

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

16, 15, 3, 30, 18

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 8, 2, 7

Evening picks: 6, 4, 8

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 11, Money Bags

2nd Place: 12, Lucky Charms

3rd Place: 8, Gorgeous George

Race Time: 1:49.91



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Ariel Alonso, who lives near Roanoke, Va., was indignant when the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration wrongly accused him of setting up a methamphetamine lab, and asked rhetorically, after the charges were dropped in January, "How do I get my ... dignity back?" The laboratory of Alonso (and his then-partner Jonathan Conrad) was in reality making the so-called "fluid of life," which they goaded customers into buying (at \$20 to \$40 a dose) by claiming that it is the component of human cells and can cleanse people internally and build new tissue, even though it was just potassium chloride and white grape juice. (That, apparently, is the business plan that gave Alonso "dignity.")

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Show me a good loser and I will show you an idiot."

— Leo Durocher

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Kerry makes merry in SM

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — Striking grocery store workers got a morale boost Thursday afternoon when presidential hopeful John Kerry paid a visit to a Vons parking lot, reassuring the picketers that securing affordable health care for all citizens is his top priority.

"Your fight may end soon, but this fight is just beginning in the United States for everybody," said Kerry, the Democratic frontrunner this election season.

Though rumors circulated Thursday of a possible settlement to the grocery store strike, none had been announced by presstime. The workers are fighting to maintain health benefits and wages, something the large grocery store corporations had threatened to scale back last year.

Kerry spoke to about 250 strikers and reporters in front of the supermarket at Lincoln Boulevard and Broadway. Last week, 11 activists were arrested at the same store as part of a civil disobedience demonstration designed to show support for the workers.

Tom Hancock, 48, a Vons cashier, said the media attention has been a boost for workers, who are approaching five months of walking the picket line.

"That felt great," said Hancock, a picket captain. "In

See KERRY, page 5



Photo courtesy

Presidential candidate John Kerry paid an impromptu visit on Thursday to Vons at Lincoln Boulevard and Broadway, meeting with grocery store picketers. The Democrat told strikers securing affordable health care for all is his top priority.

Curb appeal: Parking comes at a price

Who will shoulder burden for more spots?

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — An ambitious plan to add nearly 2,000 parking spaces downtown over the course of the next decade is mov-

ing forward, but who will ultimately foot the bill remains to be seen.

The costs will most likely be passed on to drivers, as well as developers and business owners, who operate in the downtown area.

The plan was signed off by the City Council in 2002 after nearly a year of research and discussion by

a task force specifically created to address the shortage of downtown parking. A consultant was hired for \$150,000 to help the task force find potential parking places and figure out how to finance them.

It's estimated that the additions will cost about \$72.5 million, which would be self-financed through revenue bonds paid for by

increasing parking fees and downtown property assessments.

The plan would add 1,712 new parking spaces from Fifth Street to the Third Street Promenade. By rebuilding and retrofitting existing parking garages, 2,931 current spaces will be upgraded. The new spaces will come from rebuilding

See PARKING, page 6

Suspected coke dealer busted in morning raid

By Daily Press staff

OCEAN PARK — A SWAT Team raided the apartment of a suspected coke dealer Thursday morning, taking the man into custody before a throng of curious and unsuspecting neighbors.

The arrest capped a three-week investigation into Lee Cox, 37, who lives in a beachside apartment at Ocean Avenue and Pacific Street. An unspecified amount of marijuana and cocaine were found on Cox and in his apartment, police said.

"They found out that this guy was supplying narcotics to the Brentwood area," said Los

Angeles Police Department Officer April Harding, a spokeswoman. The LAPD oversaw the investigation and made the arrest.

Seven police cruisers — three unmarked — were parked in front of Cox's complex during the 9 a.m. raid.

Residents of the building appeared shaken by the police action. Officers donned helmets and bullet-resistant vests, and carried rifles. None of the residents interviewed knew their neighbor was being monitored by police.

Cox was standing out in front of the building when officers arrived. He hugged a female companion, who was crying. Police then

approached Cox, handcuffed him and sat him in a patrol car. Officers brought a small backpack out from the suspect's apartment, placed it in his car — a white sedan — and drove the car away from the building. The woman declined to comment.

During and after the raid, senior citizens living in the Ocean House, a retirement home directly to the north, could be seen watching from their windows. Residents of Cox's building who managed to get out of their apartments amid the raid watched from across the street.

