

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

2 5 20 22 47
Meganumber: 11
Jackpot: \$27 Million

FANTASY 5

5 14 28 34 36

DAILY 3

Daytime: 6 8 6
Evening: 3 5 9

DAILY DERBY

1st: 11 Money Bags
2nd: 02 Lucky Star
3rd: 01 Gold Rush

RACE TIME: 1:42.97

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

A 34-year-old man performing a field sobriety test for a police officer alongside Route 130 in Bordentown, N.J., was killed when a tractor-trailer driver (who police said had probably been drinking) lost control and smashed into him (December). (The officer jumped out of the way in time.) And a 40-year-old New York City man was killed when, inebriated, he fell and broke a fish tank, fatally slashing an artery; he had recently purchased the tank to help his girlfriend's kids learn responsibility (December). And a 47-year-old man was crushed to death in Albany, Ga., when the tree he was cutting down fell on top of him (December).

TODAY IN HISTORY

In 1980, the U.S. hockey team defeated Finland, four goals to two, to clinch the gold medal at the Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, N.Y.

In 1983, a congressional commission released a report condemning the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II as a "grave injustice."

In 1989, a state funeral was held in Japan for Emperor Hirohito, who had died the month before at age 87.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"It's a complex fate, being an American."

HENRY JAMES
AMERICAN AUTHOR (1843-1916)

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Burglar caught in the act, eludes police

BY JOHN WOOD AND
CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writers

SUNSET PARK — Police sealed off six residential blocks here Wednesday afternoon in search of a burglar who ran out of a home on Pine Street after a resident found him inside.

There have been 20 home burglaries in the neighborhood since Dec. 4 and five attempted break-ins, according to police.

At about 1:56 p.m. on Wednesday, Santa Monica Police responded to the 1300 block of Pine Street regarding a burglary that just occurred. When officers arrived, they spoke to the victim who said she walked into her hallway from a

room and saw the suspect in the kitchen area. The victim ran out of the house and called police.

A perimeter was set up and police searched unsuccessfully for the burglar for nearly three hours. The suspect is described as a male, unknown race or age, thin, wearing a full-length coat. Nothing was taken from the woman's home, police said.

Residents of Sunset Park were kept off their streets while police swept the neighborhood. Debbie Marjanen, who lives next door to the victim, said the woman who was burglarized lived alone but had been entertaining guests and preparing her house to rent out.

Marjanen was at home when police knocked on her door and



John Wood/Daily Press

A Santa Monica Police Department SWAT team on Wednesday sweeps the area surrounding Pine Street and Euclid Street. There have been 20 burglaries in Sunset Park since Dec. 4, and five attempted break-ins.

asked to search her back yard for the burglar. Despite the rash of burglaries in the neighborhood, Marjanen said she felt safe. She lives with her husband, son and her husband's parents.

"We've got bars in the door tracks," said Marjanen, adding the house had been burglarized years earlier. "The sliding glass doors

See **BURGLARY**, page 6

City pushes forward municipal living wage

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Elected officials here re-ignited the contentious tug-of-war over a so-called living wage in Santa Monica after agreeing late Tuesday to increase by more than 50 percent what the city's contractors must pay their lowest-paid workers.

Maintenance workers, gardeners, parking attendants and other relatively unskilled laborers will benefit from the new law, which requires city contractors with projects more than \$50,000 to pay workers at least \$11.50 an hour. Employees at Santa Monica City Hall have been entitled to the higher wage since Jan. 1.

Several other California cities have required contractors with government bids to pay more than the state minimum wage of \$7.50 an hour. Pasadena enforces a minimum wage of \$10.28 an hour. Los Angeles and West Hollywood require wages of at least \$10.03 an hour, according to city documents.

Those amounts include the cost of health benefits. Santa Monica's \$11.50 hourly wage does not.

However, the cost of health care to a full-time worker is about \$1.25 an hour, meaning the three cities' minimum wages are comparable,

"The idea here is that either taxpayers pay or taxpayers subsidize."

KEVIN MCKEOWN
City Councilman

according to City Manager Susan McCarthy.

The Santa Monica City Council voted 5-2 in favor of the higher wage, expressing clear differences on the ongoing issue of a living wage throughout Santa Monica, which has divided business interests and community activists for several years.

Participating in the debate for the first time was the newest councilman, Bobby Shriver, who said he supported higher wages for

See **LIVING WAGE**, page 6



Kim Calvert/Special to the Daily Press

Independent film makers will convene at this big-top tent at a Santa Monica Beach parking lot north of the pier before the Oscars.

Hollywood sets the stage for Oscars in Santa Monica

BY KIM CALVERT

Special to the Daily Press

SM BEACH — The day before Hollywood's biggest stars walk down the red carpet for this Sunday's Oscars, they'll hit Santa Monica Beach to celebrate indie films and their makers.

"We have just as many stars as the Academy Awards," said Diana Zahn-Storey, executive producer

of the Independent Film Project's 20th Annual Spirit Awards, which has set up a tent in the beach parking lot south of Bay Street where the event will take place on Saturday. "But in many ways we're funner and more hip. We don't want it to be just another awards show — the most important thing is to have a party first —

See **BIG TOP**, page 7

GABY SCHKUD

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Concentrate on a project, but don't be surprised if by midday everyone seeks you out for help. Be flattered rather than aggravated. Responsibility drops in your lap. You have the energy and knowledge to lead. Tonight: Count on being up late.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ You might be re-evaluating a key bond, friendship or relationship. Try not to react but rather to give a response when you have to, from a centered place. Stop blaming others. Tonight: Confirm plans, as there could be a lot of confusion.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Hang close to home or try to stay out of others' way. Listen to a partner's suggestion, as you could benefit financially. You end the day out of sorts and upset. You simply need to relax more and not take situations so seriously. Tonight: Veg at home.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Chat as long and as much as you want. Everyone has an opinion and wants to expound on it. You cannot stop the chatter coming toward you. Join in. Don't take a comment personally. It isn't meant to hurt you. Tonight: Visit with friends. Plans change at the last minute.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ You could easily make a mistake with money. You could mess up your checkbook or anyone's funds you are handling. For now, put your energy in other areas of your life. You can get a lion's share of work done. Tonight: You might go overboard. In fact, you probably will.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ You are all smiles, even if confusion marks your day. Be sure to communicate and not take anything for granted. You might prevent a snafu by taking these extra steps. Your strength and personality come through no matter what happens. Tonight: Make nice.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★ Take your time and double-check anything you do. Confirm a meeting. Don't take any mix-up personally. It is simply the natural flow of the day. Still, you might be happier playing it low-key. Better yet, you might want to vanish. Tonight: Play the recluse.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ You have the energy to zoom in and grab what you want. Don't stand on ceremony. Touch base with that person you might be avoiding or having a squabble with. You create exactly what you want. Friends and meetings play big roles in your plans. Tonight: In the weekend mode already?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ You might feel pushed in certain areas of your life. Consider establishing new boundaries so you can feel more comfortable. Remember, you are part of the problem as well. Confirm plans today. Tonight: Be ready to go 100 percent when dealing with an authority figure.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Your energy could bowl others over. You are focused and know where you are heading. Still, you could be misled by a change in plans or a confusing message. Don't let this situation get to you. Tonight: Flex.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Working with individuals helps projects, relationships and interactions flow. You might want to revise your plans to accommodate growing pressure on the money front. You will find ways to bypass this issue. Tonight: Flow with the unexpected.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ What you say might not be received the way you meant it. Others simply might be responding to your tone or expression. In many ways, you have shaken the status quo more than you realize. Let others follow their own drummer. Tonight: Talk weekend plans.

