and shudder to tales of teenage girl gangs, tortured tots, wicked wives, evil spir-its, cults, creeps and assorted maniacs on a tour so wild, we had to say it twice. Seats are \$55 a person. For more information, call (323) 223-2767.

Travelin' Dylan

2701 N. Sepulveda, Brentwood, call for times

Skirball's "Bob Dylan's American Journey" exhibit includes hand-written song lyrics, posters, and a recording of his first-ever, never-released concert. Included is an area where you can play drums with Dylan — much like Bono sang with Sinatra. General admission is \$10, \$7 for seniors and students, and free on Thursdays. Visit www.skirball.org 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.



Stimulating the economy

Gov. Schwarzenegger awards \$73 million for housing projects

By DAILY PRESS STAFF

LOS ANGELES To help jump start the state's sagging economy Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger awarded \$73 million for 40 housing projects in 26 cities across the state, helping more than 1,600 California families rent or purchase affordable housing.

The awards, coupled with the \$69.5 million in permanent low-interest loans from the Proposition 1C housing bonds Gov. Schwarzenegger announced earlier this month, will create more than 5,300 jobs and more than \$244 million in wages.

"We applied for this grant because we want to help displaced workers transition to new jobs, and the money will go to the counties with the greatest need," Schwarzenegger said. "We are not just sitting by and waiting for the economy to pick back up. We are taking all the action we can to keep people working and rebuilding California."

Los Angeles and Orange counties are among those across the state receiving some of the federal money, along with Riverside and San Diego counties. Each of the affected counties has been equipped with a One-Stop Center providing displaced workers with employment services.

Schwarzenegger said more than 8,400 workers in the mortgage and banking industries have been laid off since July 2007.

"Many of these laid-off workers have skills that are transferable to jobs in high-growth, high-demand industries such as health care and biotech," Schwarzenegger said.

The governor toured the New Carver Apartments Project near downtown Los Angeles to announce the state and federal grants. The project is being built by the Skid Row Housing Trust, which received nearly \$8 million in grants to develop 97 housing units, most of which will be dedicated to people who are homeless, recovering from addiction or living with HIV/AIDS.

Schwarzenegger said the \$73 million in Proposition 46 funds — approved by voters in 2002 — awarded Wednesday will provide affordable housing for 1,611 families across the state.



Kevin Herrera kevinh@smdp.com

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT: Craig Perkins (center), the director of environmental and public works for City Hall, talks about the efforts Santa Monica has made to make it easier for developers and homeowners to go green during an open house Wednesday at Green on 19, a new collection of townhomes that were built with sustainable features in advance of being purchased, a first in Santa Monica.

Breaking green ground

New development the first to be built with sustainable specs

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

19TH STREET Five years ago, architect Jesse Bornstein would never have dreamed of building a housing project with sustainable elements included if the buyer hadn't specifically asked for them. Investors felt it was just too risky.

That was then. Now, as awareness grows about the benefits of green building, getting projects funded is a lot easier. An example of that is Green on 19, Bornstein's collection of five townhomes on 19th Street that feature

dual-flush toilets, solar panels, energy efficient appliances and alcohol-burning, flueless fireplaces — all included without a buyer even being attached.

Green on 19, which just went on the market this week, is the first private, multi-family green-building project to be built on spec on the Westside, a sign that eco-friendly construction is gaining momentum as buyers look to reduce their impact on the environment.

"Every project like this pushes the envelope, and can serve as inspiration for others to do the same," said Craig Perkins, the director of environmental and public works management for City Hall, who on Wednesday joined other city officials and prospective buyers for an open house at Green on 19.

It was fitting that representatives from City Hall were in attendance considering Santa Monica's dedication to utilizing green building practices for public projects while

encouraging residents and developers to do the same, said Bornstein, who helped lead City Hall's Solar Santa Monica initiative, which hooks up residents and business owners with companies specializing in solar installation, offering them discount prices and reliable products.

"A few years ago it would have been a great financial risk to build green without having a committed buyer, let alone five," Bornstein said. "The city's education efforts have created a market for green building, particularly solar, allowing developers the freedom to listen to their conscience and to get creative."

The five townhomes, which sell for roughly \$1.25 million and up, feature a unique implementation of SANYO HIT solar panels that provide 100 percent of the homes' energy supply on sunny days, while allowing sunlight to filter through onto roof

SEE GREEN PAGE 11

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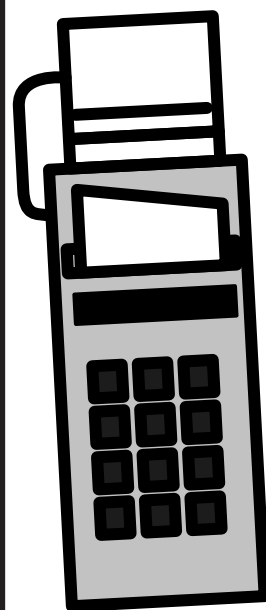
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Make like a tree and leave it alone

While the Daily Press would never advocate for the destruction of healthy, mature trees, it is time for the Santa Monica Treesavers to abandon their efforts to save a number of Ficus trees on Second and Fourth streets, which are slated for removal as part of a badly needed streetscape improvement project.

That means dropping the legal challenge filed by the Treesavers, which has put much of the project on hold, jeopardizing federal funding. No one likes litigation, so let's drop it. Second and Fourth street businesses, some of which have supported the Treesavers, have long desired improvements to remain competitive with the Third Street Promenade, and any further delay potentially places more of a burden on them.

Those streets need to be more pedestrian friendly with better lighting, wider sidewalks and fewer sections of uneven concrete that have caused people to trip and sue City Hall, diverting taxpayer money away from more important things like public safety, after-school programs and sustainable initiatives. Large Ficus trees create wonderful canopies along residential streets and help keep the climate cool while helping to clean the air, but when it comes to major thoroughfares there needs to be more visibility and limited liability. Visitors need to be able to read street signs and the names of businesses when walking down the street. Presently, the dense canopy blocks store signage.

The Treesavers tried valiantly to convince the Landmarks Commission and the City Council to grant the trees in question landmark status, and they should be commended for their efforts, which represented true grassroots activism that makes Santa Monica an attractive place to live. Without them, this issue would most likely have not gotten a second, third and fourth look.

That said, the Treesavers were not successful in changing the minds of the powers that be. It's time to move on. It would be better if the Treesavers focused their positive energy on other worthwhile causes, such as protecting the greatest natural resource in Santa Monica, that being the ocean and our beaches, which are a much bigger draw than the trees.

The urban forest seems to be in good hands with Community Forester Walt Warriner at the helm and a council that has gone out of its way to ensure that trees are protected throughout the city. There is even talk of offering incentives to owners so that trees on private property are protected.

In the end, we are only talking about 54 trees out of a total of 153 Ficus located in the project area. Of those 54, only 23 will be destroyed because they have been deemed structurally deficient due to poor pruning practices of the past. The other 31 will be relocated elsewhere in the city, some will even be replanted along the same two corridors. The streetscape project will actually increase the number of trees in Downtown. For each Ficus tree removed, city staff will replace them with two young Ginkgoes. We need this type of bio-diversity to ensure that we have a replacement cycle that works and doesn't leave us with blocks of old trees that have to be replaced all at once.