— John Wood

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Team Captains Wanted!



3rd Annual Santa Monica Relay For Life Santa Monica College, Corsair Field July 24 and July 25, 2004

The Team Captain is a leader who forms a team, works with the Relay Committee, and is the central organizing person for their team and for the Relay event itself. We need team captains to make this relay work!!!!

Team Captains responsibilities:

- Organize a team of 15-20 people and distribute team member's packets
- Attend the Captain's meetings (there will probably be 2 including one where registration fees will be collected)
- 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!

For more information: Please call LaShawndra Pace at the
American Cancer Society (310) 348-0356 option 3/ext. 246 or
lashawndra.pace@cancer.org



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The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Speak your mind and say what you feel. Don't be surprised by the reactions you get, and don't take another's response personally. Confusion runs amok in the late afternoon. Plans change. Get out of work ASAP! Listen to your instincts. Tonight: Out and about.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Expenses could be overwhelming, encouraging you to pull out of a commitment or adventure with friends. Even though you might startle others, take care of your interests. Bosses and authority figures in general are touchy right now. Your creativity runs unusually high. Tonight: Fun can be inexpensive.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ You're all smiles — finally — though you will go through your paces right now. Unexpected professional developments could put you behind schedule. Consider just how much you need to do and when you can scurry out the door. Last-minute requests come in. Tonight: Remember that it is the weekend.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ News could quickly put you out of sorts. You might feel best just closing your door and screening calls. Make it OK to vanish. Sometimes, by doing nothing, situations will work themselves out. Wishing might help. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Review a matter that is close to your heart. Someone pursues an unpredictable path. Use special caution with funds and a partnership. Your creativity surges in a new direction when you brainstorm with others. Gather with friends later in the day and at night. Tonight: Togetherness works.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ You're in charge, whether you like it or not. Others differ with you and let you know it in no uncertain terms. Stay on top of work despite confusion, which in some strange manner revitalizes your energy. Regroup. Tonight: In the limelight.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Your ability to visualize more of what you want helps you get it. You have the surprising ability to see through the maze with your work and daily life. Don't make anything more complicated than necessary. Tonight: Split work and start the weekend, please.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Where you might have counted on your creativity to bypass a problem with finances and a partnership, your solutions will backfire. Know when to pull in the experts and say that you don't know. Let someone else problem-solve. Express your caring to a special person in your life. Tonight: Togetherness works.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You could be more aggravated than anything else when dealing with family and others in general. How you handle a situation could make or break you. Perhaps "hands off" a problem might work best, allowing everyone to look at his or her role in a situation. Tonight: Go along with another's ideas.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You might be hard-pressed to deal with the unexpected in your daily life. You could find that someone close is unpredictable and quite upsetting, or could it be that you are developing those patterns of behavior? Tonight: Go home, lock the door and relax.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ You might be jolted by what a risk brings. Investigate what works for you, and refuse to veer off that course, even if you are tempted. The present situation triggers unusual creativity and mental energy. Tonight: Let go of problems and dance the night away.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You could get a sequence of jolts. But realistically, who triggered all this activity? Take responsibility and handle a situation with strength and direction. Cocoon if you feel the need. Who could blame you? Tonight: Follow Capricorn's message.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

International flavor on the catwalk

By Daily Press staff

Franklin Elementary School is having its Third Annual Multicultural Faire on Sunday.

The event for the first time will introduce "The Wealth of Nations Foundation and Embrace," a nonprofit entity helping youth and specifically targeting at-risk youth. The organization will present a fashion show featuring Santa Monica High School students modeling clothes from throughout the world.

Renowned singer Joy Graysen will begin the event singing the national anthem, followed by a new song about diversity, called "Greater than the Sun."

It will be an international potluck with performances, arts and crafts, and an international exhibit room showing that will take place throughout the day.

Giving credit when it's due

By Daily Press staff

A top city official was recently credentialed as a manager.

Assistant City Manager Gordon Anderson recently received the "International City/County Management Association Credentialed Manager designation." Anderson is one of 735 local government management professionals who are credentialed through the ICMA voluntary credentialing program.

To be credentialed by ICMA, a member must have significant experience as a senior management executive in local government, have earned a degree, preferably in public administration or a related field, and demonstrated a commitment to high standards of integrity and to lifelong learning and professional development.

