

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

20, 11, 14, 15, 24

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 8, 9, 7

Evening picks: 0, 6, 6

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 3, Hot Shot

2nd Place: 12, Lucky Charms

3rd Place: 11, Money Bags

Race Time: 1:48.55



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Ronald Paul McAllister, 43, allegedly robbed a Bank of America branch in Tulsa, Okla., in January, during which incident he was quoted as advising a teller, "Don't do anything stupid, lady." Moments later, as McAllister fled with his loot, he forgot to take his holdup note, which was a pre-printed withdrawal slip with his name on it. He was easily tracked down, and police now say McAllister had robbed another bank in October.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I want to remind you all that in order to fight and win the war, it requires an expenditure of money that is commiserate with keeping a promise to our troops to make sure that they're well-paid, well-trained, well-equipped."

— George W. Bush



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Del Pastrana/Daily Press

Volunteers for Food Not Bombs, an organization that advocates peace, serve up soup and herb tea to Santa Monica's homeless at City Hall Tuesday.

Soup and a statement

By Daily Press staff

CITY HALL — Providers of free food for the homeless made a statement on Tuesday by setting up a food line on the lawn of City Hall. They say a law that makes it more difficult to distribute food is unconstitutional.

The Santa Monica City Council was expected to adopt some minor changes to a law passed in 2002 to protect its constitutionality. Even though the law was supposed to begin being enforced in November 2002 — a month after it passed — it still isn't more than a year later. That's because the law was challenged in federal court by the National Lawyers Guild and homeless advocates.

But a federal judge ruled in the city's favor late last year, and City

Hall is poised to begin enforcing the law, which creates hurdles to feeding the homeless in public parks.

Homeless rights advocates say the law violates the constitutional rights of the charities and religious organizations that run food programs by giving the city unilateral power to prevent programs from being set up in the city's parks.

The ordinance forces charitable organizations running free meal programs in city parks to apply for a permit if the gathering is more than 150 people. Each organization must also receive a permit from the Los Angeles County Health Department that verifies their program follows health codes and is not conducted more than three times in a 90-day period.

See FEEDINGS, page 6

Local courtroom latest victim of state budget crisis

Commit a crime in Santa Monica? You may be heading to LAX

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

SM COURTHOUSE — Santa Monica might soon lose its criminal courtroom, where locals and visitors alike are tried for everything from jaywalking and panhandling to camping in neighborhood parks, possessing illegal drugs and violating the noise ordinance.

County court officials cited a statewide budget crunch and said they stand to save more than \$500,000 in security expenses by

moving the criminal cases to the Airport Courthouse near LAX. But local officials said the change will be costly for Santa Monicans.

"This is a community-based courtroom," said Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Bernard Kamins, who has presided over the criminal cases for nine years. "Santa Monica has very unique and important issues to the populace here ... It's for the people, the witnesses, the defendants."

"This, like the drug court, really works," added Kamins, a native of Los Angeles' westside and former public defender who has served on the bench for 19 years. "When you can connect with somebody heart

See COURTROOM, page 6

Homeless woman helps herself to church offering

By Daily Press staff

The lord giveth, and the lord taketh away.

Well, not exactly. But a homeless woman tried to taketh away from a local church.

A homeless woman was caught red handed on Monday morning stealing the donations in a candle offering box at St. Monica's Church, located at Seventh Street and California Avenue.

When a church employee saw Linda Marie Thomas, 43, allegedly dipping into the box shortly before 9 a.m., he called Santa Monica police. When officers

arrived, they saw Thomas reaching inside the slot with a long wooden matchstick to try to pry money out, said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega. It's unknown if she was successful in getting any cash.

Officers searched her and found several bottles of prescription medication with different names on the bottles. When Thomas was first interviewed by police, she gave them a fake name, Fabrega said. She was taken to Santa Monica Jail and booked for burglary, being in possession of another person's prescription, giving false information to a police officer and a probation violation.

Lawmakers use campaign cash for Vegas, softball, dancing

BY STEVE LAWRENCE

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — When Assemblymen Ron Calderon and Ed Chavez decided to hold staff retreats last year they didn't go down the street for coffee and doughnuts. Instead they dipped into their campaign funds for thousands of dollars to fly their aides to Las Vegas

for weekends at posh hotels.

California lawmakers also used campaign money in 2003 to buy softball equipment, choreograph a dance routine, support family members' political ambitions and travel to locations that ranged from Iceland to Taiwan.

Most of the approximately \$30 million that legislators spent in campaign funds last year went for traditional, election-related expenses, includ-

ing campaign consultants, postage, telephone bills, office supplies and more fund-raising.

But there was also spending that had a less obvious connection to the business of winning office, including dozens of expenditures at Sacramento restaurants that were listed as meetings.

State law gives lawmakers and other elect-

See SPENDING, page 7

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On September 11, 2002, at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., "Visions of America" imagery was featured throughout the White House's memorial to the victims of 9/11. President Bush, Ted and Carolyn Kennedy, James Earl Jones and other Hollywood notables attended as Joe's images were projected on giant screens over the National Symphony Orchestra.

Experience the beauty and magnificence of America in the one-of-a-kind presentation by "Joe Sohm". Joe's photographs are published daily in magazines such as *Newsweek*, *National Geographic* and *Time*. Witness Joe's unique take on our great country and see for yourself why he is a favorite photographer of the White House, the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton Presidential Library.

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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)
★★★★ You might understand much more than others realize, but perhaps playing dumb could be the best course of action. Use your intuition, especially with starting a new enterprise. Don't push yourself too hard. You could be more tired than you realize. Tonight: Treat yourself.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ You're all smiles, except when dealing with certain difficult people in your life. Your high energy helps you bypass, or rather skip over any stones in your path. Your determination draws only successful results. Express enthusiasm rather than doubt. Tonight: Find your favorite playmate.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★ You could feel a change in the wind, as your ruler changes signs today. You might be more concerned about work and your public image than you have been in a while. Don't beat yourself up or become too critical. Listen to what an authority figure shares. Tonight: Indulge yourself.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Emphasize success and goals. Your friendly side emerges, drawing others to you. You might feel like someone close is messing up. You can only make suggestions and hope he or she will listen. Your ability to communicate stars right now. Tonight: Where your friends are.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Take charge at work or wherever you spend your day. Others need your sense of direction, as they might be waffling in some way. Express your generosity of spirit in a new way. Review decisions in a more forthright manner. Tonight: Expect a late bedtime.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Reach out for others, especially as they could be a source of information. You might be surprised by the facts, as you might have been working from a whole different set of priorities and now realize you need to make an adjustment. Tonight: Visualize.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Work with someone close, while realizing you could be distorting your vision of what he or she might offer. Loosen up with a loved one you care a lot about. Reveal more of your feelings, and closeness seems to happen. Tonight: Togetherness works.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Others reach out for you. At first you might have an adverse reaction to someone's bellicose manner. Listen to his or her message, not to your knee-jerk reaction. Remember your long-term aims with others. Tonight: Where your friends are.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Pace yourself, as you have a lot of ground to cover right now. The good news is that you have the energy to get the job done. You innately assume a leadership role. Others respect you for your strength. Tonight: A must appearance.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ If faced with confusion or difficulty, tap into your intellectual resources. Someone close might be quite dependent, but he or she maintains a very serious exterior. You might not hear all the praise you'd like to hear. Tonight: Rent a movie, and relax your mind.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Listen to your instincts, to a degree, but you might not be getting the message straight. Review a personal matter with an eye to greater security. You might be considering some changes to your work location or hours. Tonight: An intimate chat with a partner.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★ You seem to hit a roadblock mid-day. Don't let this get to you; you will find a way around or over the problem. Also others will come to your rescue. Investigate possibilities that surround an important relationship. Tonight: Just answer your phone or go to a neighborhood restaurant. Socialize, please.