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

PUBLISHER

Ross Furukawa ross@smdp.com

EDITOR

Carolyn Sackariason sack@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER

John Wood wood@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER

Ryan Hyatt ryanh@smdp.com

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER

Robbie P. Plubeni rob@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Rob Schwenker schwenker@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Stewart O'Dell stewarto@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II alex@smdp.com

EXECUTIVE TRAFFIC MANAGER

Brenda Casas brenda@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED SALES MANAGER

Mirella Reyes mirella@smdp.com

NIGHT EDITOR

Lori Luechtefeld lori@smdp.com

NIGHT EDITOR

Michael Tittinger moneysurf@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Keith Wyatt keith@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Glenn Bolan glenn@smdp.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com

MASCOT

Maya Furukawa maya@smdp.com

LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SMC police department offers gun locks

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica College Police Department has joined a nationwide effort to promote firearm safety — with the particular goal of saving children's lives — by distributing free safety kits, including gun locks, to anyone who wants them.

"Hundreds of children and teenagers in this country are killed each year by senseless gun accidents," said SMC Police Chief Eileen Miller. "We want to do what we can to save lives."

The SMC Police Department is working in conjunction with Project ChildSafe, a program developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, to distribute the gun safety lock kits. The program is funded by a U.S. Department of Justice grant, with additional funding provided by the firearms industry.

"Each kit contains a safety curriculum and a cable-style gun lock, which fits on most types of handguns, rifles and shotguns," Miller said.

Miller said her department will distribute the kits without asking for identification or gun licenses. However, she said that anyone wanting a kit should not bring a firearm to the police station.

For information, or to arrange to pick up a gun safety lock kit, call (310) 434-4608 between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.



Photo courtesy of SMC

Gun locks like the one pictured above are being distributed for free by police at Santa Monica College.

Samohi science team advances to finals

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica High School Science Bowl "A" team took tops honors at the National Science Bowl JPL Regional Competition earlier this month.

Competition among 24 competing teams was hosted in the von Karman Auditorium at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory facility in Pasadena. The Science Bowl team coach and Samohi teacher, Ingo Gaida, received the first place trophy for the local team that will now go on to Washington D.C. for the national Science Bowl competition among the 64 regional finalists. The winning Santa Monica High school "A" team members are Areeb Pirani, ZeNan Chang, Bennett Rankin and Jesse Zaretsky, the team's captain.

Jack O'Connell visits Will Rogers Learning Community

By Daily Press staff

One of the state's top education leaders came to a local school last week to discuss the future.

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell visited Will Rogers Learning Community on Feb. 18. During his morning visit, O'Connell toured the school and met with students, faculty and the school community.

In his state of the address speech in 2004 O'Connell listed some of his priorities for local schools as setting a high bar for all students, establishing world class stan-

See BRIEFS, page 7



SURF REPORT

The surf is firing, but the water is still filthy. Today the NW swell peaks with some head-high sets, with chest- to shoulder-high waves for the most part. Friday the NW continues with a chest- to shoulder-high flow.

Today the water is:

61°

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

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	12:13	2.8	1:41	-0.4	6:11	5.0	8:31	3.6
SUNDAY	12:54	2.5	2:10	-0.5	6:52	5.3	8:47	3.7
MONDAY	1:26	2.2	2:35	-0.6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TUESDAY	1:56	1.9	2:59	-0.7	7:59	5.6	9:22	4.0
WEDNESDAY	2:26	1.6	3:21	-0.6	8:29	5.6	9:40	4.2
THURSDAY	2:58	1.4	3:43	-0.4	9:00	5.5	10:01	4.3
FRIDAY	3:28	1.2	4:05	-0.2	9:37	5.3	10:23	4.5

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The  Line

Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky urged local politicians last week to consider restricting one lane on each side of Wilshire Boulevard for buses only. He said it works in West LA and it's the only way to reduce congestion on the roads.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Would you support closing a lane on each

side of Wilshire for buses only? Why or why not?"

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

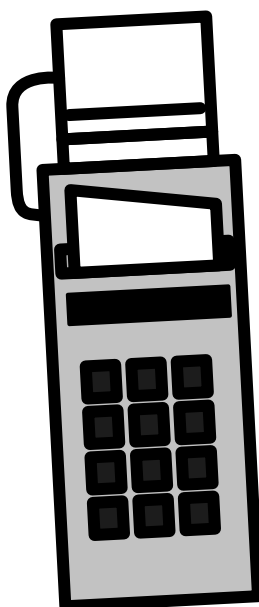


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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Incites not insightful to reader

Editor:

With respect to the local bigot, Ed Silverstein’s anti-Christian, anti-Catholic rhetoric, (SMDP, Feb. 23, page 4) I only say this to him, “get a new shtick,” because this one is getting way old.
Oh, and Mr. Ed, “The Passion” keeps climbing — approaching the \$500 million mark. All those poor misguided Christians, Jews, Muslims and Buddhists that plunked down \$8 a piece to see one of the most inspiring and moving movies of our time. Shame on them.
I’ll tell Mel next time he’s in Santa Monica that you cannot wait for the sequel.

Maria P. Bell
Santa Monica

Bush history lesson uneducated

Editor:

I’m sure Russian president Vladimir Putin found it most instructive to receive a tutorial on democracy from President Bush, as well as an admonishment that western-style reforms are necessary. There are many differences between our two systems. For example, under the Russian system of democracy, the candidate in a presidential election who gets the most votes is the one who actually gets elected president.

David Stoughton
Santa Monica

Capitalism good, Socialism bad

Editor:

It’s no surprise that liberals oppose Social Security reform. Typical leftist thinking says that the almighty government should take care of them like pets. That is why Socialism is evil. It takes away what it means to be human.
That doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t have social programs, but under the current system, we are given no incentive to plan for our own security. Then we wonder why credit card debt far exceeds our national debt.
That is the beauty of Capitalism. It gives incentive for results. That is why there have been no scientific, medical or technological breakthroughs from Socialist nations. Further proof, Communism being the highest form of Socialism, has bore the least advances in any field except the military. Coincidentally.
F.D.R. stated this same concern when he initiated the Social Security plan and staunchly advocated private investments where the individual is given control over their life. Capitalism ... Power to the people.

Thomas Kenney
Los Angeles



Fear and Loathing for kids in the cathedral

NEWS ON THE EDGE

BY RON SCOTT SMITH



A letter writer to this publication made note of a bumper sticker he saw somewhere out there that said, “God protect us from your followers,” and it got me thinking — not a favorite thing to do, but here goes.

On page 22 of the LA Times Saturday it said that Catholic bishops have officially reported 1,092 new allegations of sexual abuse of children in 2004. That’s right, 1,000-plus, and new. Doing the molesting were 756 priests and deacons. I don’t know about you, but that’s an awful lot of priests and deacons to be luring kids into darkened areas of their churches for fleeting moments of tortured, twisted pleasure, isn’t it? And that’s just one year’s worth of allegations, the latest year’s worth. Incredibly, these numbers are slight when compared to the total score rung up over the past five decades that they’ve been added to. Now sit down and take a deep breath, because the numbers you are about to read would knock anyone but those without an immortal soul off their feet.