While it may be difficult to imagine Second and Fourth streets with fewer Ficus, just think of what the streets will look like in five or 10 years when the Ginkgoes are in full bloom during the summer, or covered with white lights during the holiday season. Give it some time and it could be that the new streetscape will be more attractive than the current one, creating an enjoyable experience for all.



Your column here

David E. Johnson

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Conservatives must follow the 90/10 rule

IN 1984, TO THE CONSTERNATION OF many conservatives, Ronald Reagan loyally supported and campaigned for liberal Republican Illinois Sen. Charles Percy despite Percy's opposition to many key aspects of the Reagan program. Angry and dismayed conservatives asked Reagan how he could support Percy, who many saw as a liberal heir to Nelson Rockefeller. Reagan responded he would rather support a Republican whom he agreed with 90 percent of the time than a Democrat who would oppose him all of the time (although in Percy's case 60 percent of the time was more like it). Conservatives did not heed Reagan and ran a third party candidate against Percy throwing the election to liberal Democrat Paul Simon who was a strident opponent of the Reagan Revolution and hoped to revive the New Deal.

Today many conservatives face a quandary with the apparent nomination of John McCain. Should they support McCain, who has stymied them in the past with maverick positions, or refuse to vote for him or even run a third party candidate and almost ensure the election of a Democrat. What all of us conservatives and Republicans must do is take a deep breath and remember Reagan's 90-10 rule.

John McCain has infuriated conservatives with his work on McCain-Feingold (one of the largest infringements of free speech since the Alien and Sedition Acts) and sponsorship along with the conservative bête noir, Teddy Kennedy of what amount to tantamount amnesty. Yet despite this and his maverick in-your face style, he has been a conservative at least 82 percent of the time according to the American Conservative Union. While not quite 90 percent, it is far better than Hillary Clinton's or Barack Obama's record. While McCain is no Reagan, The Gipper wouldn't even be a Ronald Reagan in this day and age.

We all know where McCain stands on the war on terror and the Iraq War. Indeed no conservative can question his credentials on those issues. Indeed, he was far right when his critics were dismissing his call for a surge as nothing more than mere posturing and more of his maverick personality. Today, as Iraq becomes stabilized militarily, we all must concede this ornery conservative was right, when we others were wrong.

On an even greater issue to social conservatives, McCain has been a champion of the unborn for over 24 years. With Justice John Paul Stevens perhaps nearing the end of his career on the Supreme Court and Justices Ginsburg and Breyer reportedly contemplating retirement, a McCain who only agrees with conservatives 80 or 90 percent of the time will still make a greater impact in

advancing the issues of life than will a Clinton or Obama, who are adamantly opposed to conservatives on the issue and sanctity of life. While with McCain we might not get another Alito, we most certainly won't get another Larry Tribe or another Ginsburg like we would with an Obama or Clinton administration.

On the issue of taxes and fiscal responsibility, McCain is far more conservative than his like Democratic rivals. While his opposition to the Bush tax cuts is being used against him and justifiably so, it also must be taken in context with his overall record. In that overall record he has been a consistent conservative earning the support of such supply side leaders as Phil Gram and Jack Kemp. Encouraging to conservatives should be the fact that he has been reaching out to strong fiscal conservatives in crafting his economic vision.

What conservatives must not do is adopt the mindset of the Tories in England who

WHILE WITH MCCAIN WE MIGHT NOT GET ANOTHER ALITO, WE MOST CERTAINLY WON'T GET ANOTHER LARRY TRIBE OR ANOTHER GINSBURG LIKE WE WOULD WITH AN OBAMA OR CLINTON ADMINISTRATION.

after Margaret Thatcher would rather vote for Tony Blair or sit out the election then vote for a Tory leader who was not 100 percent to their liking. As a result, the Tory Party has lost three successive elections to the New Labour (or as we in America would call it Clinton lite) and only now after being out of power since 1997 are they making a rebound by realizing that under David Cameron they may not have a leader they agree with 100 percent, but 90 or 80 percent is better than five more years under a Gordon Brown who they agree with on nothing. For Republican conservatives this should serve as a cautionary tale this election year.

DAVID E. JOHNSON, is the CEO of Strategic Vision, LLC, and a leading Republican pollster and strategist. He may be reached at djohnson@strategicvision.biz.

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Meredith Pro Tem

Meredith C. Carroll

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Honesty — it's such a truly lonely word

MY HEART JUST DID SOME FIGURATIVE bleeding after reading about this poor kid from northern Nevada.

A senior at Fernley High School held a press conference earlier this month announcing his intention to sign with the University of California, Berkeley, to play football. As it turns out, though, the kid made up the whole thing. After he confessed, he said it was because he wanted so badly to play Division I ball that he fabricated the reality he craved after realizing it wasn't going to happen. Clearly he had seen "Field of Dreams" about 47 times too many.

Still, I feel his pain and admire his chutzpah. You know, in a been there, done that kind of way.

My eighth-grade French teacher, Madame Sharpe, was like the human equivalent of nails scratching on a chalkboard. She had a corny, exaggerated accent that made her sound like a child going down a slide every time she sang out, "Oui." She made it way too easy to avoid caring how to conjugate être and why it's an irregular verb in the present tense.

Nevertheless, when report cards were passed out on the last day of school before the winter break, I was a little surprised to see I got a 75 in French. I knew I had enough talent to master this particular Romance language. And I knew even more it would be a très blue Christmas vacation as soon as my parents saw concrete proof of exactly how much of that talent I had squandered. I spent the day panicking about my grave potential for being grounded when a friend suggested I simply change the grade.

Unfortunately both my parents happen to be particularly bright, so I didn't really think they'd buy my 75 as the doctored 95 I made it out to be with the stroke of a pencil. They already suspected I hadn't tried too hard in French class. Especially since I had once wondered aloud to them whether Brie cheese was named after our neighbor's dog, not the other way around.

I went for it anyway. And then my parents heaped praise upon me that I found suspiciously suspicious. I was wracked with guilt for all 14 days of the winter break.

Fast-forward to the night before the first day back at school and the remorse kept me up for hours. Finally I appeared in tears at the foot of my parent's bed and confessed — the timing of which was entirely auspicious,

since my mom knew all along I was full of it and planned on calling the school office first thing the following morning to get my real French grade.

That was nothing, though, compared to my pièce de résistance in 11th grade.

I was driving back from lunch one day and miscalculated the width of the spot in which I was trying to park. As such, I made a significant dent in the rear driver's side door of the school librarian's car. I panicked and drove off, telling my parents later someone must have hit me, thus explaining my missing front right reflector.

No one raised an eyebrow until a few days later when I came home from a tennis team match and my dad was there. It was never a good sign when he appeared before dinner-time.

"Tell me again what happened to the reflector on your car," he asked nonchalantly.

As I repeated the story, I grabbed a tissue from my mom's nightstand and saw a piece of paper next to the phone with "Detective Reynolds/Mamaroneck Police Department" written on it. The heat rushed to my face and the rate of my heartbeat rivaled the frequency of Roger Clemens' misremembrances before a Congressional committee last week.

"Interesting," my mom said. "Because the police called and said a witness saw you hit another car and drive off."

"That's totally not true! I have no idea what you're talking about," I cried indignantly.