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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 Sackarison sack@smdp.com STAFF WRITER John Wood wood@smdp.com CHILD DEVELOPMENT COLUMNIST Margie Altman margiealtman@yahoo.com ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER Rob Piubeni rob@smdp.com ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Steve Averill steve@smdp.com ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Rob Schwenker schwenker@smdp.com PRODUCTION MANAGER Del Pastrana del@smdp.com	PRODUCTION ASSISTANT Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II alex@smdp.com ADMINISTRATIVE TRAFFIC MANAGER Heather Rich heather@smdp.com CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE Mitch Troy mitch@smdp.com CIRCULATION MANAGER Robert DeAmicis robert@smdp.com CIRCULATION Keith Wyatt keith@smdp.com SPECIAL PROJECTS Glenn Bolan glenn@smdp.com MASCOT Maya Furukawa maya@smdp.com
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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Traffic snarls begin in Ocean Park

By Daily Press staff

The construction that began along Fourth Street on Monday will continue for two more months.

New street improvements include landscaping at Strand Street, extended curbs at uncontrolled intersections, two marked crosswalks at Bay and Strand streets, median island extensions, a "welcome to Santa Monica" sign south of Marine Street and street paving. A new water main and connections also will be installed to increase water supply in the area.

Southbound traffic on Fourth Street from Pico and Ocean Park boulevards will be closed to thru-traffic. Local access to residents will be allowed, but all other traffic will be detoured to alternate streets. Overall construction is expected to continue through May 31.

For more information, call the 24-hour project hotline at (800) 200-8340.

City on top of the technological world

By Daily Press staff

City Hall has been put on the map in the technological world.

The city of Santa Monica has won the coveted PTI Technology Solutions award for its "Enterprise Management Intranet GIS Application." EMIGA uses the city's Geographic Information System to present detailed management information about city construction projects.

By viewing and clicking an online map, project managers are able to quickly determine the location and scope of current and planned construction projects within the public right-of-way and public facilities. EMIGA makes it possible to coordinate the timing of multiple projects in a single area, resulting in decreased noise, congestion and other types of environmental disruption.

Public Technology, Inc. is a national nonprofit technology research and development organization based in Washington, D.C. that represents local governments. The PTI Technology Solutions Awards is a national program recognizing local governments that use technology to increase revenues, improve service to their community, save tax dollars or improve management.

Shakespeare resurrected in Santa Monica

By Daily Press staff

Overseas actors will spend a week at Santa Monica College and cap the visit with two performances of "Romeo and Juliet."

Actors from the London Stage — a group of five classically trained actors from such companies as Royal Shakespeare and Royal National — will conduct seminars and workshops for theater, English and other SMC students, and will also make presentations to middle and high school students in Santa Monica.

Performances of Romeo and Juliet will be held at 7:30 p.m. on March 5 and 6 at Lincoln Middle School Auditorium, located at 1501 California Ave.

Tickets are \$10 general admission and \$5 for students with I.D.

For tickets, call (310) 434-3000 or for information, call (310) 434-4303.

The residency and public performances are sponsored by the SMC Associates, a private organization that funds speakers and special programs on campus.

Using minimal props, costumes and lighting effects, the five actors play all the roles in the full-length Shakespeare play — 21 in the case of "Romeo and Juliet" — shifting from role to role by gesture, stance, intonation or the use of a skirt or scarf.

The actors also cross gender boundaries. The actor playing Romeo will also play Lady Montague and other roles.

Actors from the London Stage, which started in 1975, have toured colleges and universities throughout the United States. Patrick Stewart and Ian Richardson in previous years were among the actors in the program.

The actors' residency is an educational program developed by Homer Swander in 1975 at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The theater company is now based in London, England, and at the University of Notre Dame.

surf report

A new WNW swell will build today. The good winter breaks will see chest- to head-high surf. There will be some small SW swell helping to cross up some of the summer spots, but most of the energy will be coming in from the WNW.

OUTLOOK: Yet another W-WNW swell arrives. Stormsaucе.

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MONDAY	4:30 AM	5:08 PM	10:28 AM	11:37 PM
TUESDAY	5:23 AM	5:38 PM	11:14 AM	N/A
WEDNESDAY	6:30 AM	6:06 PM	12:15 AM	12:15 PM
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The Q-Line

Local politicians and city leaders have been recently discussing whether a hike in the hotel bed tax would be appropriate to help fund the local school district, which is financially faltering.

The tax, which is strategically set at 12 percent — 2 percent lower than the city of Los Angeles and surrounding cities — is tacked on to room rates at hotels in Santa Monica.

The increase would have to be voter

approved, and could appear as a ballot measure this November.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you support an increase in the hotel bed tax. Why or why not?"

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response before Thursday at 5 p.m. We'll print them in Saturday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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LETTERS

Chamber backs charter amendment

Editor:

The correlation between a quality education and success throughout one's lifetime has never been more evident than it is in our contemporary society. A glance at recent labor headlines demonstrates that even the low skill, safety net jobs of a decade or two ago will be no longer be available to future graduates.

With that as a backdrop, I am proud to be a participant in the efforts to bring a stable, predictable, and long-term funding stream to our local schools. The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce has decided to lend its support to the enhancement of education in Santa Monica by formally endorsing the Committee For Excellent Public Schools Charter Amendment. After many years of unsuccessful attempts to codify an agreement with the city of Santa Monica, those in the forefront of efforts to provide an excellent education to our children have proposed a charter amendment to be put before the voters. This is a reasonable measure that asks for \$6 million in annual support from our city to the Santa Monica Malibu-Unified School District. This is a very modest increase from the \$5.25 million that the city has been providing for some years. With the volatility and uncertainty of state funding for the last few years, there were few if any options left. Our children deserve better than having to survive on bake sales and PTA raffles and fundraisers. In a city as prosperous and progressive as ours, it seems somewhat disingenuous that our city fathers have not chosen to give a modicum of security to those who represent our future. It is simply a question of priorities. In a city that can find resources for a \$70 million library and a \$60 million public safety building, \$6 million per year for our most precious resource does not seem excessive.