By the church’s own admission, a full 11,750 charges have been brought by victims who were mostly between the ages of 11 and 14 at the time of their holy seduction. Let me repeat, and spell that number out. Eleven thousand, seven-hundred-fifty American kids say they have been raped in their earthly incarnation, by presumed emissaries from heaven, since 1950. How many pedophile Fathers have been implicated? Hold on tight. It’s 5,148. That’s five thousand, one-hundred-forty-eight of the deity’s finest. There are only 195 dioceses in the United States. Imagine. These are breathtaking, stunning, devastating numbers. Somebody out there tell me how there could still be a Catholic Church standing? How now would any parent of sound mind send any child off to learn about God with one of these designated ambassadors in one of these designated houses? What part of “no” has been so hard to get for any of these holy players?

“God protect us from your followers,” on a bumper sticker.

What’s most frightening about all this is that no one in their right mind could deny that the problem is institutional, woven throughout the fabric of the Catholic nation just as surely as confession is. Speaking of which, do these randy priests visit each other’s confessionals and purge themselves of their sins on one

giant, rotating, lewd sex-talk circuit? When these guys train for the pulpit, they must all know, as they look around at each other and exchange knowing glances, what’s been going on in secret places. Aside from despicable, vile, criminal, this thing is just plain spooky. This righteous bunch, wearing the colors of one of the most dominant and influential religious sects on the planet Earth have been routinely preying upon their youngest, most God-fearing neophytes in the prime of their innocence, and it’s hard to imagine anything as divinely wrong.
That’s 11,750 kids who have been criminally assaulted. Sorry you had to read that number again but I can’t get over it, and nobody devout seems all that concerned. Speaking as one whose family has fairly substantial Catholic roots, with all due apologies to my family, this thing gives me the creeps. It may be presumed there are thousands upon thousands more victims who haven’t come forward because of the embarrassment and/or humiliation factor, no?
This is the preeminent faction of the Christian faith, the faith that has been officially declared by the electoral majority of this nation and by the man they elected, to offer the guiding light under which the decisions that determine the fate of children all around the world are made. What would Jesus say to all this?
Perhaps worst of all about the whole sordid deal is that every wannabe child molester lurking around out there on the peripheries of school yards across the land can now justify their warped lust by pointing to the church. If it’s good enough for the monsignor, you know? Michael Jackson’s defense, if his attorney is worth the salt, will be, “my client is in an exalted state.” Blame it on the priests.

I blame it on Hunter S. Thompson, the newly-dead man, because I wouldn’t be sitting here alone like an idiot, pounding away, fighting off the deathlike deadline cluster headache because I was one of those like, who-cares-types, until I began reading his dispatches from along the Nixon-McGovern campaign trail in 1972 that ripped the sanctimonious lid off the reporting that ruled the land and laid it bare — leaving unseemly pieces of underbelly strewn from D.C. all the way up there to Woody Creek, Colo. You’re not allowed to do that are you? I remember asking. You can’t be that ridiculous, that honest, can you? Glued to every gonzo, blown up paragraph, hooked forevermore, adios, you crazy mother. Hold on to the pearly gates up there, dear God, here comes trouble. Fear and Loathing have entered the room.

(Ron Scott Smith can be reached at edgeofthewest@aol.com. Read past columns in archives in Thursday editions at www.smdp.com.)

YOUR OPINION MATTERS! Send your letters to Santa Monica Daily Press Attn. Editor: 1427 Third Street Promenade Suite 202 Santa Monica • 90401 • sack@smdp.com

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Business

SANTA MONICA BUSINESS BRIEFS

Lakatos joins Widom

By Daily Press staff



Martin Lakatos AIA

Martin Lakatos AIA, who for the past nine years has been responsible for managing the major capital improvements at Kaiser Permanente's Fontana Medical Center, has joined the architectural firm Santa Monica-based Widom Wein Cohen O'Leary Terasawa (WWCOT) as principal, where he will be responsible for expanding the firm's health care practice, announced principal Adrian O. Cohen, FAIA.

A licensed architect in California, as well as in his native Argentina where he earned his architecture degree from the University of Buenos Aires, Lakatos is a seasoned health care field administrator who devel-

oped diverse skills in this area over 15 years at Kaiser Permanente. At Kaiser, Lakatos rose from facilities project architect to assistant to the medical group administrator in charge of facilities, planning and development.

"Having also earned his MBA in 1997, Martin has a rare combination of design talent and strong business acumen and will add greatly to the WWCOT management team," Cohen said.

During his tenure, Lakatos was responsible for project management and construction delivery on a wide variety of projects for Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., including the \$140 million master plan for their Fontana Medical Center, and the outpatient master plan for their Los Angeles Medical Center that encompassed 250,000 square feet of remodeling projects for the outpatient and cardiac surgery departments, internal medicine, magnetic imaging, neurology, urgent care and emergency services.

Prior to joining Kaiser, Lakatos practiced architecture with several Southern California firms. He is a member of the Medical Group Management Association.

Recognized as one of the fastest-growing architectural firms in the nation, WWCOT is a more than 100-person, firm with offices in Riverside, Santa Monica, Moorpark, Palm Springs, and Shanghai, China. WWCOT provides programming, strategic and master planning, architectural and interior design, architectural forensics, and construction support services for a wide range of health care, governmental, educational, senior living, multi-family residential and corporate clients.

Heu Design opens Santa Monica office

By Daily Press staff

Heu Design, a creative design firm founded in Manhattan, has announced the opening of a Los Angeles office to accommodate clients on the West Coast. The interactive agency has produced marketing solutions for clients including HBO, MTV, Generra, and Proofpoint. Heu Design also has collaborated with other agencies on joint projects including Mekanism, the Attik, and RDAi.

"Opening an office on the West Coast allows Heu Design to build on its successful partnerships with entertainment and media clients by being at the heart of the industry," said Bryan Heu, CEO and Chief Creative Officer for the LA office.

Recent projects include an interactive feature for HBO, titled "Dressing the Sopranos." This micro-site takes visitors behind the scenes with award-winning costume designer Juliet Polcsa of the hit series "The Sopranos" for an inside peak at the clothes, the stars, and the secrets of The Sopranos look.

Another featurette, "MTV's First Ladies," provides music fans with an intimate look at their favorite past, present, and future female artists on MTV.com. The micro-site includes interviews, photos, video streams, live online performances and more. And Generra, well known for its modern street fashion, showcases its latest collection with the launch of its new site created by Heu Design, www.generra.com.

The new office is located on 20th Street in Santa Monica.

Any time a good time to trim your tax bill



MARKET MATTERS

BY BRIAN HEPP

Just as you need to think about your health year-round, you should also keep your taxes in mind throughout the year, not just when you rush to your accountant with your W-2 forms in hand. There are several healthy habits you can practice all year long to help minimize your tax bill in April. Let's take a look at a few of them.

It is better to give. By gifting appreciated securities to children or charities, you can avoid capital gains taxes while helping a child pay for college or contributing to a worthwhile not for profit organization. Children can typically sell the securities at a lower tax rate than if you sold them yourself, and a charity would not have to pay any taxes on the gift. In addition, if you gift securities to a charity, you will get a charitable contribution deduction for their fair market value, if you have held them for more than one year. A word of caution — you should avoid gifting securities for which you have incurred a loss as you can sell them and claim a tax deduction for your loss.