Anderson is qualified by 22 years of professional local government executive

See BRIEFS, page 5

Going with the flow



Nicky Five Aces/ Special to the Daily Press

A man braves the pounding rain around 1 a.m. Thursday morning along Fourth Street and Arizona Avenue.

surf report

The WNW swell is past its peak today, but will offer up some sizeable surf, especially in the morning. Many exposed winter breaks are still in the head high to a couple of feet+ overhead range.

OUTLOOK: Look for a steady fade in surf through the day. Conditions will be slightly better. Winds are light and variable to light onshore up to 10 knots in the morning, building out of the NW in the 8-15 knot range for the afternoon.

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

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58°

	LOW TIDES		HIGH TIDES	
	LOW ONE	LOW TWO	HIGH ONE	HIGH TWO
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SUNDAY	3:45 AM	4:36 PM	9:48 AM	11:02 PM
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
THURSDAY	8:03 AM	6:48 PM	12:59 AM	1:47 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

He who cast the first cherry

Editor:

Ed Silverstein's big complaint in his latest column, (SMDP, Feb. 25, page 4), is that Mel Gibson cherry-picked certain Gospel passages that backed up what he wanted to say. He further emphasizes that the Gospels were written several decades after the crucifixion, implying that they might not be accurate.

Given the fact that the movie came out this week (and not several decades ago) Silverstein has the opportunity to be much more accurate. There are literally hundreds of expert sources to choose from this week from TV, print and radio. Silverstein has the opportunity to show us how a fair depiction of a major event is done.

So did he present a balanced and fair account of what experts say about "The Passion?" No. In his effort to crucify the film, he didn't give one source that supported "The Passion," only sources that support his biased slant.

Silverstein plays the anti-Semite card without pointing out that most Jewish leaders do not consider the film, nor Gibson, to be anti-Semitic (Dennis Prager, Michael Medved and several Jewish experts on Diane Sawyer's interview with Mel, to name but a few).

Furthermore, all Christian leaders have gone out of their way to say that the Jews are not to blame, but rather that Jesus died for all our sins.

Seems to me, Silverstein is guilty of the very cherry picking that you rant against.

Eric Cooper
Santa Monica

Nail all religions to the cross

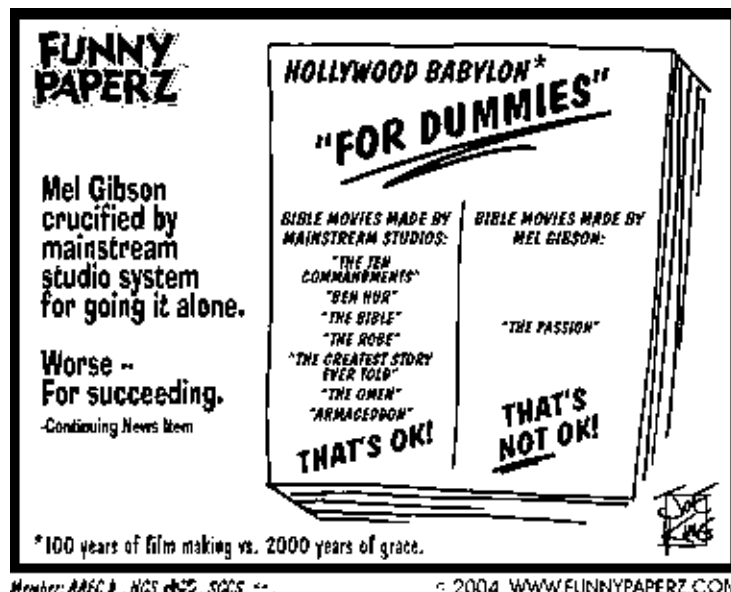
Editor:

I wonder if Ed Silverstein realizes that his belittling of Mel Gibson's particular beliefs might help bring about the very anti-Semitism he fears (SMDP, Feb. 25, page 4). I, on the other hand, a nonbeliever, will now belittle each of the big three religions — Islam, Judaism and Christianity (written here in random order). The author James Mitchener once wrote that the big three religions were born of the desert, during unenlightened, desperate times when people were yearning for salvation from slavery and persecution. Dead religions. They should really have no place in this modern secular world. Think of all we have learned since those times!