"Good. OK," my dad sighed. "Then we'll hire a lawyer and sue them. How dare anyone spread vicious lies about my daughter. They'll rue the day they ever uttered your name in connection with a crime. Those worthless bastards will pay."

I gulped.

My dad stared at me. I stared back. I had some amount of confidence that I could keep up the charade. After all, I was channeling George "It's not a lie if you believe it" Costanza. But it was the mystery witness that had me sweating. I had to make a quick decision. I blinked.

The next several days weren't a picnic, but it was way better than if I had stuck to my guns and called a press conference to herald my story to the world. Poor kid.

E-mail question or comments to meredithcarroll@hotmail.com.

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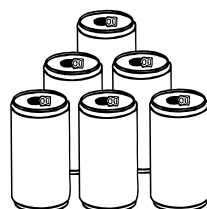
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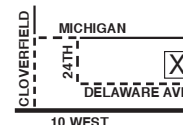


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Getting in just under the wire

Gov. Schwarzenegger orders spending freeze after hirings

BY AARON C. DAVIS | Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Tuesday clamped down on state spending, ordering cuts that will cancel nonessential travel for thousands of employees and freeze hiring at most state agencies as California grapples with a \$14.5 billion budget deficit.

The governor's executive order comes after he filled several positions in his own administration and appointed dozens of people to state jobs, boards or commissions since Jan. 10, when he announced a fiscal emergency.

His appointments during that time — more than 120 — come with a cost of more than \$5 million a year.

Six of those have been hires to his own staff, with more than half making in excess of \$110,000 annually. The governor has given another six current or former staffers jobs elsewhere in state government, including on boards and commissions where they make as much as \$128,000 a year. The six hires to Schwarzenegger's office were more than he had announced in the previous three months combined.

"Clearly, he was doing what he could to preserve his own staff and then make the announcement once he had gotten things squared away to his satisfaction," said Assemblyman Chuck DeVore, R-Irvine, who advocates greater spending cuts.

Schwarzenegger spokesman Aaron McLearn said dozens of the appointments were to boards and commissions that are required to be made and pay only \$100 per meeting, or less.

All six hires in the governor's office replaced essential staffers who had left, McLearn said, including communica-

tions director Adam Mendelsohn. His replacement, Matt David, 28, was hired at a salary of \$147,900, roughly equal to Mendelsohn's when he left.

"There have been positions that have gone unfilled since last year. But if it's a position critical to the mission of the office, then the position gets filled," McLearn said.

Going forward, he said, the governor's office will be more judicious in its hiring. McLearn said 166 people are currently on Schwarzenegger's payroll, down from 174 in December, and that number will likely fall further through attrition. The governor's office is authorized to have 184 employees.

Still Schwarzenegger has one of the highest-paid political entourages in the country. Thirty-six Schwarzenegger staffers were paid more than \$100,000 as of late last year, and his chief of staff makes more than any adviser to President Bush.

"It's important to remember that this (order) was signed today," McLearn said. "It will ensure that from today through the rest of this fiscal year, this administration will not spend a dime more than it needs to spend."

Schwarzenegger's executive order is aimed at saving \$100 million before July and requires all state agencies and departments to reduce nonessential spending by at least 1.5 percent.

Cuts should not be made to public safety or public health activities, according to the order. But it suggests freezing hiring and canceling or postponing contracts to lease or purchase equipment.

It also says state employee travel costs should be reduced by canceling or postponing discretionary travel to all conferences, seminars and nonessential meetings.

But Steve Maviglio, spokesman for Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, said the governor has not been practicing what he preaches when it comes to holding down spending.

"There's been no shortage of appointments to six-figure jobs in the administration," said Maviglio, who also makes a

six-figure salary. "If you preach cut, cut, cut and then you add, add, add, that doesn't make sense to most taxpayers."

Separately on Tuesday, Republicans voted against closing a tax loophole that allows wealthy state residents to avoid paying sales tax on yachts, private planes and recreational vehicles.

It was the second time since Friday that Assembly Republicans had blocked the measure, which would bring in an estimated \$21 million to the state annually.

Assembly Minority Leader Mike Villines, R-Clovis, said the added revenue was just a fraction of the \$14.5 billion needed to close the deficit.

"This is not going to do it," Villines said. "This is a little thing. We need to do big things."

Assembly Budget Committee Chairman John Laird, D-Santa Cruz, said the so-called yacht tax was about fairness. He noted that the \$1 billion in emergency cuts the Legislature approved last week reduced funding for schools and doctors caring for the poor.

"Everybody has to give," Laird said.

Schwarzenegger on Tuesday also called on the Legislature to complete a new spending plan by March, three months ahead of California's budget deadline. He said early action will be critical to helping close the state's estimated \$14.5 billion shortfall.

Last year, a partisan budget battle in the Senate delayed a deal until late August, meaning cuts did not go into effect until September, at the earliest. That meant the state did not realize a full year's savings from the approved cuts.

Both parties said it was unlikely a budget deal could be reached by the end of next month.

In a warning to Democrats who have called for a balance of spending cuts and tax increases, Schwarzenegger said delaying budget action would not help the party's cause.

"I can tell you this right now, there will be no raising taxes," Schwarzenegger said at a news conference.

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State senator considers run for Doolittle's seat

BY ERICA WERNER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON State Sen. Tom McClintock, a darling of California conservatives, may add his name to the already crowded GOP primary field in the Northern California district now represented by John Doolittle, his political adviser said Tuesday.

McClintock represents Thousand Oaks in Southern California, but the GOP incumbent in his area, Rep. Elton Gallegly, plans to seek re-election. Doolittle, under investigation in a Washington lobbying scandal, announced he will retire at the end of his current term.

That creates a rare open House seat in a conservative district and an opportunity for McClintock, who will be forced by term limits to give up his state Senate seat at the end of this year.

McClintock "has been getting almost a torrent of support" since conservative activists floated his name last week, adviser John Feliz told The Associated Press in a phone interview.

McClintock has formed an exploratory committee to raise money for polling and other activities but has not set a specific timeframe to officially announce his intentions.

"I would say 'strongly considering' is an apt description," he said.

Already in the race are former Rep. Doug Ose and former state Sen. Rico Oller, among others.

McClintock is a GOP standard-bearer who has had several unsuccessful runs for statewide office, including governor during the 2003 recall, controller in 1994 and 2002, and lieutenant governor in 2006.

He also ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1992.

The 4th Congressional District takes in suburbs of Sacramento and rural counties to the north. Doolittle, who is under federal criminal investigation in the Jack Abramoff lobbying scandal, is in his ninth term representing the district but announced last month that he would retire.

Ose and Oller indicated McClintock's decision would not change their plans.

"He and I have been friends for many years and he is a solid conservative, and ideologically he and I are very similar to each other," Oller said. "I just wonder why he doesn't run where he's from."

Oller has been casting himself as the true conservative in the race.

Ose spokesman Doug Elmets said Ose has "an extensive list of supporters, and he's absolutely committed to running."

"I've not seen nor has Doug Ose seen anything that indicates that Tom McClintock is inclined to run for this seat," Elmets said. "In fact, I think that it's Doug Ose's feeling and the feeling of many Republicans that he's the prime candidate for running for governor in 2010."

Moore says bring Castro to the Oscars for ratings

BY MARCELA ISAZA | Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES "Sicko" director Michael Moore jokes that Fidel Castro would be a "ratings grabber" at Sunday night's Academy Awards show.