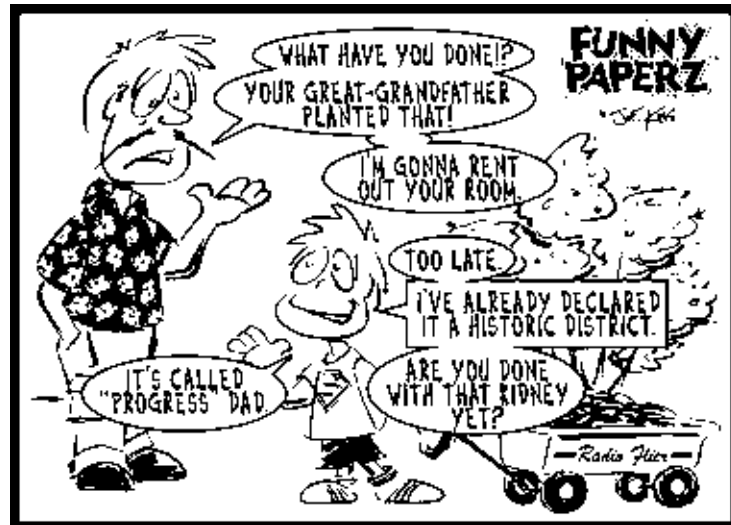
Good schools benefit us all and are an integral component of a healthy, prosperous community. When the trappings of an attractive city are stripped away, what at its core is left? What draws businesses to relocate here and what allows our local real estate to shine as it does? In a word, it's our schools. Parents don't have to spend \$20,000 a year for private schools. Local kids can attend school locally. These are the future employees of our businesses. We need to ask ourselves, "What is the risk of inaction?" Can we as residents, businesses and city officials afford to pin our hopes on what may or may not happen in Sacramento? If history is a guide, the answer is resounding "no."

The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce has long been a supporter of education as is evidenced by our support of parcel taxes going back 15 years and most recently by our backing of the school funding initiative, Measure S. We also sponsor a new

educators reception each year for the hundred or so new teachers to the Santa Monica Malibu-Unified School District. Many of our member businesses and especially the hoteliers and financial institutions are consistent and reliable contributors to the local schools. Our support of this charter amendment is a natural extension of the sincere belief that better schools benefit us all on a short- and long-term basis. While we endorse this measure, a long-term formal funding arrangement worked out in advance between the city and the district would of course be preferable.

Dr. Michael E. Gruning

Chairman of the board, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce



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An agent of Satan takes on Mel Gibson's 'Passion'



INCITES

By Ed Silverstein

I have learned some interesting facts recently. Apparently I killed Christ. I am also an agent of Satan. At least according to the Gospel of Mel.

Today Mel Gibson, star of the "Mad Max" and the "Lethal Weapon" series, and director of "Braveheart," (renowned for their scenes of sadistic torture and shots of Gibson's butt) will release his controversial new film, "The Passion of the Christ." The star was apparently inspired to make the film after a bout of guilt resulting from abuse of alcohol, drugs and other addictions he declined to discuss that left him so despondent that he considered throwing himself out of a window.

I have no objection to films that celebrate the life or death of any religious figure. And anyone interested in seeing this reportedly excessively violent and nauseatingly gory picture should do so. Though I do strongly disagree with religious leaders who suggest that the hard R rated film is appropriate for children as young as 11. What concerns me is the intent and motivation that leads Mr. Gibson to portray the final days of Jesus in the manner he chose.

Gibson claims he wanted to make a film that was absolutely true to the gospels. According to John Meacham's comprehensive Newsweek piece entitled, "Who Killed Jesus," the problem with using the gospels as ... well, gospel, is

that the writers "shaped their narratives several decades after Jesus' death to attract converts and make their young religion." In addition, the gospel writers were almost certainly compelled to depict the ruling Romans more favorably out of fear for their religion and their lives.

In any event, Gibson chose to cherry pick script elements from the diverging and conflicting gospels that support his long discredited and repudiated "traditional" Christian beliefs. Another source for the film, which Gibson speciously denies, are the visions of a controversial, 18th century nun, Sister Anne Catherine Emmerich, who today would be a diagnosed schizophrenic — probably living on the streets of Santa Monica.

Though I will not endeavor to detail all of the numerous inaccuracies pointed out by Meacham and others, of particular note is that Gibson depicts Pilate as a reluctant executioner forced by the Jewish high priests to execute Jesus. In fact, Pilate was reportedly "inflexible, stubborn, cruel and guilty of executing troublemakers without trial." Other writings of the time directly accuse Pilate of ordering Jesus' death. And Rome was the only authority that could order crucifixion. This was the penalty for sedition, not blasphemy, which makes sense when you consider that Jesus' rising popularity would have been construed as a threat to Roman rule.

So was Gibson unaware of the historical context or the inconsistencies in his film? The answer is, no.

Professor Paula Fredrikson ("Mad Mel", The New Republic, July 28, 2003) was among nine notable New Testament scholars, both Christian and Jewish, who

were provided an early copy of Gibson's script for comment. Though they never spoke to Gibson directly, the actor conveyed through the film's Aramaic and Latin translator, William Fulco S.J., that he was very interested in their opinions.

According to Fredrikson, all members of the panel independently determined that the script was deeply flawed, and they were concerned that the inaccuracies were potentially divisive. The professors compared notes and wrote up detailed suggestions on how to make the script more accurate, which they supported with comprehensive historical documentation.

But instead of addressing their concerns, Fredrikson tells us that Gibson's lawyers released accusations to the media that the theologians had stolen the script. Gibson's company further claimed that the scholars were trying to sabotage the project by extorting Gibson into making a film that conformed to their views.

If Gibson knowingly made such false accusations, one has to wonder if the actor's newfound belief embraces honesty as one of its tenets or if anything goes as long as it advances his cause.

Also in question is whether Gibson is an anti-Semite, a charge he vehemently denies. In fact, the actor has claimed that some of his best friends are Jews.

Mr. Gibson's father, however, is a notorious Jew hater. He adamantly asserts that the Jews killed Christ, that the Vatican II is a plot engineered by Jews and Free Masons, and that the Holocaust never occurred. And it is the father's extreme religious views that are represented in Mel's "The Passion."