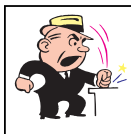
If you try hard enough you will find what you are looking for, whether it is a burning bush or somebody descending to earth with some important news. Whether it is the Christian right imposing their moral views on others, or fanatical Jewish settlers living in illegal settlements they say God gave them, or radical Islamics railing against secularism and mistreating their own women, I see it all as a form of self-induced medieval mental illness. Why can't they be more mellow, like the Buddhists seem to be? And today — like the occasional whale that persists in beaching itself, somehow

certain of a body of water just ahead — us humans plod on fighting against each other in the name of our own version of God seeking salvation at the expense of others. I personally don't care who killed Christ. Most of the world would have been better off if he died of old age ... no martyrdom. That is why we want Osama bin Ladin alive. We don't need him as a martyr, do we? I am sick of religion. But if I were religious, I would like to think I would not publicly criticize another person's beliefs. It is just adding fuel to the fire, the misery so much of the world still faces today. I believe in the freedom of religion, and I also believe in the freedom from religion. Religion stops at my doorstep. I also will probably not go see Mel Gibson's film. I don't like violent movies. I take one look at a movie poster and it shows someone standing there with a gun, I pass by. And now I can say the same thing about movies with people being nailed to crosses.

John Gorman
Santa Monica



Additional booze flow in Bayside is sobering thought



MY WRITE

By Bill Bauer

Next Wednesday evening, the Santa Monica Planning Commission will consider text amendment changes to the zoning ordinance, municipal code and Bayside District Specific Plan — which will make it easier for downtown restaurants to sell alcohol.

The recommendations, originally drawn up by the blue ribbon Promenade Uses Task Force, were approved last April by the Board of Directors of the Bayside District Corp., the city-subsidized, non-profit corporation responsible for overseeing the downtown commercial area.

While some of the recommended changes seem to be steps in the right direction towards keeping the Third Street Promenade and the downtown Bayside District fresh, diverse and attractive, others are self-serving and don't protect the public interest.

Presently, restaurants desiring to serve alcohol — either with full bar or beer and wine only — have to obtain what is known as a "Conditional Use Permit"

from City Hall and a license from the state Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Some of the text amendment changes are designed to eliminate public review of alcohol CUP applications in order to reduce "regulatory hurdles for restaurants wishing to open or expand on the Promenade."

Alcohol CUPs are now granted by the Planning Commission (or the City Council if an appeal is filed) in open public hearings. The changes call for alcohol service in the Bayside District to be approved administratively (behind closed doors) when a restaurant owner agrees to a standard set of 19 conditions compiled by city staff. One problem is that the conditions are general and broad, not site-specific. In other words, all of Bayside alcohol outlets would have the exact same set of rules.

These standards, typical of most Bayside CUP conditions, include only serving alcohol to customers intending to purchase food, outlawing sale for consumption off-premises, limiting alcohol sales to 35 percent of the gross revenue and limiting hours of beverage service to 9 a.m. to midnight, Sunday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 1 a.m., Friday and Saturday. A CUP would be required only when a business wants a change of conditions.

But, here's the rub. A restaurant needs only to agree to abide by these standards in writing to sell alcohol. So, after a wink and a nod, a business permit is granted and conditions are forgotten. Being that enforcement is virtually nonexistent, it's like a free ticket to Disneyland.

I like a pint of good ale from time to time, but I think it's a bad idea to eliminate all public comment on the privilege (note that I said "privilege," not "right") of dispensing alcoholic beverages.

For example, a couple of years ago, if it weren't for public input at a Planning Commission hearing and later at a City Council appeal, numerous code violations by the Gaucho Grill on the Promenade would have been "ignored" by city staff and their request for an alcohol CUP would have been gladly approved.

Once granted to an address, permission to sell alcohol never goes away. You can bet the many property owners on the Bayside board who backed the changes are fully aware that an alcohol license enhances property values.

"Alcohol drives the city's economic engine" is a City Hall mantra. With that in mind, there's no question that staff wants to muzzle citizen input and make obtaining an alcohol CUP a slam dunk. City Hall has rarely revoked an alcohol CUP even in

light of flagrant violations. In fact, it seems City Hall does everything in its power to ensure that alcohol flows unencumbered.

In 2002, there were 356 licenses to sell alcohol in Santa Monica. It's the third highest concentration of alcohol licenses in California. Since then, the city has signed off on about two dozen more alcohol CUPs.

It's no coincidence that we have a high number of alcohol-related crimes here. One-third to 40 percent of the Santa Monica Police Department's arrests every year are for alcohol related offenses. From 1996 through 2000, the number of arrests for being drunk in public ranged from 1,924 to 1,078 annually.