Moore's Oscar-nominated documentary on the health-care industry concludes with a trip to Cuba, where he seeks care for a group of 9/11 responders who have experienced health problems. They are greeted with open arms at a Havana hospital and given what appears to be top-notch care that they could not get in the United States.

Castro, who is 81 and in poor health, announced his retirement as president of Cuba this week, ending a half-cen-

tury of autocratic rule.

"I got some great news today because I was trying to figure out how I was going to get Castro into the Oscars and for me he resigns today so he can come to L.A. and go as my guest and perhaps give the acceptance speech," Moore told AP Television on Tuesday night.

"As long as he keeps it under five hours. I'm telling you, that's got to be a ratings grabber. Can you imagine him? Showing up? If I could talk to (Oscar producer) Gil Cates and maybe get Castro in a dance number at the beginning of the show? Great."

✉ **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com

L.A. woman sentenced for role in kidnapping

BY THOMAS WATKINS | Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES A woman was sentenced to 15 years in federal prison Wednesday for her role in a kidnapping scheme in which five wealthy Russian immigrants were killed and their bodies dumped in a reservoir near Yosemite National Park.

Authorities said Natalya Solovyeva lured one of the victims to a Los Angeles bar, where he was abducted and then forced to contact another man who was also kidnapped.

Solovyeva was the girlfriend of Jurijus Kadamovas, 40, one of two men sentenced to death in the case. Two other men were sent to federal prison.

Prosecutors sought only 11 years for Solovyeva, pointing out that she had cooperated in two previous trials. U.S. District Judge S. James Otero, however, noted that she had been promised a new BMW if she aided the kidnappings, and that two men would "probably be alive today" had she not taken part.

Solovyeva, 32, had pleaded guilty to two counts of hostage-taking resulting in death and one conspiracy charge. During the sentencing hearing, she looked intently at Otero as she listened on headphones to a Russian translation of the proceedings.

"I would like to say over and over again how sorry I am for what I did. I am sorry for all the victims," she said in English before being sentenced. "I know I made a terrible choice I will regret for all my life."

The victims were killed in 2001 and 2002, even though their families and friends gave the kidnappers \$1.2 million. Prosecutors said the kidnappers used the money buy new vehicles and to buy mink coats for their girlfriends.

Ruven Umansky, the father of victim Alexander Umansky, said his son was killed even after he had paid a ransom of \$234,628.

"I disagree with the government in their assessment of her honesty," Umansky said of Solovyeva.



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- > Never insist on having the right-of-way by stepping out into traffic.
- > Don't block out sounds and sights by using earphones, cell phones, hoods or umbrellas.

Bus Service Change Vote Set For March 12

Decisions on proposed bus service changes are on the agenda for the Metro Westside/Central Governance Council meeting Wednesday, March 12 at 5 pm at La Cienega Tennis Center, 325 S. La Cienega Boulevard, Beverly Hills. For information, search "Metro Westside/Central" at metro.net.



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Alexis Hawkins news@smdp.com

MAIN SOURCE: (From top left clockwise) Mayra Gomayz takes some of the canine clients from the Santa Monica Kennels out for a walk. Venice artist, Amtara, gives a pottery lesson at Duganne Ateliers Fine Art Printmaking Studios. Ann Marie Solo instructs an afternoon community yoga class at YogaWorks. An iconic mural adorns the wall next to Bangs Hair Salon. The Santa Monica Community Garden is one of the mainstays on Main Street.



Kevin Herrera kevinh@smdp.com

GREENING UP THE NEIGHBORHOOD: Developers of Green on 19 held an open house on Wednesday to show off the sustainable project, which is the first multi-family spec development to include green features such as solar panels and energy efficient appliances.

Federal tax incentives are coming to an end

FROM GREEN PAGE 3

decks. The project earned an Energy Star Homes qualification due to the high efficiency of the building's envelope, the high-performance HVAC system, as well as myriad Energy Star appliances and lights.

In addition, sustainable building materials, xeriscaping and water reclamation for the project exceeds City Hall's standards.

City Hall intends to continue encouraging environmentally sound and sustainable building practices, while it notes that federal and state incentives may lessen or disappear in 2009. Solar Santa Monica recommends investing in solar now in 2008 to take advantage of current tax breaks.

"State rebates are scheduled to shrink, and right now the residential Federal Tax

Credit is slated to disappear altogether at the end of 2008," said Susan Munves, who administers the Solar Santa Monica program. "We still believe, with rising energy costs, that residents will see a strong return on their investments."

The federal government currently offers a tax credit of up to \$2,000 for solar thermal installations, but the credit is scheduled to disappear in 2009 unless it is renewed by legislators.

"I hope that Green on 19 will stand as proof that a market exists for special projects and inspire others in the private sector to explore this as an option," Bornstein said. "There's probably no better place than Santa Monica to do a project like this."

kevinh@smdp.com



JUST IN CASE

Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

Personnel from the Santa Monica police and fire departments along with a number of city volunteers, participated in a county-wide disaster response drill on Wednesday morning. The nerve center of the drill was located at the Public Safety Facility.

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Residents want more arts funding in budget

FROM BUDGET PAGE 1

the gross domestic product, so any weakness in consumer spending can have a big impact on the economy, both here and nationally.”

Swindell presented three different five-year outlooks for the budget — the worst case scenario in which the recession would have a severe impact on revenue streams and widen the deficit to \$32.6 million in the 2012-13 fiscal year; the best case scenario where City Hall would basically be immune to the economic downturn and the general fund would not have a gaping hole; and the baseline projection which shows a deficit of \$16.4 million by 2012.

Considered to be the most likely of the three, the baseline scenario takes into account a loss of approximately \$1 million in sales tax revenue from the Santa Monica Place renovation, and a 4 percent increase in labor costs. But the scenario also includes revenue from two new hotels and the maintenance of the utility user tax for telecommunication services, keeping that revenue stream alive, Swindell said.

The five-year projections are meant to set the stage for the formulation of the upcoming budget, giving city officials a framework from which to base spending.

But in order to form a budget, city officials first needed to know what the community wanted in terms of spending.

“I urge you to not only continue your

funding, but increase funding to the arts in Santa Monica,” Karen Goodman, a member of the Powerhouse Theater in Ocean Park, said. “Support the arts organizations that are driving and existing in Santa Monica.”

Increasing financial support to the arts community seemed to be the theme among many of the speakers that presented their wish lists at the meeting, many asking the council to honor its recent support of the

found it troubling to provide grants to individual artists, noting that it's not the only profession in which people struggle financially. The list includes the clergy, writers, actresses and singers, he said.

“We're identifying just one kind of person,” Holbrook said.

Aside from upping funding for the arts, residents also expressed desire to see money be spent toward the development of safer

Boulevard, west of Lincoln Boulevard. City Hall recently hired a consultant to further examine the project, which would make the boulevard a more pedestrian and friendly street.

“It's a project our city needs to take on,” Recreation and Parks Commissioner Lori Nafshun said, adding the commission has studied the green streets concept. “Ocean Park Boulevard is a great blank slate to start this project.”

Several of the councilmembers remarked that they were surprised homelessness was not mentioned as a budget priority, noting that it's one of the biggest issues facing the city.