This is not to infer that Gibson shares all of his father's beliefs. However, when

the actor was initially asked if he believes in the Holocaust, his reply was that a lot of people, including Jews, died during World War II. Such a disingenuous, non-denial denial has the same evasive lack of credibility as when Bush responded to Tim Russert's question about whether he was AWOL by stating that he was honorably discharged.

Aside from Gibson's ignoring of historical priorities, there is also the question of the offensive depiction of the unrelenting violence and torture of Jesus. Some suggest that Gibson is obsessed with sadistic imagery, and the actor himself has stated that he toned down the film. Gibson has claimed it was to show the extent of Christ's sacrifice. But as the veteran of dozens of action flicks, Mel is well aware that such graphic torture does less to elicit sympathy for the protagonist than to incite anger against the antagonist. In Gibson's film, they are Jews.

Considering the rising anti-Semitism around the world (and if my hate mail is any indication, in America as well) the choices Gibson has made for this depiction of Jesus are wildly irresponsible. I can't unequivocally state that Gibson is an anti-Semite, but if he isn't, then he is an incredibly insensitive and clueless man. And should "The Passion" result in even a single incident in which a Jew is harassed, attacked or even killed, I have a suggestion for Mr. Gibson:

Next time you feel so despondent over your own questionable behavior that you consider jumping out a window ...

(Ed Silverstein is a freelance writer living in Santa Monica. Passionate comments are welcome at edsincites@aol.com.)

OPINION



It's not an ego issue, it's democracy: 'Vote for me!'



POLITI-GIRL

By Beth Solomon

It's good to see Ralph Nader back in the saddle of presidential politics. He announced Sunday he'll make a fourth run for the presidency, four years after his populist Green Party effort gave the country a good political push — into the arms (literally) of George Bush and Dick Cheney.

Some people want to blame Ralph for the debacle that critics have called the most right-wing administration in American history.

It's true that Nader's 97,000 votes in Florida and 22,000 votes in New Hampshire tipped the last election to the Republicans — I mean the Supreme Court. (Wait, is there a difference?)

But it can't be coincidence that George Bush adopted the "compassionate conservative" mantra during the last Nader campaign. George was affected by Ralph's belief in standing up for the little guy. He was deeply touched. Which explains why he's proposed programs for poor people, such as encouraging them to marry. And he's all for the common man's snowmobiles in national parks. And drilling the bejesus out of our land to get more energy. All for the little guy.

Ralph says defeating George Bush is this year's top priority. And he means it. Ralph's not even content to wait for November — he's calling for impeachment. Now!

Ralph says Democrats and Republicans are basically the same thing. I remember believing that the last time around in 2000, until my mother leaned me over her knee and spanked me, gently pointing out that Roe vs. Wade is one Republican Supreme Court nomination away from the trash can. Or the "ash heap of history," to use the Republican term.

"They may be different in their mind, they may be different in their attention, they may be different in their rhetoric," Nader told the LA Times, "but in the actu-

al performance, these corporate interests and their political allies are taking America down."

He's got a point. Even me, I'm sitting down in a Starbucks right now. Do you think I should run?

No, seriously. Ralph has a lot of good points to make, and he's angry. Ralph is always angry. And it feels good to express anger and vent it. It feels even better when you do it on the radio, on Tim Russert's show, and in front of cheering college kids. So let's all form a giant chorus of anger in this country. It works for Rush Limbaugh and the ditto heads — moving our country forward, one spew at a time.

Don't forget, we progressives love dissent. Message discipline? A unified front? Putting aside our differences to get something done? That's not democracy, that's Republicanism. Which they've executed so well in six of the last nine elections. Hello, death penalty, Iraq-gate, Jeb in 2008?

Will Rogers famously said, "I'm not a member of any organized political party, I'm a Democrat." Wanna bet?

Maybe Ralph's problem is disappointment with the weak Democratic field. Look at them: A decorated Vietnam hero turned anti-war leader. A preacher from Harlem. A progressive Army general who couldn't stop talking about renewable energy. And a vegan from Cleveland who has a Rainbow Bus for an entourage — potential staff for his Department of Peace.

They must be in the pocket of ... Ben & Jerry's?

Not too long ago, I was inspired by Ralph Nader. He's led a life of public advocacy, creating organizations like Public Citizen and the PIRGs, which have done a great deal to protect the environment, hold corporations accountable, and blow the whistle on government wrongdoing. I don't want to harsh on him.

But there's no sense resting on our laurels and just electing a Democrat to the White House when we can do so much more. As Ralph says, there's always room for more candidates and ideas. He'd make a great No. 2. And don't you love the sound of ... President Solomon?

(White House hopeful Beth Solomon is reachable at bethsolomon@earthlink.net).

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LOCAL

Move for SM criminal court to be discussed March 3

COURTROOM, from page 1

to heart — rather than with a club over their head.”

The decision to move the courtroom, which hears only misdemeanor offenses, comes a year after all felony cases were transferred to the LAX Courthouse. Judge Kamins said he currently oversees from 80 to as many as 180 cases in the courtroom each day, adding that between seven and 28 of those cases involve alleged criminals who are being held in custody.

Prosecutors and defense attorneys — and even Judge Kamins — said they were caught off guard when county officials called a special meeting last week to discuss moving the courtroom. Officials are expected to discuss the matter again next week and hope to complete the move in May.

Allan Parachini, a spokesman for the court system, said similar consolidations have led to the demise of community courtrooms in Hollywood, Monrovia and San Pedro. He added they are necessary, though painful, because the Los Angeles Superior Court system is facing certain budget cuts of an unknown severity. Last year, it closed 29 courtrooms and laid off 300 people, he added.

Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Linda Lefkowitz, who took over as presiding judge of the Santa Monica Courthouse on Jan. 1, said the city will look at various

options for mitigating the added expenses and inconveniences to City Hall and local residents.

“Every judge in this courthouse — we are committed to community courts,” said Lefkowitz, 62, who has been a judge more than 10 years. “And we certainly respect the interests of the community of Santa Monica ... But the court will go down there as what’s called a ‘dedicated court,’ meaning it’s going to be a Santa Monica misdemeanor court only.”

“This, like the drug court, really works. When you can connect with somebody heart to heart — rather than with a club over their head.”

— BERNARD KAMINS
Santa Monica Superior Court Judge

Lefkowitz said officials are exploring possibly holding some arraignments by video conference, meaning less expense for local police, prosecutors and public defenders, who would have to commute with the suspected criminals to the Airport Courthouse. Still, Lefkowitz acknowledged the move’s announcement had caused waves in the courthouse.

“I know I’ve given (Judge Kamins) some disappointment about this, and I feel very badly about that,” said Judge Lefkowitz, who praised his judicial work.

But the bottom line, Lefkowitz added, is the move is near certain.