The corollary is that the easier it is to acquire alcohol in a community, the more problems such as crime, alcohol-related vehicular accidents and alcoholism occur. This is especially visible with our high transient population — a large percentage of which are serious substance abusers.

You can address the Planning Commission on this issue on, March 3, at 7 p.m. in City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1685 Main St. Read the staff report: Agenda item 8-C available on line.

(Bill Bauer is a long-time Santa Monica resident and a freelance writer.)

LOCAL



Kerry and company do battle in Trojan country

KERRY, from page 1

fact, it's the next president of the United States here. He's on the working man's side. Things will change with him in office ... To tell you the truth, the last four years under Bush we have gotten back to the 80s with a culture of greed.

"With the election of Kerry, I feel like the tide is going to turn."

That sentiment was prevalent on Thursday, as the event attracted grocery store workers from throughout Los Angeles and the country. Maria Patris, a cashier at a Ralph's market in Alhambra,

"Did you look into his eyes? These are the eyes of an honest, caring person."

— MARIA PATRIS

Cashier at a Ralph's market in Alhambra

addressed the large crowd, explaining how she desperately needs health insurance coverage because she is a breast cancer survivor. While on the picket line, Patris said she is paying \$500 a month for coverage, plus several hundred dollars

more for medicine.

"Right now, this is the only thing that is important to me — affordable health care," she said.

Asked why she supports Kerry for the Democratic nomination on the March 2 ballot, Patris replied: "Did you look into his eyes? These are the eyes of an honest, caring person."

Also at the event was Los Angeles City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa, a co-chair on Kerry's national campaign. He said he expects Kerry to win California by "double digits."

"This was a very important day," Villaraigosa said. "He demonstrated that the working families are at the forefront

of his agenda."

Larry Healy, 52, a former grocery store worker from Pennsylvania, said he and four other union supporters flew to California while on vacation to help Kerry campaign. Healy said his chapter of the United Food and Commercial Workers — Local 56 — was the first to endorse Kerry. They threw their weight behind the contender last April.

"We need somebody to stand up for the working people — and George Bush has declared war on the working people," said Healy, who also campaigned for Kerry in Iowa, New Hampshire and Delaware.

Kerry left the event in a caravan of black Suburbans. Later Thursday, he was to face off against fellow presidential hopefuls Al Sharpton, John Edwards and Dennis Kucinich in a debate at the University of Southern California. The debate was expected to focus on a variety of topics, including gay marriage, social security benefits and federal tax cuts.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

experience. Prior to his appointment in March 2000 as assistant city manager, he served five years as assistant city manager in Hayward and four years in the same capacity in San Pablo. Prior to that, Anderson spent four years as special assistant to the city manager and five years as economic development administrator for the city of Pasadena. Anderson has a degree in urban and public administration from Occidental College and an MBA from Saint Mary's College of California. He came to city government from a background in banking.

In addition to his professional tenure, highlights of Anderson's ICMA membership include chairmanship of the Committee on Professional Conduct in 1997 and 2002, former member of the board of governors of the ICMA University that began the certification initiative, and former member of the Urban Consortium Steering Committee of the Public Technology Institute (PTI). Anderson also is a conference presenter, mentor to aspiring municipal administrators and member of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators and the Urban Land Institute and the Hispanic Network.

Angel Flight deal gives lift to patients' hopes

By Daily Press staff

A nonprofit corporation that flies people with illnesses from Santa Monica all over the country for treatment has expanded its operation.

The Santa Monica City Council earlier this month approved a new lease for Angel Flight West, Inc. at the local airport. The corporation proposed an expansion plan to occupy 2,384 square feet of office space in the "Specialty Hanger Building" for with a five-year option, beginning March 1.

Angel Flight has occupied 1,027 square feet in the Santa Monica Airport administration building courtyard since 1988. The lease will generate \$214,581 in revenue for City Hall.



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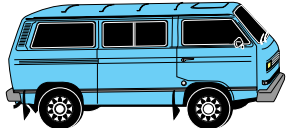
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LOCAL

Meter is running on development of parking spots

PARKING, from page 1

and adding to three garages, which will produce 712 slots and another 1,000 by constructing two new structures near Fifth Street. Those structures will have street-level retail and be used by monthly parkers so short-term visitors can park closer to the Promenade.

But it may become a moot point if City Hall doesn't find a way to pay for the land, that is, if there is any left by then.