“I know we all feel strongly this is an extremely, if not the most important, issue facing the city,” Councilmember Bobby Shriver said.

Mayor Pro Tem Richard Bloom said that if an initiative, which would limit commercial development, is placed on the November ballot, City Hall might want to expend some resources to study the ballot measure.

Bloom also expressed that one of the biggest priorities will be to ensure the update of the Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE) is completed. LUCE will dictate development in the city for 20 years or more.

“It's extraordinarily important to put as much effort ... to get the LUCE process completed,” Bloom said.

melodyh@smdp.com

THE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO BE UNCERTAIN, ALTHOUGH WE'RE SEEING A STRONGER INDICATION AND MORE PREDICTION THAT WE WILL IN FACT HIT RECESSIONARY CONDITIONS THIS YEAR.”

Carol Swindell, City's finance director

cultural arts report, which outlines current and suggested new grants.

One of the new funding options suggested in the report is grants for individual artists.

“It's very important to keep the arts here in Santa Monica because the practice of art is a vital element in maintaining a healthy (cultural) community,” Emma-Louis Thomas, a professor at UCLA, said.

Councilmember Bob Holbrook said he

bike lanes, a bigger city planning staff, early childhood development programs and even a metal detector, which one speaker said was necessary after several City Councilmembers were killed during a meeting in a Missouri town last week. The safety enhancement wasn't an idea that councilmembers necessarily dismissed.

Several residents also spoke about funding toward the “greening” of Ocean Park



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City Council denies Treesavers' appeal

FROM TREES PAGE 1

because the trees were temporarily protected when the landmarks application was filed later in October. Talks of continuing the legal battle were revitalized last month and city officials agreed to leave the trees alone until the court hearing on Friday.

But the court hearing was postponed because a new judge was assigned to the case and requested more time. Meanwhile, city officials have said they intend to bring the trees back into the construction picture after Friday.

I BELIEVE VERY FIRMLY THAT EVERY SINGLE SOLITARY MEMBER OF CITY COUNCIL TRULY WANTS TO SAVE THESE TREES."

Andrea Drever
Tree advocate

"The city will hold back until Friday," Lawrence said on Wednesday. "After that, the city will proceed with the project."

Tom Nitti, a Santa Monica attorney representing the Treesavers, said he plans to go down to Downtown Los Angeles today to request the judge to hear the case as was scheduled on Friday.

"This puts the Treesavers in a difficult place," Nitti said on Wednesday. "We'll see what the judge decides to do tomorrow."

NO DESIGNATION

After the Landmarks Commission denied the landmarks application in early January, the Treesavers filed an appeal, hoping to convince the City Council there was historic as well as cultural significance associated with the trees.

The council upheld the Landmarks Commission's ruling and followed city staff recommendation that the appeal be denied because the trees as a whole didn't meet any one of the six criteria required for designation.

The Treesavers argued that there is historical significance tied to the trees, which were planted thanks to the efforts of a city beauti-

fication committee during the 1960s. The committee was led by Jacqueline Girion and Clo Hoover, the first female mayor of Santa Monica. The planting of the trees symbolize both the women's and the environmental movements in Santa Monica, the Treesavers argued.

More than 50 people spoke on the issue, pleading the council to grant landmarks status, many focusing on the ecological benefits of keeping the trees.

"Save the trees, save the trees, save the trees," Catalyn Dana said. "Thank you."

Many of the residents said the council could "right" its decision last summer when it approved the streetscape improvement project. Some even requested the council to reexamine the project.

"I believe very firmly that every single solitary member of (the) City Council truly wants to save these trees," Andrea Drever said. "I don't think it's too late to save these trees."

The way councilmembers voted for the landmarks appeal closely mirrored that of the vote on the streetscape project last summer when Councilmember Kevin McKeown was the lone vote in opposition to the removal of the trees. McKeown was the only councilmember that voted for the appeal. Councilmember Pam O'Connor was not present at the meeting Tuesday.

"Whether the council tonight decides these trees are landmarked or not, the underlying decisions to remove them can be reversed," McKeown said, who added he would favor bringing the project back to the dais.

"We operate in a criteria-based world and the landmarks world has survived only because it strictly adheres to making decisions on criteria," Mayor Pro Tem Richard Bloom said. "From my perspective, the application and appeal do not justify landmarking the trees."

Mayor Herb Katz said he knew Hoover personally. She was the mayor who appointed him to his first board — the Architectural Review Board. The mayor also added that he was one of the proponents behind a campaign that saved and landmarked a fig tree at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel that was planted by one of the city's founding fathers.

"As far as tonight goes and landmark goes, (the commission) did what they did correctly," Katz said.

melodyh@smdp.com

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2008 Santa Monica Daily Press

Local Red Cross helps couple following fire

"We got there one hour after the fire was out," said Mark Solnick, director of emergency preparedness and response with the Red Cross, "It was cold and smoky and we were there to provide for the people, give them comfort, shelter and food if necessary, especially to the woman, she was pretty (shook) up."

The Red Cross took the elderly couple to the Travelodge on Pico Boulevard where they will stay until they can file an insurance claim and find long-term shelter.

"We are ready to give them what they need," he said, "We are there to provide the baby steps needed in rebuilding their lives."



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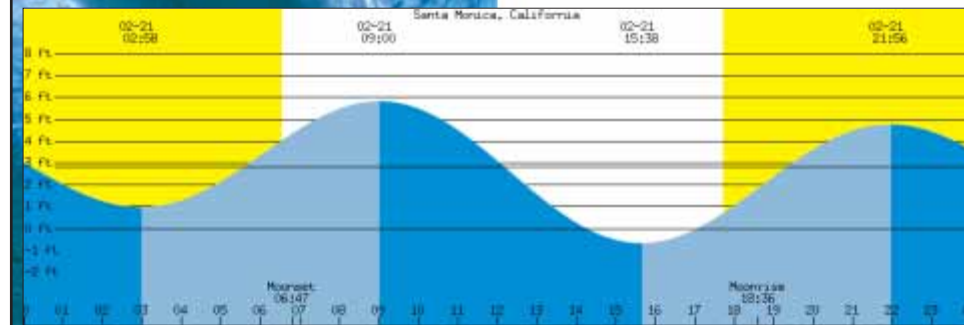
SURF CONDITIONS**WATER TEMP: 56°**

SWELL FORECAST (5-7 FT)

Today, the NW swell should start to build along the coast as swell energy comes in from a moderate, Western Pacific originating storm. This should bring some 290-degree, 14-second period swell with size running chest to at times head high at west facing breaks, waist to chest at direct south facing breaks. Today though could see more rain, but it's highly likely that this next band of precipitation might hold off until tonight.

LONG RANGE SYANOPSIS

NW COULD GET BIG BY MONDAY...

TIDE FORECAST FOR TODAY IN SANTA MONICA

Giants give young players a chance

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
AP Sports Writer

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. Right fielder Randy Winn could find himself bouncing around the San Francisco Giants' outfield on occasion this season. Dave Roberts, too.

And they're not the only ones.

The only for-sure thing: Aaron Rowand will be the regular center fielder as long as he's well. Other than that, manager Bruce Bochy will give his young outfielders a good look during spring training and a chance to make the opening day roster.