Build your nest egg. You should maximize your contributions to your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and your employer-sponsored retirement plan (such as a 401(k)), as they both offer significant tax advantages. Most individuals can make pre-tax contributions of up to \$13,000 in 2004 if that amount is invested in an employer-sponsored plan. If you contribute to a Simple IRA, you may be able to make pre-tax contributions of up to \$9,000 and if you contribute to a traditional IRA you may be able to deduct up to \$3,000. In addition, if you are over 50 years old you may be able to reduce your tax bill further by making catch-up contri-

butions to your retirement plan.

Keep in mind that these limits are for 2004 and are scheduled to increase over the next couple of years. Talk with your tax advisor or financial consultant about the best way to take advantage of contributions to your retirement plan.

Pay it forward. Most taxpayers are allowed to offset ordinary taxable income with up to \$3,000 in capital losses. For example, say you sold a stock at a loss of \$4,000. This loss would first offset capital gains you recognized in the current year. Let's assume you had no capital gains to offset this year. Then you would be eligible to reduce your taxable income by \$3,000 for this year, and you can carry forward the leftover \$1,000 to reduce next year's taxable income. It is also important to review any losses you may have incurred in previous years to make sure you aren't overlooking a deduction you could take this year.

Watch the wash. The wash sale rule says if you sell an investment at a loss, you cannot repurchase the same investment either 30 days before you sold it or 30 days after the sale and still claim a loss on your taxes. It is also important to keep in mind that this applies to the purchase of any securities, which are the same, or substantially identical to the security you sold to generate the loss.

These are just a few tips to keep in mind throughout the year to help you keep your tax bill trim. Talk with your financial consultant about ways you can keep more of your money to afford the things you want.

(Brian Hepp is a financial consultant for Santa Monica-based A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc. Member SIPC. He can be reached at (310) 453-0077 or at brian.hepp@agedwards.com. A.G. Edwards is a full-service retail brokerage firm that offers a complete spectrum of financial products and services, including stocks, bonds and mutual funds, financial retirement planning and tax-advantage investments.)

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LOCAL

SM Police still looking for Sunset Park burglar

BURGLARY, from page 1

are shatterproof."

Another burglary happened last Thursday across the street from where the Wednesday incident occurred, according to SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega.

And on Feb. 8, a woman who lives in the 1100 block of Pine Street reported that her home had been burglarized during the late morning. The woman told police that an hour prior to realizing she had been burglarized, a man knocked on her front door. When she opened the door, the man asked if her lights were working. The victim responded in the affirmative, then closed the door and watched the man walk eastbound on Pine Street.

The victim went back to watching television. About 30 minutes later, she walked into her bedroom and realized that she had been burglarized, police said.

Police believe the burglar cut the victim's window screen and entered her home. Once the burglar was inside, he entered the bedroom and removed jewelry and coins, police said.

Of the 25 burglaries or attempted break-ins in the Sunset Park neighborhood, which stretches from Lincoln Boulevard to Centinela, and Pico Boulevard to the southern city limits, nine occurred in December, 10 in January and

five in February, Fabrega said.

Police have not yet been able to link the burglaries to one suspect because there have been no witnesses to the crimes. All of them have occurred during the day when people typically aren't home.

The burglars have taken mostly items small enough to fit into a bag, backpack or pocket. Some of the items stolen have been a laptop computer, an I-Pod and jewelry.

Police urge residents to immediately report any suspicious persons stopping or loitering in the area. They believe the suspects might be on foot. High ranking officers continue to meet with residents in the area to discuss possible leads and how they can protect themselves.

"A lot of people are concerned and rightly so," Fabrega said.

Among the worried residents Wednesday afternoon was 25-year resident Robby Nickel, 44, who lives with her husband and three children at the intersection of 11th and Pine streets. Nickel watched from her front yard as police roped off the streets to conduct their investigation.

"We used to keep our doors unlocked all the time because we have a dog and we thought nothing could go wrong," said Nickel, who now always keeps her doors locked and her front patio light on.



John Wood/Daily Press

An officer on Wednesday speaks with resident Geoffrey Kyron, whose street was blocked off after a residential burglary in Sunset Park.

Geoffrey Kyron, 49, a 40-year resident of Sunset Park, said he thought the burglar or burglars were from out of town, be-

cause the crimes were out of character for his neighborhood.

"We never had a burglary around here for nearly 20 years running," he said. "What's going on?"

Beyond beefed-up patrols, by car as well as on foot and bicycle, police are working with the neighborhood group Friends of Sunset Park to organize community watch efforts and get the word out that residents should lock doors and gates at all times; not store hidden keys outdoors; and try to keep outside lights on at night. Undercover officers also are patrolling the neighborhood.

Police also are performing free security inspections of people's homes, which can be requested at the SMPD's community relations division (310) 458-8474, Fabrega said. If residents would like to organize a neighborhood watch with police, they are asked to call the community relations division. For update information, residents can log onto the SMPD's Web site, santamonica.smpd.org.

Anyone with information regarding Tuesday's burglary is encouraged to call Detective Mike Federico at (310) 458-8432, or the SMPD at (310) 458-8491. Callers who wish to remain anonymous may call the We-Tip national hotline at 1-800-78-CRIME (27463).

Newest councilman pledges support for higher wages

LIVING WAGE, from page 1

poor people, but wanted to know exactly how much it would cost taxpayers.

Raising the minimum wage for employees at City Hall will cost about \$350,000 a year. How much it will cost to raise the wage for employees of city contractors, however, is less clear. McCarthy pegged the figure at between \$500,000 and several million dollars. It's unknown what portion of the increased wages will be absorbed by the contractors in order to remain competitive, McCarthy added.

Shriver said how much it actually costs could determine the fate of the wage increase. He asked that a study be conducted after one year to gauge the cost of the higher wage to City Hall.

"It's not that complex, I think, an exercise and therefore I do think that the data could be said to be, if I could say such a terrible thing, somewhat factual," a sarcastic Shriver said during the Tuesday council meeting. "I think that there could be a decent study that would give people ... a sense of exactly what this actually did cost."

Both proponents and opponents of a broader, city-wide living wage debate are hoping Shriver will be on their side when a proposal comes forward, as is expected in the near future. Business interests that have fought the living wage for years said Shriver would bring fiscal accountability to the council. Advocates for the living wage cited Shriver's family credentials, and his ongoing commitment to helping poor people and others in need.

"He's a Kennedy. He's for the interests of poor people," said Abby Arnold, a former council candidate and active member of the nonprofit group, Santa Monicans Allied for Responsible Tourism, which has advocated on behalf of unionized workers in local hotels and grocery stores.

"This is a person that cares about whether or not poor people can live in our community," she added.

Seth Jacobsen, a political consultant hired by deep-pocketed Santa Monica business interests, countered that Shriver's addition to the council will bring some balance to the debate.

"I think he is a moderator for us on the council," Jacobsen said Wednesday. "If there is a debate on this issue, it will be a formidable one, but a balanced one."

Shriver said Wednesday he would continue to support higher wages for the poor, adding accountability would be key.

"Every dollar that you spend on one thing is a dollar you don't spend on something else," said Shriver, adding advocates of a living wage need to be hard-nosed and make the financial implications of their proposals transparent. "That's the thing progressive people need to really focus on and let people understand."