It's a concern for City Councilman Ken Genser, who said earlier this month that many of the properties initially pinpointed have since been bought and are under other development. Genser and Councilman Herb Katz said it's a priority for them this year to find funding and land so the plan they approved isn't scrapped for something else.

"Our goals are the same, but now it's a matter of money," Katz said. "We only have so much money and what do we want to do with it?"

City Hall is currently facing a \$4 mil-

"Our goals are the same, but now it's a matter of money. We only have so much money and what do we want to do with it?"

— HERB KATZ
City Councilman

lion deficit for the upcoming year and a balanced budget is expected to be adopted in June.

Monthly parking rates in the garages are expected to be increased from \$75 a month to \$105, and short-term rates would increase to \$1.25 every 20 minutes after the first two free hours, with a maximum of \$10 for the day. The current maximum is \$7.

As far as the assessments are concerned, the task force considered tacking on an extra 50 cents per square foot to existing properties and expanding the assessment district to include an additional 1.9 million square feet in commercial

space. That district would include north of Wilshire Boulevard, the east side of Sixth Street, the north side of Colorado Avenue and the east side of Ocean Avenue.

The task force reasoned that property owners would benefit from the additional spaces and therefore should help pay for them. New commercial development in the Bayside District already pays into a shared parking fund and is not required to provide separate parking. The downtown area has seen about 50,000 square feet of growth per year in the past eight years.

The task force also recommended increasing on-street meter spaces from 50 cents to \$1, something already done in efforts to close City Hall's budget deficit last year.

There already are 3,311 spaces in eight garages, 1,085 private off-street spaces

and 236 metered spots downtown. Those totals don't include parking in the two garages attached to Santa Monica Place, which are currently being retrofitted.

Before the task force convened, City Hall asked the public through a telephone survey about downtown parking. The vast majority of residents said finding a parking space is difficult and nearly two-thirds thought it should be increased.

Research by the task force backed that sentiment up — there are 2.1 spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space, considered low given the high proportion of regional retail, local retail, entertainment uses and the attraction of the Promenade, officials said. Most other comparable cities have nearly twice the amount of spaces, according to city documents.

City Hall is currently doing an Environmental Impact Report on the plan, which should be completed by the fall, said City Hall's assistant director of planning, Ellen Gelbard. She added that a financial feasibility study should help provide a roadmap for where the money will come from.

"The idea was not to use general fund money," she said.

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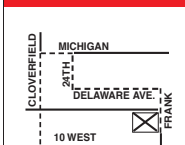
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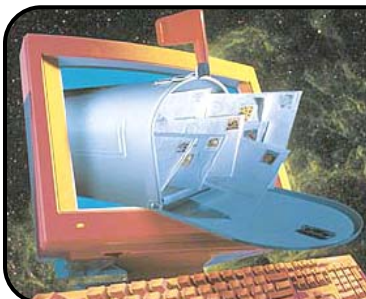
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STATE



Judge estimates Peterson trial will last five months

BY KIM CURTIS
Associated Press Writer

REDWOOD CITY — A broken trail of scents led police dogs from a storage room where Scott Peterson kept a fishing boat to the end of a San Francisco Bay pier near where prosecutors allege he dumped his pregnant wife's body, the dogs' handler testified this week.

The handler, whose Labrador retriever tracked Laci Peterson's scent in the days after she disappeared, testified the dog picked up the smell at the Berkeley Marina on Dec. 28, 2002. Scott Peterson said that's where he launched for a brief fishing trip four days earlier — the day Laci Peterson vanished.

Prosecutors want to use testimony from handler Eloise Anderson and a second dog trainer to help establish their theory that Scott Peterson took his wife's body from their Modesto home to the

warehouse to retrieve his boat and then to the bay, where he allegedly weighted it down and tossed it overboard. Defense lawyers claim the trail is too patchy and the dogs are unreliable.

Judge Alfred A. Delucchi will decide whether jurors hear the potentially damaging dog testimony.

On Wednesday, the judge said 200 potential jurors will be called to court next Thursday — the beginning of a lengthy selection process in a trial he estimated will last five months.

Anderson testified that one of her dogs, Trimble, followed Laci Peterson's scent to a pylon at the end of a pier at the Berkeley Marina where boats are moored. The way the dog tracked the scent indicated that Laci Peterson did not actually walk on the pier, Anderson said.