Roberts, the primary starter in center in 2007, is most likely to replace departed home run king Barry Bonds in left field. But the left-handed hitter also could become more of a specialist against lefties with Fred Lewis playing semi-regularly in that spot.

"I think regardless of whether you have a job, you've got to be professional and go out and perform," Roberts said upon arriving in the clubhouse Tuesday. "Whatever people are saying or writing, I'm going to go out and do my job and help the Giants the best I can."

Winn could play right field or perhaps even in left if the Giants opt to give Nate Schierholtz the nod in right. Speedy Rajai Davis is also in the mix after San Francisco acquired him last season as a rookie from Pittsburgh in a trading deadline deal that sent pitcher Matt Morris to the Pirates.

Whew! — so many possible scenarios. It will be a chore for Bochy and general manager Brian Sabean, and they know they have their work cut out for them making some tough decisions. Evaluations began in earnest Tuesday, the first full-squad workout for the club.

"This is a spring we're going to take a look at everybody," Bochy said. "We're going to break with our best club, with who's going to give us our best chance of winning."

The Giants made the decision to go young way back in September. That's when owner Peter Magowan told the 43-year-old Bonds that the Giants wouldn't re-sign him for a 16th season.

Bochy planned to sit down with Roberts soon to discuss the situation and his role. The 35-year-old Roberts understands this is all part of the job.

When Lewis was healthy, he often filled in for Bonds if the slugger left games early last year. Schierholtz is more of a natural right fielder, but he also is the only one who isn't out of options. He also has the least experience — yet perhaps the most potential in the Giants' eyes — so playing every day at Triple-A Fresno at first might be what the organization decides is best at this stage.

Schierholtz, who turned 24 on Feb. 15, bats left and hit .304 with 10 RBIs, three triples and five doubles in 39 games for San Francisco in 2007. He made 24 starts in right field and also went .500 (9-for-18) at the plate against lefty starters.

Yet the Giants also could try to trade the 27-year-old Lewis, a lefty hitter who has spent parts of the last two seasons in the majors. He hit for the cycle in just his third game for the Giants last year before later missing time with a strained muscle in his right side.

When last season ended, Davis had made an impression and got the idea he would get to compete to start in center this spring. That changed when the Giants signed the hard-nosed Rowand to a \$60 million, five-year contract and decided the outfield will be built around him.

“WHATEVER PEOPLE ARE SAYING OR WRITING, I’M GOING TO GO OUT AND DO MY JOB AND HELP THE GIANTS THE BEST I CAN.”

Dave Roberts
San Francisco Giants' outfielder

Davis, 27, also has played parts of the past two years in the big leagues — and he has no hard feelings about playing behind the 30-year-old Rowand this early in his career. Rowand is coming off a career year with the NL East champion Philadelphia Phillies in which he earned his first Gold Glove and All-Star selection.

"I'm going to get a chance and I'm going to take advantage of every opportunity I get," Davis said. "He's a guy who is talented and has established as a major league player. He plays the game hard and brings that energy, which will help us as a team. He brings leadership and brings fun back to the game in here."

That "fun" wasn't always attainable with Bonds and his home run chase becoming the major focus surrounding the franchise the past two seasons. It was a media frenzy almost daily.

These Giants are refreshed, and ready for some healthy competition.



NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **February 12, 2008**

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

QUICK STATS
(for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills — 1
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill — 2
- Number of wet days — 13
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather — 38 / 14
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather — 5 / 28

The Beach Report Card is made possible by a grant from 

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	LOCATION	DRY	WET
Las Cañitas Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth (seacastilla)	A+	C	Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	A+	F
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	D	Will Rogers State Beach at Palen Canyon storm drain	A+	A+
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachasa and Las Alitas creeks	A+	A+	Will Rogers State Beach at Teneccal Canyon drain	A+	F
Enchanted Canyon at El Morado State Beach	A+	A+	Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chantreaga)	F	F
Bread Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	F	Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	A+	F
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	F	Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	A+	D
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	A+	Santa Monica Municipal Pier	F	F
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	F	F	Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Marster storm drain	B	D
Escalante Creek, just east of Escalante State Beach	A+	C	Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restaurants)	A+	F
Ladigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	C	Ocean Park Beach at Ashford Ave. drain	A+	A
Selkirk Canyon at San Blocker County Beach	A+	B	Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	D
Puente State Beach at creek mouth	B	F	Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	A+	B
Marine Canyon storm drain at Puente Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	A+	B	Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	B	A+
Serfider Beach at Malibu Calvary fence	A+	D	Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	A
Serfider Beach (beach location) - daily	F	D	Venice Beach - projection of Topical St.	A+	B
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A	F	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach - lifeguard tower	A	D
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	C	Deckweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	B	B
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (joint zone)	A+	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A+	A+
Big Rock Beach at 15948 PCH storm	B	B	North Westchester Storm Drain at Deckweiler State Beach	A+	A+
Pena Creek at Los Tunes County Beach	A+	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty)	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	D
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	B	D	Deckweiler Beach - opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A+	A
Cadwick Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	D	Deckweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	F
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	m	F			
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	F			



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

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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 boxes 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.

Bitch! Whine! Complain!

Check out our Q-Line™ question on Page 5.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Not so fast

L.A. judge puts the brakes on Spears' traffic hearing

A judge put the brakes on **BRITNEY SPEARS'** driving-without-a-license case Wednesday after her lawyers said they don't believe the troubled pop star is capable of resolving the matter.

Superior Court Judge T.K. Herman continued the misdemeanor case until March 20 after lawyer J. Michael Flanagan said Spears' conservatorship attorneys "do not think she is qualified or capable of entering into a binding agreement" at this time.

The attorneys also don't

believe Spears, 26, is capable of giving a deposition or signed declaration, Flanagan said.

Earlier this month, a judge placed Spears under the conservatorship of her father and an attorney after more than a year of increasingly bizarre behavior by the singer.

Spears hit a parked car on Aug. 6, 2007, and left without notifying the owner. She was originally cited for hit and run and driving without a license, but the hit-and-run charge was dropped.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ARETHA TAKEN TO TASK



PETA thinks **ARETHA FRANKLIN** is no queen of soul when it comes to wearing fur.

Franklin was crowned this year's worst-dressed celebrity by the animal rights organization. Her crime: wearing "yet another vulgar fur" at the Grammy Awards.

"... you looked as if you were going to perform 'I Am the Walrus' by the Beatles," People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals said Wednesday of Franklin's appearance.

"How 'bout some R-E-S-P-E-C-T for animals?" PETA added.

The other offenders are Marilyn Manson, Eva Longoria, Lindsay Lohan, Kate Moss and Kylie Minogue.

AP



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ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Give more of yourself. Focus on accomplishment and getting the job done. You could be your own worst critic. Tonight: Easy does it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ You might feel as if someone is raining on your parade. Your real issue will be what to do about this situation. Tonight: Think "weekend."