The concept of a living wage in Santa Monica has been debated for years. Jacobsen was a vocal opponent of a living wage proposal known as Proposition JJ, which was narrowly defeated at the polls in November of 2002. That proposal, which was first approved by the council and later forced to the vote, would have

"Every dollar that you spend on one thing is a dollar you don't spend on something else ... That's the thing progressive people need to really focus on and let people understand."

BOBBY SHRIVER
City Councilman

required coastal businesses grossing more than \$5 million a year to pay their workers \$12.25 an hour, or \$10.50 an hour with health benefits.

Proponents of the living wage argued big businesses were treating workers unfairly. Opponents said the new wage would depress the economy and stifle entrepreneurs.

Echoes of that divide still could be heard at the Tuesday council meeting. City Councilmen Bob Holbrook and Herb Katz voted against the \$11.50 proposal, saying it unfairly squandered Santa Monica's taxpayer dollars. They suggested the minimum wage for contractors be modeled after the lower wages in Pasadena or Los Angeles.

"My motive is pretty straight forward," City Councilman Bob Holbrook told his colleagues. "I just don't understand why our taxpayers would want us to spend 15 percent — potentially 15 percent — more to get the same work done. It just doesn't seem fair to the Santa Monica taxpayers,

that's all."

City Councilmen Richard Bloom, Ken Genser and Kevin McKeown held ground on the other side of the issue, saying the higher wage for City Hall's contractors was long overdue.

"The idea here is that either taxpayers pay or taxpayers subsidize," McKeown said Tuesday. "This level of \$11.50 was chosen to be that neutral point at which all we're really doing is eliminating the hidden taxpayer subsidy and giving people the dignity of directly paying the wages for the work they do."

Mayor Pam O'Connor, who has supported the living wage in the past but has not been an outspoken advocate in favor of it, apparently agreed.

"To rent an apartment now in Santa Monica — to rent — you have to have an income of about \$50,000 a year," O'Connor said. "So this is about paying someone something closer to a living wage, whereby they might have some shot at not having to work two jobs."

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LOCAL



'Spirit Awards' will be aired live on cable TV

BIG TOP, from page 1

to create that party feeling even during the show itself."

Zahn-Storey said the awards did have a serious underpinning, however, as they pay homage to the courageous artists who follow their own vision rather than a Hollywood formula.

"The Spirit Awards support independent filmmakers and the growing audience for their films," Zahn-Storey said. "They recognize an entire community of artists who embody the kind of independent spirit needed to make these films."

Seventeen awards will be given out Saturday night, including three categories for Best Picture: Best Feature, Best First Feature and the John Cassavetes Award for the best film made with a budget under \$500,000. Another category, not seen at the Academy Awards, is the Best First Screenplay category. Other categories include more traditional categories, such as best actress, best actor, supporting actor and actress, and best documentary.

Zahn-Storey said a Special Distinction Award will go to the ensemble cast of "Mean Creek."

"All the leads in that movie were so incredible that the nominating committee couldn't pull them apart," Zahn-Storey said.

Zahn-Storey said the IFP holds its awards show in Santa Monica because it's set in a beautiful location, there is space for the now traditional Spirit Awards tent and it's held so close to the next day's Academy Awards show.

"We want to be convenient," she said. "Everyone's in town for the Oscars and having the Spirit Awards the day before makes it easier for people in the business

to come to our awards celebration too."

This year's Spirit Awards will be hosted by Samuel L. Jackson along with co-chairs Salma Hayek and Quentin Tarantino. Confirmed guests include Javier Bardem, Kevin Bacon, Cate Blanchette, Jeff Bridges, Kate Bosworth, Benjamin Bratt, Don Cheadle, David Duchovny, Jodie Foster, Jamie Fox, Jake Gyllenhaal, Marcia Gay Harden, Laura Linney, Ewan McGregor, Megan Mullally, Dennis Quaid, Christina Ricci, Marisa Tomei and Elijah Wood.

The Spirit Awards will be held at the parking lot at 2030 Barnard Way — also known as Beach Lot 4 South. City Hall raises revenue by renting city-owned property to such events which also require a variety of city permits and hiring of city personnel such as traffic control officers and parking lot attendants, according to Trinie Garcia-Valdez, City Hall's community use administrator. She said neighbors within a 500-foot radius of the event were notified in advance about the event and that although the parking lot will not be available to the public, adjacent lots will be open. She said there won't be any street closings.

The show will be broadcast live on the Independent Film Channel from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and will be re-broadcast on Bravo at 10 p.m. with an hour-long pre-show starting at 9 p.m.

The IFP, which produces the Spirit Awards, is a nonprofit organization consisting of 9,000 members. The members vote for films and artists that have been nominated by the IFP nominating committee. The committee consists of writers, directors, casting directors and other professional film makers and are appointed by the IFP board of directors.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

dards, and creating an accountability systems which reflects high expectations for all students.

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Local students earn cash for community contributions

By Daily Press staff

There are two "cool kids" in our midst.

Santa Monica students Ivy Kuperberg and Michelle Mahanian were honored by Greenlight Financial Services and KABC for their contribution to the community. The students each received \$1,000 educational scholarships on Feb. 5 at a luncheon at KABC studios.

"Cool Kids" is a program designed to recognize extraordinary students between the ages of 14-18, who are performing what are considered exceptional services for their community.

Kuperberg was chosen to be a "Cool Kid" for her extensive volunteer work at several local charitable organizations, including Sojourn Services for Battered Women and children; Upward Bound House — a homeless shelter; and Camp Holiday Trails, where she was a camp counselor, helping kids with illnesses enjoy the experience of summer camp.

Kuperberg was also recognized for her participation on Santa Monica High School's cross country team and symphony orchestra. She is currently a freshman at Rice University.

Mahanian was chosen for founding a program called "Music to Heal." The program enables instrumental and choral musicians from various high schools to perform for patients in hospitals and rehabilitation shelters, bringing joy to those who are suffering or ill. Additionally, Mahanian also has demonstrated overall academic excellence with a GPA of 4.25 and ranked fourth in a class of 500 at Palisades Charter High School.

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STATE

California farmers ask Supreme Court for help

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court justices waded into the West's contentious water wars Wednesday, questioning whether individual farmers can sue the government over water they say they were due but never received.

Two dozen farmers from California's Central Valley want the government to pay them about \$32 million as compensation for water they were supposed to get under a contract. The Bureau of Reclamation diverted the water to comply with Endangered Species Act requirements to protect two threatened fish.

But the government says its contract with the Westlands Water District only allows lawsuits by the district — not by individual landowners who are its members. The state of California and the water district itself agree, contending that allowing farmers to sue the gov-

ernment directly could result in a rash of lawsuits and undermine water districts' ability to do business with the Bureau of Reclamation.

"The water doesn't belong to any one landowner or group of landowners, it belongs to the whole," said Bush administration lawyer Jeffrey Minear.

"It would be very disruptive to the system if a minority of farmers in the district were able to bring a suit."

But the farmers' attorney, William Smiland of Los Angeles, told the court his clients should have the right to compensation for their loss.

"My clients have suffered massive losses, they've been litigating these claims for 25 years," Smiland said. "We think we should have a forum and a remedy and a right to our day in court."

Justices sounded skeptical of Smiland's arguments.

"The whole point of the district was to make it easier for the U.S. to know with whom it was dealing," said

Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Justice Stephen Breyer compared the farmers to children trying to enforce a contract entered into by their parents.