“Let me put it this way: It is highly probable, if not

definite, that the cases will be moved to the Airport Courthouse,” she said Tuesday. “We had considered this for some time, because we are now dependent on state funding ... We have to reduce our security costs county-wide by \$4 million by the end of this fiscal year, by July.”

Parachini said despite the costs and other negative effects to the local community, the move must be made.

“In each community where that has happened, the local law enforcement folks have complained that that’s a hardship for them — and we agree, that is a hardship for them,” he said. “The problem for us is we have to operate a system that has 2.6 million new filings each year and something on the order of 7,000 to 8,000 criminal trials a year.”

Parachini said the decision to move Santa Monica’s criminal courtroom also was prompted by a construction project currently underway there that forces inmates in custody to be funneled outside, through a public area, and back into a secure “lockup facility.”

“Something had to give,” he said.

Santa Monica Police Department Lt. Frank Fabrega said it’s unclear how much it will cost City Hall to transfer the prisoners to the newer, larger courthouse near LAX.

“It’s too early to say what the cost will be,” he said. “We anticipate that it may have a dramatic affect on the budget, but we’re still looking into various options.”

Fabrega said while busy times can require dozens of “custody transfers” in a single day, the average is typically 14. But because felony and misdemeanor prisoners can’t be transferred together, the police might have to make as many as four trips each day to transport prisoners. Currently, the SMPD owns only one vehicle to transport groups of prisoners.

Judge Kamins, who lives in Malibu, declined to comment on whether he would make the move to the Airport Courthouse. He reiterated how much he values the courtroom as well as the attorneys that regularly work in it. And he also praised workers at the Airport Courthouse but indicated commuting there would be difficult and time consuming.

City Attorney Marsha Moutrie, an avid First Amendment supporter, echoed many of the concerns of Judge Kamins. She too will be involved in the meeting March 3.

“The thing that I’m concerned about ... is the impact upon this community of losing what amounts to a community courthouse that processes violations of local law,” she said.

SM City Hall poised to enforce 2002 law

FEEDINGS, from page 1

About 40 people gathered in front of City Hall on Tuesday to take advantage of food offered by a Venice-based organization called “Food Not Bombs.” No police were present, and it appeared as though the group was allowed to distribute food with no citations from the city or the county health department.

Some council members voted for curbing meal programs in the parks to force the charitable organizations to link their programs with city-funded social service agencies.

City officials say the ordinance doesn’t create any new barriers to food lines. Rather, it allows for laws that are already on the books to be enforced.

However, many volunteers of various food distribution programs said they don’t believe the city is trying to protect the health of the homeless with its new law. They believe the city enacted its ordinance to help clear the city of its homeless.

The National Lawyers Guild plans to appeal the ruling.

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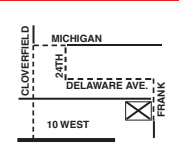
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STATE

State law gives latitude in using campaign funds

SPENDING, from page 1

ed officials broad latitude in how they use their donors' money. It requires that campaign funds be used for an election or governmental purpose and bars officials from tapping their campaign accounts for personal expenses outside of politics.

But determining what constitutes personal use can be tricky, said Robert Stern, former general counsel for the Fair Political Practices Commission, the state's campaign watchdog.

"I think it has to be fairly blatant before it's personal use," said Stern, who now serves as president of the Los Angeles-based Center for Governmental Studies. "You can pretty well justify most expenditures."

Jim Knox, executive director of California Common Cause, a campaign reform group, agreed the law gives public officials a great deal of leeway in how they spend campaign money.

"I think it's really an issue between the candidate and his or her donors whether there is a breach of faith in how they spend their donors' money," he said.

Despite voter-approved contribution limits, California legislators managed to raise about \$35 million in campaign donations in 2003 even though most of them don't face tough election campaigns this year.

That figure doesn't include the \$2.3 million that state Sen. Tom McClintock, R-Northridge, raised for his unsuccessful campaign for governor in last year's recall election.

As far as Stern is concerned, lawmakers have too much campaign money. "The problem is these guys don't have any election problems so they use it for other purposes than their elections, like trips to Las Vegas with their staffs."

Legislators tapped campaign funds for at least \$513,000 last year to cover their travel costs. The total probably was more than that because some campaign finance reports did not provide a breakdown of legislators' travel spending.

Most lawmakers spent only a few hundred or a few thousand dollars in campaign money for travel, and 22 reported using no campaign money at all for their travel. But 18 tapped campaign accounts to cover more than \$10,000 of their travel-related expenditures.

The state will pay at least part of the cost of lawmakers' travel between their districts and the Capitol. Legislators who live close enough can commute using a state-leased car and gasoline credit card.

For those who need to fly, the state will pay for one trip a week — sometimes two

"Going to Vegas was kind of a matter of getting out of Sacramento."

— HERB WESSON
State assemblyman

if there is a compelling legislative purpose — at a flat rate, said Greg Schmidt, the Senate's secretary. Legislators whose airfare exceeds the rate have to pony up the difference, either from campaign accounts or their own pockets.

Lawmakers also traveled as far as Iceland, Cuba, Peru and Taiwan in 2003. About 15 went to Hawaii for an annual conference put on by the California Correctional Peace Officers Association, according to CCPOA Vice President Lance Corcoran.

Sen. Dede Alpert, D-San Diego, was one of three lawmakers who went to Iceland for what she said is best described as an exchange visit with government officials there. The Icelandic government paid for her accommodations, and she used campaign funds to cover her airfare.

"We never use any state money for any of these trips," she said. "You wind up being (questioned whether) this is worthwhile enough to use government funds."

Such trips are educational and an appropriate use of campaign money, she says, although she acknowledges there is a personal benefit too.

"I enjoy it I admit," she said. "I like going and seeing other places and seeing how they may do their education (system) or how they do their energy issues. It's an enjoyable way of learning."

Calderon, D-Covina, and Chavez, D-La Puente, both said their use of campaign money for the Las Vegas retreats was justified and had a valuable political purpose.

"It was the first one we did in the three years I've been in office," said Chavez. "The Capitol and district staffs had never met before. This was an opportunity to work cooperatively."

"We did a lot of team building and bonding and a lot of learning in terms of how to be more effective," said Calderon.

Stern said "staff retreats are important, but our staff retreats are down the block. We have a nice lunch and that's it."

Calderon acknowledged his retreat could have been held at a less expensive location in California, but he said his district and Capitol staffs wanted to go to Las Vegas and that the gambling Mecca "offered an environment with both conference facilities and activities for socializing."

"This was a one-time, special, team-building conference that was perfectly within accepted campaign practices," he said, adding that many of his donors had told him they didn't object to him spending campaign money on the trip.