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You might feel a little down or perhaps burdened by responsibilities. Tonight: You don't need to go far from home.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ You naturally use the right words and come up with the correct solutions. Tonight: Hang out.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ Be more aware of your daily patterns, especially when dealing with finances. Don't let go of a problem. Tonight: Do what feels comfortable.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Though you could find the day difficult at times, you'll come out flying and feeling as if you have accomplished a lot. Tonight: All smiles.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ You simply are not in the position to discuss your feelings or reveal key information. Tonight: Order in.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Aim for what you want. If your first stab at this goal fails, don't give up; keep at it. Tonight: Be where the crowds are.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Step up to the plate and let go of your reservations. You will do an excellent job of handling a new responsibility. Tonight: Your treat.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ What might feel like a snafu will work out if you remain optimistic and positive. Tonight: Read between the lines.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ A partner wants and possibly will demand to take the lead. Tonight: Go along with another's ideas.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Others state their case. You could feel that someone is a tad austere or difficult. Tonight: Choose who you most want to be with.

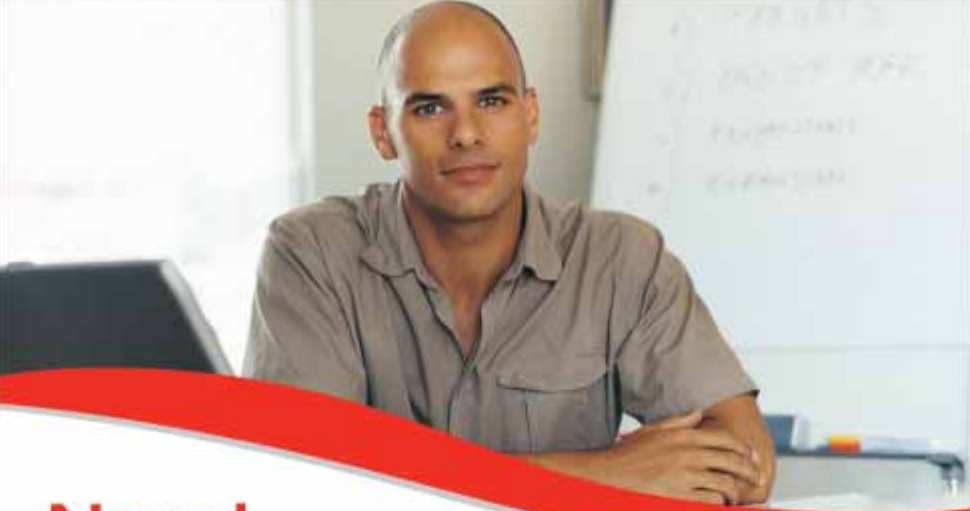
Happy Birthday

The odds favor you. Rooting for you is akin to betting on the favorite this year. You come out of the most difficult situations flying. Your base of friends proves to be instrumental to your success, whether it is through support or simply brainstorming. You will do well with crowds and groups. If you are single and you want a relationship, you can be sure you will meet someone special. Get to know this person well before diving in. Remember, the world is your oyster. If you are attached, the two of you can make quite the team effort, lassoing in what you want.

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

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

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com> (c) 2006 by King Features Syndicate Inc.



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Difficulty
BRONZE

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

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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

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

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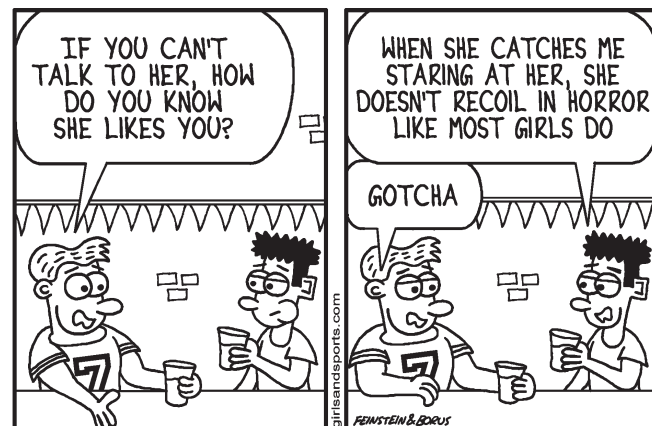
221

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. THERE'S A CUTE GIRL ON THE JURY WITH YOU AND SHE MIGHT LIKE YOU...

...BUT YOU AREN'T ALLOWED TO TALK TO HER UNTIL THE TRIAL IS OVER

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By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



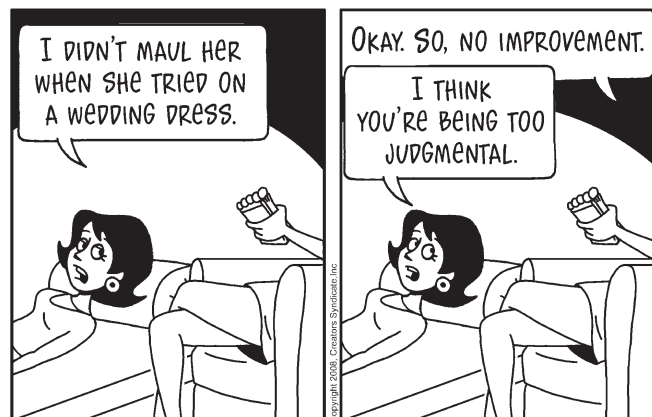
LET'S CONTINUE WITH YOUR JEALOUSY OF DREW.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN IMPROVING?

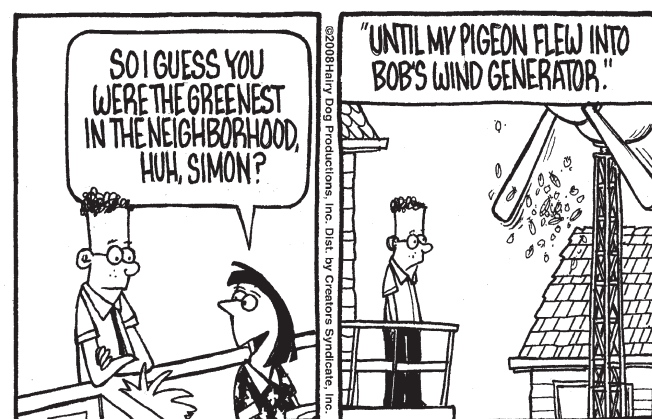
LET'S SEE.