"I might buy a house with the idea of helping my child. ... That doesn't mean he can enforce the contract," Breyer said.

At issue is a water service contract between the federal agency that manages water in the West and the nation's largest water district. Westlands Water District encompasses 600,000 acres of cotton, tomatoes, onions and other farmland in western Fresno and Kings counties.

In 1993 the Bureau of Reclamation cut Westlands' water allocation by half because of federal requirements to protect the threatened winter-run chinook salmon and delta smelt. Westlands and some farmers in the water district sued.

Westlands dropped its suit two years later as part of negotiations to establish the California Federal Bay-Delta water project. But some two dozen individual property owners and farming partnerships, led by an aging farmer named Francis Orff, continued with the suit.

Wednesday's argument focused on the relatively narrow question of whether the farmers had the right to sue at all. If the Supreme Court reverses lower courts and says they do, it could open the door for hundreds of individual farmers to take on the Bureau of Reclamation.

The result would be chaotic, Westlands attorney Stuart Somach of Sacramento said outside court.

But the case was also being watched because it touches on a bigger issue: whether the government must compensate property owners for irrigation water diverted for environmental purposes.

The Endangered Species Act — passed after the Westlands contract and some other water contracts like it were signed — requires water to be used to protect species in some circumstances where agriculture also claims it. Traditionally, no compensation has been given. Changing that could undermine the Endangered Species Act by making it too expensive to uphold, environmentalists say.

But property rights supporters are increasingly arguing that such diversions of water must be regarded as a government "taking" of private property, and compensation must be paid.

That view got encouragement when the Bush administration spent \$16.7 million in December to settle a lawsuit by California water districts over water diverted to help threatened fish. Environmentalists had hoped the government would appeal a ruling in favor of the water districts rather than settle.

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NATIONAL



‘Ranch Rescue’ member acquitted of threatening U.S. agents

By The Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — A member of a self-styled border watch group has been acquitted of federal charges that he threatened three U.S. Border Patrol agents during a confrontation in southern Arizona last year.

Casey James Nethercott, a member of the group Ranch Rescue, was released after the verdict Tuesday, said his attorney, public defender Jason Hannan. Nethercott had spent more than five months in federal custody.

“Casey never once considered entering a plea. This case was about principles from the beginning. The jury saw that,” the defense attorney said.

The charges stemmed from an Aug. 31 incident near Douglas at a local headquarters for Ranch Rescue, one of several civilian groups that patrol the Arizona-Mexico border to watch for illegal immigrants.

Federal prosecutor Maria Davila said Nethercott ignored attempts by Border Patrol agents to pull him over on an immigration stop as he returned to his home from Douglas.

She said Nethercott led the agents on a slow-speed pursuit that ended at his ranch, where the prosecutor said he threatened and attempted to intimidate the agents who were lawfully investigating their suspicions that Nethercott was involved in smuggling.

Hannan said the confrontation alleged by the Border Patrol agents never occurred.

He said the threats the agents said Nethercott made were shown to be nothing more than Nethercott calling 911 on his cell phone and reporting to the Cochise County Sheriff’s Department that armed agents were at his gate and he needed help to avoid a shootout.

“It was politics, pure and simple. They were just trying to get rid of him,” Hannan said.

Last year, Nethercott was found guilty by a Texas jury of felony firearm possession. The jury was deadlocked on a second charge that accused Nethercott of pistol-whipping an illegal immigrant near a Texas ranch.



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BLUFIZZ



NATIONAL

The desperate, the homeless struggle in city of sin

BY ANGIE WAGNER
 Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — The red and white pickup truck eases onto the street, and the homeless emerge from the darkness, their grubby and weathered hands grabbing for water, the night’s meal and maybe a blessing from the priest.

“Can I have one, Father?” one man asks the Rev. John McShane as the Roman Catholic priest passes out bottled water from the back of his old Dodge.

“I have your shoes tonight,” the priest tells another man.

Tonight, dinner is turkey and noodles with a side of macaroni salad offered by McShane and his volunteers. The homeless leave their beds on the concrete curbs along this quiet street just a short distance away from the clinking slot machines and flashing neon of downtown Vegas.

Here, on either side of a highway overpass, they park grocery carts filled with blankets and few belongings.

They sleep on gravel, concrete and trash, trying to stay warm in the desert chill, their faces bathed in the dim glow of a street light.

The smell of poverty, of urine, of unclean men comes in a wave and never leaves.

McShane greets each drug addict, gambler, disabled and down-and-out soul, always looking for Christ disguised as the homeless.

Michael Barnett made \$75 as a day laborer moving furniture this day; he said by 9 p.m. he spent \$60 of it on heroin and cocaine. At 35, he has nothing but his addiction. He said he has overdosed several times.

“It’s happened so many times, it’s going to kill me,” he said, stoically rolling a cigarette.

Barnett, like many of the homeless, moves between cities with the seasons. When summer arrives and temperatures soar above 100, Barnett will scrounge up money and take a Greyhound bus to Oregon.

It’s easy here to get drugs, he said.

“I’d hate for my sister to see me like this,” he said, ducking back into the shadows.

It’s been three years since Pearl Minter, a 52-year-old grandmother of six, has been on the streets. She says she has cancer, a heart murmur and was hit by a car recently. She can’t hold a job because she uses marijuana for her pain.

Minter, in her brown cowboy boots and pink and turquoise dress, is one of the few women out this night.

“You have to fend for yourself. They’ll take everything you got,” she said.

On any given night, McShane finds more than 100 people living on the streets. A county count last year found 7,887 homeless people, an 18 percent increase from 1999. Shelters in Clark County, home to Las Vegas, have 3,288 emergency and transitional beds, but many homeless don’t want to follow shelter rules and prefer the streets.

Homeless advocates say more needs to be done in a city built on wealth and opportunity. For the first time, the county is developing a regional plan on homelessness.

People move to Las Vegas because the cost of living is low, the climate mild and the lure of easy money. But the city is changing. The housing market has exploded and apartment rents aren’t as affordable as they once were.

“What we have here is accessibility to any and every possible, conceivable vice on Earth,” said Linda Lera-Randle El, founder of the homeless outreach program Straight from the Streets. “It’s much more accessible

here — gambling, alcohol, sexual addiction.”

The city’s appeal is part of the problem.

“It’s a new place. It’s exciting,” said Paula Haynes-Green, the county’s regional homeless services coordinator. “People come here because they do feel there are endless opportunities.”

Just before 10 p.m., a homeless man and a woman emerge from a pickup and wander over to the encampment, the man pulling up his pants as he walks.

“You see the weakness of human nature sometimes,” the priest said, glancing at the scene.

A few blocks beyond old Vegas, where casinos beckon tourists with 99-cent margaritas and shrimp cocktails and free slot machine pulls, Clarence Woods walks away from the neon, looking to buy a pack of cigarettes.

One week ago, he was sleeping on the streets, but luck as a day laborer has allowed him to stay at a \$370-a-month hotel. He doesn’t know if he can last.

He’s 53, a father of five too embarrassed to tell his children where he is living. He uses a different address, for pride’s sake. He is honest about his life: He ended up homeless because he was irresponsible.

“It’s like hell,” he said, his cranberry stocking hat pulled down tight in the night chill.

Woods said he did well in Las Vegas, owning his own upholstery shop. Bankruptcy left him on the streets.