Altogether, Calderon spent nearly \$30,000 last year on Las Vegas trips, including a \$3,200-per-donor fund-raiser last May at the Mandalay Bay Hotel that enabled contributors to watch an Oscar de la Hoya fight.

"I wanted to do something memorable," he said. "I made a good profit on it and everybody who went had a great time."

Nevertheless, he ended up spending about \$71,000 more than he raised in 2003.

Assemblyman Herb Wesson, who stepped down as Assembly speaker Feb. 9, also spent campaign money for a Las Vegas trip last year. While there, he met with advisers to discuss his career goals and also had meetings with some campaign contributors and the speaker of the Nevada Assembly, said spokesman Richard Stapler.

"Going to Vegas was kind of a matter of getting out of Sacramento," he added.

Calderon, Chavez and Assemblyman Jerome Horton, D-Inglewood, dug deep into their campaign funds to help relatives in local election races.

Calderon gave more than \$20,000 to help his sister-in-law, Marcella Calderon, the wife of former Assemblyman Tom Calderon, win re-election to the Montebello school board.

"I'm a parent," he said. "I think she's good for the district whether she's my family member or not."

Chavez and Horton loaned or contributed larger amounts to help their spouses win a seat on the La Puente City Council and to become Inglewood's city clerk.

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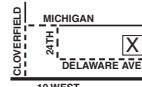


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- Attend the Bank night 2 weeks before the event (Bring the money raised by your team)
- Create a team name and select your team's campsite
- Be enthusiastic and urge team members to Fundraiser: Most of the money will come from fundraising.

The next team captain's meeting for Relay For Life will be held at Santa Monica Place in the Community Room located on the 3rd floor. The meeting will be on Thursday, February 26, 2004, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Parking is free.

Teams are forming now!

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Deduction time: Homeowners have a lot to write off



DAYS ON THE MARKET

By Jodi Summers

Nobody likes paying taxes, but some households can take more deductions than others. If you are a homeowner, you have the opportunity to take some special tax deductions that are not available to renters. If you own a home or are thinking about buying or selling, take a look at some of the perks the IRS offers so you can save yourself money.

1) Deduct your mortgage interest.

Homeowners get the perk of deducting all of the interest they pay on mortgage balances of \$1 million or less (\$500,000 if married filing separately).

Tax director John Battaglia of Deloitte & Touche's Private Client Advisors Group pointed out that if you're in the 30 percent tax bracket and can afford \$1,000 a month for your home before you take mortgage interest into account, that amount is actual-

ly \$1,240 after taxes. If you figure \$800 of that \$1,000 payment is mortgage interest, as it can be in the early years of your mortgage, you'll get 30 percent of that \$800 back from the IRS, or \$240. And so, a new homeowner can actually afford a \$1,240 payment.

2) Maximize your home office deductions.

If you have your own business and run it regularly and exclusively from your home, you can deduct certain home office costs. If you have a home office, you can deduct your utilities, repairs, maintenance and other upkeep-related expenses. New furniture or equipment for the office are deductible for the tax year when they are physically installed (not just purchased) by Dec. 31. These deductions can all be taken on IRS Schedule C.

3) Have a home equity loan? Deduct the interest.

The amount of interest you pay on a home equity loan up to \$100,000 is always deductible.

"It doesn't matter what you spend that loan on," Battaglia said. "You can go out and borrow \$100,000 against your home,

spend it on anything, even a vacation — and you can deduct the full amount of interest you pay on that loan."

4) If you refinance your mortgage, deduct the points.

"When you refinance, you may end up paying a mortgage point — that amount is fully deductible, spread out over the life of the loan," said tax agent Tony Bardi.

"Points" are chunks of the mortgage interest that are paid up front rather than over the life of the loan. Lenders might offer points in exchange for a lower interest rate overall. If you previously refinanced your mortgage and were deducting points over the life of the loan, you can deduct the remaining amount in the year you refinanced again.

5) Prepay your January mortgage installment.

"If my clients are looking to get a little extra deduction, I tell them to pay their January mortgage installment in early December, so that it's credited by Dec. 31," offers Bardi. "That way they can deduct the interest on that payment as well."

Be advised, you can't just mail a check by the 31st — the payment needs to be

processed by that time. If this deduction interests you, call your lender and ask when they'll need to receive your check in order for them to process it by the end of the year.

6) Ensure your property tax payment is processed by Dec. 31.

Pay the second half of your property taxes in December. If the state has processed your check before the end of the year, then you can deduct your tax payment.

7) Is a 1031 exchange right for you?

This rule does not apply to your primary residence, but it's a great perk for those with business and investment properties. According to IRS Code 1031, you can swap similar properties and defer any tax payment. If you have a rental property worth \$200,000 and want to exchange it for another income property of equal or greater property, you can do so without paying capital gains tax.

Be sure to talk to your accountant to see which benefits are right for you.

(For your real estate needs, e-mail Jodi Summers at jodis@boardwalkrealty.com, or call (310) 309-4219).

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02/17/2004	Lot Size: 6,028	Sold Price: \$775,000	Pool Bath: 1.75	02/18/2004	Lot Size: 12,980	Sold Price: \$2,450,000	Pool Bath: 4	02/17/2004	HOD: \$478	Sold Price: \$775,000	Pool Bath: 2
SOLD 2621 2ND ST SANTA MONICA 90405				SOLD 1512 HARVARD ST #4 SANTA MONICA 90404				SOLD 1007 OCEAN AVE #PH1 SANTA MONICA 90403			
Date Sold	SqFt: N/A	List Price: \$1,300,000	Bed: 1	Date Sold	SqFt: 982	List Price: \$395,000	Bed: 2	Date Sold	SqFt: 1,996	List Price: \$1,600,000	Bed: 2
02/18/2004	Lot Size: 6,494	Sold Price: \$1,350,000	Bath: 2	02/18/2004	HOD: \$176	Sold Price: \$446,000	Bath: 1.5	02/19/2004	HOD: \$874	Sold Price: \$1,600,000	Pool Bath: 2
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Date Sold	SqFt: 4,027	List Price: \$2,169,000	Bed: 3	Date Sold	SqFt: 1,335	List Price: \$459,000	Bed: 4	Date Sold	SqFt: 3,800	List Price: \$1,739,000	#Units: 5
02/18/2004	Lot Size: 2,944	Sold Price: \$2,155,500	Bath: 3.5	02/19/2004	HOD: \$229	Sold Price: \$465,000	Bath: 2	02/19/2004	Lot Size: 6,612	Sold Price: \$1,675,000	GRM: 13.60
SOLD 1321 PALISADES BEACH RD SANTA MONICA 90401				SOLD 943 14TH ST #1 SANTA MONICA 90403							
Date Sold	SqFt: N/A	List Price: \$2,195,000	Bed: 3	Date Sold	SqFt: N/A	List Price: \$679,000	Bed: 2	Jodi Summers at Boardwalk Realty 310.309.4219 • jodis@boardwalkrealty.com			
02/19/2004	Lot Size: 2,495	Sold Price: \$2,175,000	Bath: 3	02/18/2004	HOD: \$400	Sold Price: \$660,000	Pool Bath: 1.75				