2/21

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



By Adrian Raeside



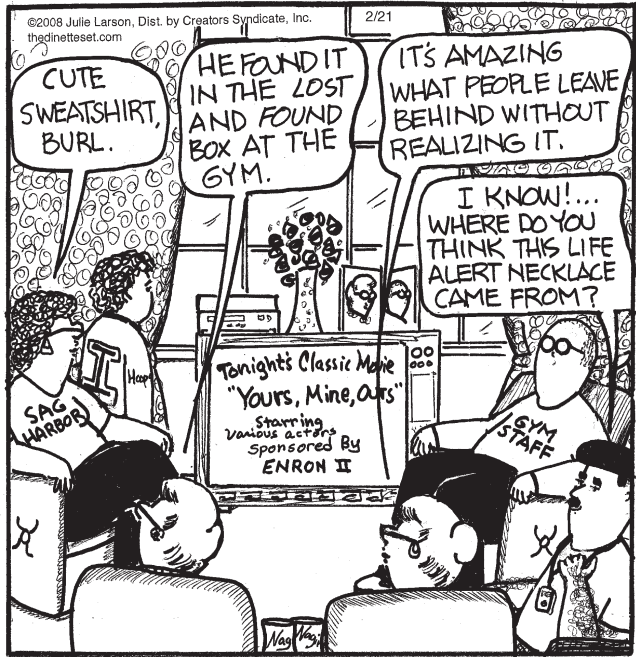
By Jim Davis



By Brian Anderson



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



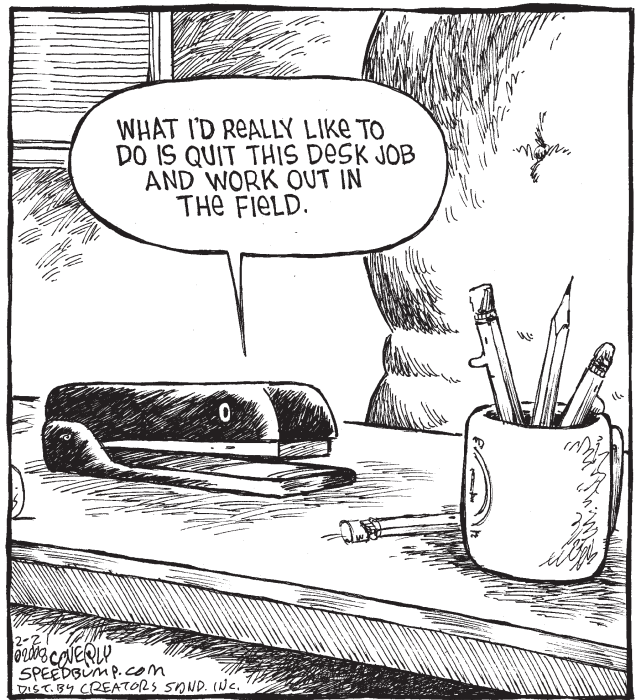
Strange Brew

By John Deering



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

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By THOMAS JOSEPH

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 - 5 Justice symbol
 - 11 File stand-in
 - 12 "Serpico" star
 - 13 Close
 - 14 Ready for print
 - 15 Signaled
 - 17 Father's Day gift
 - 18 Check marks
 - 22 Peter of "Everybody Loves Raymond"
 - 24 Cone fill
 - 25 Cry of discovery
 - 26 Numerical prefix
 - 27 Flock makeup
 - 30 Visnjic of "ER"
 - 32 Alpine trill
 - 33 Gifted
 - 34 San Francisco sight
 - 38 So far
 - 41 Church part
 - 42 Eats into
 - 43 Stumble
 - 44 Composer Bloch
 - 45 Casino figure
- DOWN**
- 1 Pike, e.g.
 - 2 Pining
 - 3 Enclosed area
 - 4 Involve
 - 5 Raced
 - 6 Academy attendees
 - 7 With a low pH
 - 8 Set ablaze
 - 9 Hydro-carbon suffix
 - 10 Lawn makeup
 - 16 Rebel leader
 - 19 King, queen, or jack

M	A	M	A		G	O	S	S	I	P
O	M	A	R		E	N	T	I	C	E
W	O	K	E		T	I	E	D	U	P
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A	N	G	E	L		S	P	A	C	E
T	O	W	N			O	K	R	A	
A	V	A	S	T		A	L	I	E	N
D	A	Y		A	R	G	O	N		
			F	R	E		G	O	D	
D	A	M	A	G	E		S	H	O	E
A	D	O	R	E	D		H	A	Z	E
N	O	P	E	T	S		E	Y	E	D

Yesterday's answer

- 20 Hawaiian coffee
- 21 Quick drive
- 22 Cradle occupant
- 23 River from Pittsburgh
- 28 Century part
- 29 Lists of candidates
- 30 Guy's date
- 31 Willing to consider
- 35 Top
- 36 Gung-ho
- 37 Workout count
- 38 Course start
- 39 Bruins great
- 40 Mafia head

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1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12					
13					14					
15				16						
		17				18		19	20	21
22	23					24				
25								26		
27			28	29		30	31			
32						33				
			34		35				36	37
38	39	40					41			
42							43			
44							45			

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Super LOTTO	2 6 17 41 45 Meganumber: 1 Jackpot: \$80M
Fantasy 5	6 10 14 29 37
DAILY 3	MIDDAY: 6 2 0 EVENING: 9 1 7
DAILY DERRY	1st: 11 Money Bags 2nd: 05 California Classic 3rd: 07 Eureka RACE TIME: 1.45.42

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ The Jesus World Tour (all new!)Recent Playdates: Marion County, Fla., January (image of Jesus on a slice of raw potato); Tampa, Fla., January (image of Jesus on a slab of granite); Houston, January (image of Jesus on another slice of raw potato); Meadow Lake, N.M., December (image of Jesus on a sprayed-on wall covering); Homestead, Fla., December (image of Jesus on a chest X-ray); Port St. Lucie, Fla., November (image of Jesus on a pancake); Houston, October (image of Jesus on a bathroom towel); Forest, Va., August (image of Jesus on a smudge of driveway sealant); Manchester, Conn., August (image of Jesus on a kitchen cabinet door); Lodi, Calif., August (image of Jesus on a backyard fence).

TODAY IN HISTORY

1965 black Muslim leader and civil rights activist Malcolm X, 39, was shot to death inside the Audubon Ballroom in New York by assassins identified as members of the Nation of Islam.

1907 Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden was born in York, England.

1916 the World War I Battle of Verdun began in France as German forces attacked; the French were able to prevail after 10 months of fighting.

1925 The New Yorker magazine made its debut.

1947 Edwin H. Land publicly demonstrated his Polaroid Land camera, which could produce a black-and-white photograph in 60 seconds.

1972 President Nixon began his historic visit to China as he and his wife, Pat, arrived in Shanghai.

1973 Israeli fighter planes shot down Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114 over the Sinai Desert, killing more than 100 people.

1975 former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and former White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman were sentenced to 2 1/2 to 8 years in prison for their roles in the Watergate cover-up.

1995 Chicago adventurer Steve Fossett became the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean in a balloon, landing in Leader, Saskatchewan, Canada.

2000 consumer advocate Ralph Nader announced his entry into the presidential race, bidding for the nomination of the Green Party.

WORD UP!

factitious \fak-TISH-uhs\, adjective: 1. Produced artificially, in distinction from what is produced by nature. 2. Artificial; not authentic or genuine; sham.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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COUNTER HELP needed. Cafe near 3rd St. Promenade 215 Broadway. Must be experienced. Immediate openings. Apply afternoons in person. (310) 396-9898.

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GIVE OF YOURSELF volunteers wanted at the discovery shop. Help us contribute to the American cancer society by spending 4 hours per week assisting in our resale shop in Santa Monica. Contact Terry or Shaunna at (310)458-4490

IMMEDIATE POSITIONS available in the Environmental Services Department. Looking for part time housekeepers/ floor techs. Hospital Experience preferred. Call (310)829-8431 for interview.

MUSIC BOOKING agency sales. p/t flex. (310)998-8305 xt 88

MYSTERY SHOPPERS - Get paid to shop! Retail/Dining establishments need undercover clients to judge quality/customer service. Earn up to \$70 a day. Call 888-731-1179

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Average Price of Properties Listed for Sale As of Late February 2008

		Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
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North of Montana	=	\$ 3,798,500	\$ 2,177,000
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	\$ 3,450,556	\$ 1,006,837
South of Wilshire	=	\$ 932,316	\$ 785,849
Sunset Park	=	\$ 1,418,294	\$ 574,292
Ocean Park	=	\$ 1,885,750	\$ 1,026,945

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