He calls himself a recreational drug user, drinker and gambler.

“It’s a real trap,” he said. “But it’s what Las Vegas is about.”

On Fremont Street, the lights flicker as tourists hustle between casinos, drinks in hand. Thousands gather each night under the downtown canopy to watch a light show blaring music and dancing images.

Edward Haynes, 42, meanders through the crowd, hoping to bum a few bucks for a hot dog. He came to Las Vegas in January because he heard it was a cheap place to live. But he said he has been in prison six times for trafficking cocaine in several states and knows employers don’t want to hire convicted felons.

He said he has dealt drugs for two decades. He knows nothing else or how to escape the streets.

“Sometimes society deals you a hand and you don’t have any other choice.”

It’s almost midnight, and Haynes needs a beer before he beds down under an overpass bridge a few blocks away from the 24-hour fun.

He hasn’t resorted to selling drugs here yet. He doesn’t know how long he can hold out.

“I can’t answer that,” he said.



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Family: Journalist Thompson likely planned suicide in advance

BY DAN ELLIOTT

Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Journalist Hunter S. Thompson did not take his life “in a moment of haste or anger or despondency” and probably planned his suicide well in advance because of his declining health, the family’s spokesman said Wednesday.

Douglas Brinkley, a historian and author who edited some of Thompson’s work, said the founder of “gonzo” journalism shot himself Sunday night after weeks of pain from a host of physical problems that included a broken leg and a hip replacement.

“I think he made a conscious decision that he had an incredible run of 67 years, lived the way he wanted to, and wasn’t going to suffer the indignities of old age,” Brinkley said in a telephone interview from Aspen. “He was not going to let anybody dictate how he was going to die.”

Thompson, famous for the book “Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas” and other works of New Journalism, spent an intimate weekend with his family, the spokesman said. His son, Juan, daughter-in-law, Jennifer, and young grandson, William, were visiting from Denver.

“He was trying to really bond and be close to the family” before his suicide, Brinkley said. “This was not just an act of irrationality. It was a very pre-planned act.”

Family members had no hint that Thompson planned to take his own life, Brinkley said, and he did not leave a note. “There was no farewell salutation,” he said.

Brinkley said Thompson’s son and grandson were the only other people in the home at the time of the shooting. Juan Thompson said he heard a noise that sounded like a book hitting the floor, ran to the kitchen and found his father dead, Brinkley said.

Thompson’s wife of two years, Anita, was at a health club.

The family is looking into whether Thompson’s cremated remains can be blasted out of a cannon, a wish the gun-loving writer often expressed, Brinkley said.

“The optimal, best-case scenario is the ashes will be shot out of a cannon,” he said.

Other arrangements were pending.

Sales of “Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas” and other Thompson favorites have soared since his death. “Fear and Loathing” was No. 15 on Amazon.com as of Wednesday and publisher Vintage Books has ordered a “significant” reprinting.

“We usually sell about 60,000-70,000 copies a year of that book and our next printing will be close to that total,” Vintage spokesman Russell Perreault said.

Other Thompson books selling well include “Hell’s Angels,” “Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ‘72” and “Hey Rube.”

Bush, German chancellor call anew for Tehran to renounce nuclear ambitions

BY TOM RAUM

Associated Press Writer

MAINZ, Germany — President Bush and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder insisted Wednesday that Iran must not have nuclear weapons, but remained divided on how to coax Tehran into giving up its suspected ambitions for such an arsenal.

“It’s vital that the Iranians hear the world speak with one voice that they shouldn’t have a nuclear weapon,” Bush said at a news conference with the German leader.

Both sought to play down the differences between the United States and Europe.

“We absolutely agree that Iran must say, no, to any kind of nuclear weapon,” Schroeder said.

Bush was making a nine-hour stop here during a trip to Belgium, Germany and Slovakia, where the president meets Thursday with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Touring a museum dedicated to Mainz native Johannes Gutenberg, inventor of the printing press, Bush, Schroeder and their wives posed for pictures and watched as the world’s first press produced a page from the biblical book of St. John.

Later, Bush addressed members of the U.S. Army’s 1st Armored Division at nearby Wiesbaden Air Base. “You’re part of the history of freedom and peace,” Bush told about 3,000 troops. “Terrorists must be confronted and they must be defeated. In this war, there is only one option for victory: We must take the fight to the enemy.”

At a round-table meeting with young Germans, Bush emphasized the close relationship he and Schroeder have with the Russian leader, who is under criticism from the West for rolling back some democratic reforms.

“I expressed some concerns at the European Union yesterday about some of the decisions such as freedom of the press that our mutual friend has made,” Bush said. “I look forward to talking with him about his decision-making process.”

A senior administration official, who briefed reporters on Air Force One on the flight to Germany, said Bush rejects Putin’s defense of his tightening of government controls. “An argument that ‘My people need a strong ruler — me’ is an argument that does not fit with the way the president talks about democracy,” said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Bush and Schroeder seemed resigned to differences on issues such as global warming and, especially, the U.S.-led war in Iraq that Germany so vehemently opposed.

“Now, our joint interest is that we come to a stable, democratic Iraq,” Schroeder said.

Even though Germany refuses to go into that war-torn nation, Schroeder noted its role in training Iraqi security officers in the United Arab Emirates and its willingness to help the new Iraqi government draft a constitution or establish ministries.

Bush thanked Germany. “I fully understand the limitations of German contributions,” he said.

The leader of Germany’s main opposition party, the conservative Christian Democrats, said after a 15-minute meeting with Bush that relations are on the mend. “I got the impression that trans-Atlantic relations are really in a new phase,” Angela Merkel told ARD television.

The sticky issue of Iran dominated the news conference that followed the leaders’ more than hour-long meeting.

Schroeder wants Bush to more actively engage with talks led by Germany, France and Britain that offer incentives to Tehran, such as membership in the World Trade Organization, in return for dropping its uranium enrichment program.

“There needs to be movement on both sides,” Schroeder said.

Bush backs the European diplomacy but frowns on the idea of rewarding Iran for breaking the nonproliferation treaty that prohibits it from making nuclear fuel or for sponsoring terrorist groups in Israel such as Hezbollah.

“We will work with them to convince the mullahs that they need to give up their nuclear ambitions,” Bush said of the Europeans.

He added: “The reason we’re having these discussions is because they were caught enriching uranium after they had signed a treaty saying they wouldn’t enrich uranium. ... They’re the party that needs to be held to account, not any of us.”

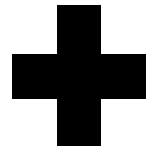
Later, National Security Adviser Steve Hadley said that while the administration supports the Europeans’ negotiations with Iran, “we also continue to make clear that these are talks that need to head to a solution and that solution needs to involve the permanent cessation of enrichment and the forswearing of reprocessing.”

Hadley said the leaders talked about incentives and punishments — whether there should “be a mix of carrots and sticks and who should the carrots come from and what should they be.” But he stopped short of saying that Bush was retreating from his belief that Iran should not be rewarded.

“I think he’s going to have to go back and give it some thought,” Hadley said of Bush. “He may have some views right now. He’s a decisive guy. He hasn’t shared them with me.”