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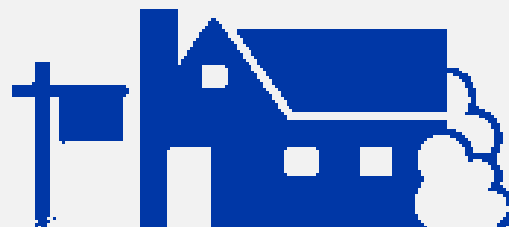
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IN YOUR SPACE

By Christina S. Porter

As the leasing market slowly improves at its turtle's pace toward equilibrium, the following information might be less of a concern than it was in the late '90s. Nevertheless, it's still good advice. According to Marc L. Ripp, Esq., who wrote an article for the "Commercial Lease Law Insider" in March 2004, there is a "cure" for those chronic lease violators. Chronic lease violators are the lessees who commit the same lease violation over and over again. But they always remedy the violation before it becomes a default.

Mr. Ripp suggests adding a "chronic

violations" clause to your lease, which allows you to act swiftly to rid yourself of a troublesome tenant. The clause effectively makes a lease violation a default with no cure period if the tenant commits the same violation more than a certain number of times over a 12-month period. It allows you to immediately exercise your remedies. A significant loophole in this scenario is that most leases require that you send the tenant written notice before it allows you to exercise the remedies as they are spelled out in the lease. As most owners know, this will force you to waste valuable time and money sending out the notice, defeating one purpose of the clause. If you do not send the notice, you might lose the right to utilize the remedies.

Mr. Ripp cited the following example: The rent non-payment clause in a certain owner's lease said that the tenant would violate the lease if he didn't pay rent with-

in 10 days after notice. The lease also had a chronic violations clause that made it a lease default if the tenant committed two violations of the rent non-payment clause within a two-month period. One month the tenant paid his utility bill late — and more than 10 days after it received a late notice from the owner. The next month he paid his rent late. The owner immediately started an eviction action. The tenant argued that the owner couldn't evict him because the owner hadn't sent notice of the second lease violation. The owner argued that notice wasn't required before he could exercise his rights under the chronic violations clause. The court ruled that because the owner hadn't notified the tenant of the second violation, he couldn't evict the tenant. The court noted that the chronic violations clause incorporated the notice requirement that was in the rent non-payment clause.

Mr. Ripp suggests that in order to avoid the same fate as the owner just described,

it might be wise to add to your chronic violations clause that you are not required to give the tenant notice before exercising your rights. He also suggests the following "model lease language" be added to your chronic violations clause: "Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, if tenant is in default under any covenant, condition, or agreement of this lease more than (insert number of times) within any twelve (12) month period, irrespective of whether or not such default is cured, landlord, at its sole election, in its sole and absolute discretion, and without notice to tenant may (insert your own list of remedies).

It is very important that you consult your legal counsel prior to adding or subtracting any language to an existing lease.

(Christina S. Porter is a senior associate at NAI Capital Commercial Real Estate, where she specializes in leasing and selling office and industrial buildings).

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NATIONAL

Government opens case against former Qwest executives

BY CATHERINE TSAI
AP Business Writer

DENVER — Four former Qwest Communications executives offered varying defenses against charges they helped the company improperly log \$34 million in revenue, with at least one contending he was turned into a scapegoat, as their trial got under way.

The government opened its fraud trial against the men Monday. In opening statements, Assistant U.S. Attorney William Leone said the defendants devised a scheme for Qwest to improperly book a 2001 computer equipment sale to Arizona school officials, hoping to meet lofty revenue targets and help their own performance reviews and bonuses.

They then allegedly conspired to hide the facts from then-auditor Arthur Andersen and regulators, Leone told jurors.

"We believe the evidence will show the defendants broke important rules about revenue recognition and reporting revenue at Qwest, and then the defendants lied about what they had done," Leone said. "It's just that simple."

Former executives Grant Graham, Thomas Hall, John Walker and Bryan Treadway have pleaded innocent to securities fraud, wire fraud and other charges. They face years in jail and millions of dollars in fines if convicted.

Attorneys for Graham, Hall and Walker said their clients relied on accounting and legal experts at Qwest in their work on the Arizona deal.

Treadway, meanwhile, had objected to proposed parts of the deal, his attorney Steve Cowen said. Cowen said his client's advice regarding the transaction was not followed and that documents were changed without his knowledge.

Hall's attorney Jeff Springer said prosecutors were rushing to go after someone for all the financial turmoil suffered by investors, and that the case was not as prosecutors had presented it.

"This is about a cold, calculating corporation offering up as a sacrifice and scapegoat an honest, decent employee so that the corporation would not end up being a defendant," Springer said.

The case is the first stemming from investigations that ultimately forced Qwest Communications International Inc.

to erase \$2.5 billion in revenue from its books and prompted former chief executive Joseph Nacchio to quit under pressure in 2002. The trial is expected to last a month.

The charges center on accounting practices from the second quarter of 2001 from a \$100 million deal Qwest had with the Arizona School Facilities Board.

The board hired Denver-based Qwest to build a network for Internet access to schools statewide. The four men are accused of hurrying to get equipment for the project delivered by the end of the quarter so revenue could be booked right away — in violation of generally accepted accounting rules — and then claiming Arizona officials wanted it done that way.

The men allegedly ordered equipment Arizona officials hadn't agreed to buy and of keeping a warehouse open on a Saturday, the final day of the quarter, to make

it appear the material was received on time.

The defendants and four other former Qwest executives also have been sued by the Securities and Exchange Commission, which says they inflated Qwest revenues by about \$144 million in 2000 and 2001 to meet promises of double-digit revenue growth. That civil lawsuit is on hold until the criminal trial is over.

No other criminal charges have been announced against the company or any of its employees involving accounting irregularities, though prosecutors said the probe is continuing.

Defense attorneys have suggested key prosecution witnesses, including former Qwest employee Douglas Hutchins, may have been offered immunity for their cooperation.

Area in Las Vegas scouting for water

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Drought has Southern Nevada's regional water authority scouting for new supplies and considering a \$1 billion-plus pipeline that would be the area's largest public works project since the Hoover Dam.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority is looking to the rugged desert landscape north of Las Vegas, with officials predicting more than a million people might one day be served by water from the Muddy and Virgin rivers and the mountains and valleys of southeast Nevada.