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ACROSS

- 1 Went out
5 Dropped out of a hand
11 Tolstoy heroine
12 Maryland bird
13 Longing
14 Accumulate
15 Perfect partner
17 Hamm of soccer
18 Film trophy
22 Cornered
24 Wake up
25 Honey maker
26 Heel
27 Poets
30 Meal starters
32 Good ability
33 Prepare for battle
34 Premium channels
38 Bible dancer
41 Call for
42 Out of bed
43 Alum
44 Uses a mirror
45 Spot

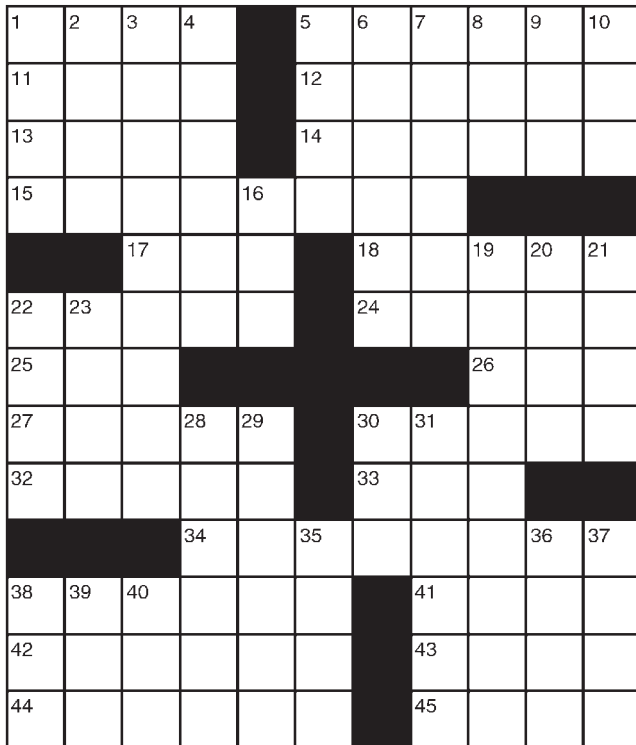
DOWN

- 1 Speaker's place

- 2 Quite fond of
3 Burdens
4 Ornamental flower
5 — song
6 Speaker
7 In this way
8 Buck's mate
9 Yale student
10 Cub's home
16 Has permission to
19 Potential pickles
20 Soon, in memos

- 21 Beatty movie
22 "Fernando" group
23 Afternoon events
28 Take testimony from
29 Flower part
30 Pouchlike part
31 Grove item
35 Longings
36 Bound
37 Whirl of water
38 Tree flow
39 Sched. abbr.
40 Tall tale

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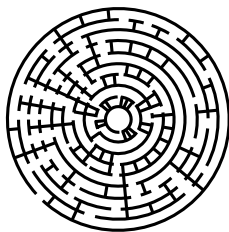
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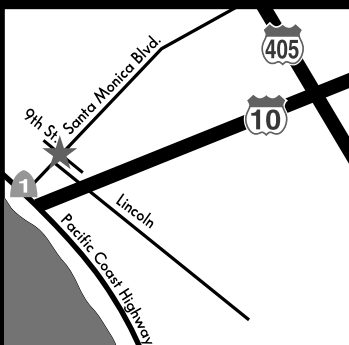
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Naomi Campbell tells of near self-destruction from her cocaine use

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Naomi Campbell says she nearly self-destructed from her use of cocaine.

Campbell tells Diane Sawyer on ABC's "Primetime Live" (to air at 10 p.m. EST Thursday) that she's glad she recovered, but acknowledges that it's still difficult.

"It was a rebellion in a certain way. You know?" the British supermodel says. "I don't want to be in that pain again. I don't want to be in that place."

Campbell, 34, says she first tried cocaine when she was 24 but stopped before "something would have happened. Some self-destructive thing."

"I never did drugs before I would go on the runway because I knew that's when I was an active addict. I knew that they could see my eyes," she says.

Campbell says she assumes others knew of her addiction at the time. "People aren't stupid. ... you think people don't know, but they know. They know. I mean, that's your mind playing tricks on you."

In 2004, Campbell won her appeal in a privacy case against a London newspaper that published photographs of her leaving a drug counseling meeting in 2001. Her lawyer said Campbell hadn't objected to the Daily Mirror's reporting that she had a drug problem and had misled the media about it, but only to its publication of details of her treatment.

In the "Primetime Live" interview, Campbell also discusses some of the more glamorous aspects of her life, including a reported romance with R&B singer Usher.

"We're still friends," Campbell says. "We were never boyfriend/girlfriend. ... One of the reasons why I felt like I needed to pull back is because it was getting misconstrued."

DOYLESTOWN, Pa. — Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie spent a day with a suburban Philadelphia plastic surgeon for an episode of "The Simple Life 3: Interns."

Dr. Eric Marchant said the duo initially seemed bored with the work.

"I thought, 'Uh-oh, this was a bad idea,'" he said, but they became more animated as the day wore on. The episode was to air Wednesday night on Fox television.

"What I expected was snobbery and standoffishness ... and they weren't that at all," Marchant said. "They were right in there with you."

Marchant invited the reality TV show, although he wasn't quite sure whether it would help or hurt the image of his practice.

"You have to take risks in life, or you don't experience anything," he said.

Marchant said he hopes the show won't cast plastic surgery in a negative light.

"It's still television," he said. "It's a reality TV show. If people don't get it, come on."

LOS ANGELES — Eric Benet is singing an apology to ex-wife Halle Berry.

Benet said lyrics in his upcoming album include an apology.

"I think somewhere along the way, she's heard everything," he told "Access Hollywood" in an interview broadcast Tuesday. "Maybe she hasn't heard the songs, but she's heard everything I have to say."

Berry filed for divorce from the R&B singer last April after about three years of marriage.

Tabloids speculated about Benet's faithfulness.

"Some of it is truth," but the reports also were full of misconceptions, Benet, 34, told the syndicated entertainment TV show.

"I think the biggest misconception is that there is something wrong with me," he said. "It's like the whole picture that was painted was ... 'sex addict.'"

Benet also denied being a sex addict last year. In a July interview with ABC's "Primetime Thursday," he denied he had ever committed adultery but acknowledged indiscretions that entailed "verbally inappropriate" behavior and "physical contact that was extremely inappropriate and wrong in a marriage."

SAN FRANCISCO — Howard Stern, the acerbic self-described "King of All Media," has received Wired Magazine's Wired Renegade award for his tense battle with the FCC and upcoming switch to Sirius Satellite Radio.

Other recipients of the sixth annual Rave Awards, presented Tuesday, include Brad Bird, who won in the Film Director category for "The Incredibles," the computer-animated story of a family of superheroes.

"I'm very excited to be included in this group of people," said Bird, who dismissed the notion that the popularity of computer-generated blockbuster films might nudge real-life actors out of the business.

He called such concerns those of "backward-thinking actors."

"I think some actors are taking it that way, but I don't think it's a legitimate concern," Bird said.

Kevin Sites, a freelance journalist, took home the first Blogger award, for helping pioneer a new breed of reporting from the war in Iraq. Sites also chronicled the tsunami rescue effort in southeast Asia.

"This year's Rave Award winners are inventive, rebellious, courageous, and they're changing the world," said Chris Anderson, editor-in-chief of Wired Magazine. "They're the mavericks, visionaries and dreamers who inspire us as they transform our culture."

Other winners included Danger Mouse for "The Grey Album," in the musician category; Rem Koolhaas in the architect category; and Burt Rutan in the industrial designer category.