Tapping that supply would require environmental approvals, cooperation with the affected counties and the go-ahead from the Nevada state engineer, who is responsible for

ensuring that new wells do not threaten existing groundwater supplies.

It might also require a pipeline from the Virgin River, a massive project the water authority began studying last summer.

"Because of the drought, we are accelerating, big time, the evaluation of our options," said Kay Brothers, water authority deputy general manager. "We're looking at these things. The environmental permitting of this is going to be a huge issue."

The first relatively small step is under way. The water authority has drilled a test well in Coyote Springs, site of a proposed community on the Clark-Lincoln County line, to comply with an order from State Engineer Hugh Ricci.

The test pumping is expected to pro-

duce about 10,000 acre-feet of water a year — enough for a similar number of families, or about 50,000 people.

If the test well shows water can be drawn from the ground for at least two years without hurting the environment or existing wells in the region, then Ricci could allow the new pumps to become permanent.

Until then, the 10,000 acre-feet will go to the Moapa Valley Water District system. Drilling the test wells and the short pipeline from Coyote Springs to the Moapa Valley Water District system will cost an estimated \$33 million, Brothers said.

That project should go to bid in May. Brothers said the water authority hopes to be able to pipe about 36,000 acre-feet of water a year to Las Vegas by about 2011.



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Sharon, Qureia trade condemnations

By The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon accused the Palestinian premier of heading a “government of murder and lies” that is incapable of negotiating a peace deal with Israel, according to an interview published Tuesday.

The harsh criticism appeared to set the stage for Sharon to push forward with his plan to dismantle some settlements and impose a boundary on the Palestinians if peace efforts prove fruitless in the coming months.

Sharon's comments came in response to Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia's condemnation of a suicide bombing of an Israeli bus Sunday that killed eight passengers. Qureia, also known as Abu Ala, criticized the bombing, “especially its timing and place,” saying it hurt efforts to persuade the world court at The Hague to rule against the separation barrier Israel is building in the West Bank.

Israel says the barrier is needed to keep out bombers. The Palestinians “expressed regret about the timing of the attack because it could hurt them at The Hague,” Sharon was quoting as telling the Yediot Ahronot daily. “The government of Abu Ala is a government of murder and lies. With such a government it is impossible to reach any agreement.”

Iraqi leaders seek faster elections

By The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraqi leaders said Tuesday they want to start immediately on planning elections, after the United Nations estimated that it would take eight

months to organize a nationwide ballot.

In the meantime, U.N. officials must offer a new method for choosing the provisional government due to take power from the U.S.-led coalition on June 30, a prominent Shiite Muslim party said. Shiites led the push for elections before the handover date, but the U.N. report issued Monday said the country couldn't hold elections until at least January 2005.

“If there is no election ... then who is going to take over sovereignty from the Coalition Authority? The Iraqi people need to know,” said Hamed al-Bayati, a spokesman for the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, which holds a seat in the current, temporary Iraq administration.

But the United Nations believes it's up to the Iraqis to come up with a formula for establishing a provisional government.

U.N. envoy Lakhdar Brahimi said Monday the world body, if asked, would help come up with an alternative to the original American plan to pick a new government using regional caucuses, a formula that Iraq's powerful Shiite clergy rejected as illegitimate and that now most of the 25-member Governing Council opposes.

Stewart's business manager testifies

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Weeks before Martha Stewart sold her ImClone Systems stock, her stockbroker mentioned his desire to get rid of her shares before they fell to \$60, a Stewart business manager testified Monday.

The testimony by Heidi DeLuca undercuts the government's charge that Stewart and the broker dreamed up the \$60 price floor later, as a cover story.

DeLuca, testifying for the defense, said that stockbroker Peter Bacanovic told her on Nov. 8, 2001, that he could “set a floor price of \$60 or \$61” for Stewart's ImClone shares.

“He said he would speak to Martha about it personally,” DeLuca said. The conversation would have been long before Stewart dumped her shares on Dec. 27, 2001.

Also Monday, U.S. District Judge Miriam Goldman Cedarbaum put off a ruling on whether to throw out any charges in the case.

The judge has appeared intrigued by the possibility of throwing out the most serious charge against Stewart — securities fraud — which accuses her of deceiving investors in her media conglomerate, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, when she publicly proclaimed her innocence.

The judge has called that charge “novel” and “the most problematic” of the five counts each against Stewart and Bacanovic.

Bush jumps into the fray

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush, casting aside his desire to appear above the political fray, struck back at his Democratic critics, portraying presidential front-runner John Kerry as a waffler and warning that Democrats would raise taxes, expand government and fail to lead decisively on national security.

Bush had hung back for months, despite constant pummeling by the Democratic presidential candidates. But he leveled his sharpest criticism yet at his rivals in a speech Monday night. Bush recalled terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, signaling his willingness to use the strikes for political gain, which his aides long had promised would not be done.

Kerry, a senator from Massachusetts, found himself fending off both Bush and his chief rival, fellow Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina.

Bush, meanwhile, has prepared ads for an advertising onslaught that is to start March 4.

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Obituaries

BEULAH "BILLIE" J. Mc Ferrin Passed away in Santa Monica on Thursday, February 19 2004. Billie was born in Detroit, Michigan on May 18, 1923. She is survived by three sons; Bill Karlee of Santa Clarita, Jim Wilson of Simi Valley, and David McFerrin & his wife Beverly of Clovis, CA., two grandsons & two granddaughters She believed in the Lord, family, friends & fun. A grave side service will be Thursday February 26, 2004 at 12:00 noon at Green Hills Memorial Cemetery. Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Green Hills Memorial in Rancho Palos Verdes, Ca.

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Daily Press Classifieds

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— Christine Cohen

"I've gotten great response from my ad and a lot of jobs. You provide wonderful customer service and your rates are well within my budget. Dealing with nice people is always a pleasure."

— Frank, Realistic Roofing

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— Howard Greenburg, Howard Management group

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— Diego Guida

"Recently I placed an advertisement for employment for my restaurant located on the Promenade. The response I received was tremendous. This was my first experience with Santa Monica Daily Press. Mitch Troy made my experience easy and pleasurable and I will not hesitate to call Mitch for any future advertisement needs. Thank you Daily Press for all your help."

— Jim Rickwalt, Johnnie's Italian Restaurant

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\$19.95**

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Must mention this ad at time of write up. Taxes extra.
Expires 6/30/04

**4-wheel alignment
& Tire Inspection
\$69.95**

Check and adjust camber and toe. Check tread depth and condition all four tires. Additional parts and labor may be required on some vehicles. See Service Advisor for details.

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**10%
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SERVICE BILL**

Bring this coupon to your Service Advisor and receive the above savings applied to your entire service bill, when it does not include services listed on this ad.

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