A second dog that specializes in finding cadavers also picked up traces of Laci Peterson's scent, this time along the boat's

rim, Anderson said. Laci Peterson's family has claimed she never knew her husband purchased the 14-foot aluminum boat.

Twist, the cadaver-sniffing dog, also picked up Laci Peterson's scent on a blue tarp stored in a shed in the Peterson's backyard. Prosecutors allege he wrapped his wife's body in a tarp, while the defense counters he was carrying large umbrellas.

Defense lawyers seized on Anderson's testimony that a strong odor of fertilizer made a definitive scent impossible to establish. Defense lawyer Shepard Kopp pointed out fertilizer also was stored in the shed and may have confused the dog. Peterson worked as a fertilizer salesman before his arrest.

Throughout the day, defense lawyers picked apart Anderson's testimony, saying there were too many opportunities for the dogs to make mistakes — as they had many times during their training.

A second handler, whose bloodhound

was summoned to find Laci Peterson after her disappearance testified previously that her dog acted as if Laci Peterson had been driven from the couple's Modesto home. The dog ran from the home to the middle of the road — instead of on the sidewalk where a person would walk.

Investigators later brought the dog to the warehouse where Peterson told police he stopped Christmas Eve morning before going fishing. The dog picked up a path to Interstate 580 — one route from Modesto to the area where the bodies of Laci Peterson and their unborn son surfaced in April.

Days after the bodies were found, authorities arrested Scott Peterson and charged him with two counts of murder. He could face the death penalty.

A third dog expert is expected to testify Thursday about how tracking dogs use scent. The issue of sequestering the jury may also be discussed.

San Francisco mayor questions Bush's 'truthfulness'

BY LISA LEFF
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Mayor Gavin Newsom denounced President Bush's "lack of truthfulness" in attributing his support for a constitutional ban on same-sex marriages partly to San Francisco's recent experiment in allowing gay couples to wed.

Bush announced in an Oval Office address Tuesday that he's backing a proposed federal anti-gay marriage amendment because "a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization."

The president specifically pointed to Newsom's Feb. 12 decision that has allowed more than 3,200 same-sex couples to marry with the city's blessing, as well as a Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling that has cleared the way for gay couples to wed in that state beginning in May.

Newsom, a Democrat, strongly disputed Bush's assertion that San Francisco's wedding spree fueled his decision to back the amendment, citing comments the president made last summer indicating he would do so. Newsom called the way Bush chose to cloak his endorsement "shameful" and "cowardly."

"I am deeply disturbed by the president's lack of truthfulness regarding his decision," said Newsom, who took office Jan. 8. "President Bush promised the right wing of his party that he would support this effort to codify discrimination in the Constitution long before San Francisco's decision to uphold the state constitution."

As Newsom defended the city's policy and more couples exchanged vows at City Hall, Bush's announcement received lukewarm reactions from some California Republican leaders.

In Washington for a meeting of the nation's governors, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said "the proper thing to do" to resolve the deeply divisive debate is to seek a determination from the state Supreme Court.

"We have a law in California ... that makes it very clear that marriage is between a man and a woman, so I don't have to concern myself with anything else," Schwarzenegger said, pointing to a 2000 ballot initiative that requires the state to only recognize a marriage between a man and a woman as valid.

Schwarzenegger said he can't remember if he voted for Proposition 22, but that he considers it "a very strong law" that "should be upheld."

The governor's comments were echoed by Rep. David Dreier, R-San Dimas, chairman of the House Rules Committee.

"I'm not supportive of amending the Constitution on this issue. I believe that this should go through the courts, and I think that we're at a point where it's not necessary," Dreier said.

California Attorney General Bill Lockyer reiterated Tuesday that he will ask the California Supreme Court later this week to rule whether San Francisco authorities are violating state marriage statutes, as gay marriage opponents claim, or upholding anti-discrimination provisions of the

California Constitution, which is the city's position.

The announcement from Lockyer, a leading Democrat and potential rival to Schwarzenegger in the 2006 election, gave lawyers on both sides of San Francisco's gay marriage debate a rare point of agreement.

Mathew Staver, who represents one of two groups that have sued the city to get the licenses invalidated, and Kate Kendell, Executive Director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, said they preferred for the case to work its way through the lower courts instead of going straight to the Supreme Court.

"I think this entire matter needs to be carefully deliberated, and haste sometimes makes waste," Staver said.

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Entertainment

Only turns in 'Twisted' should be for exit doors

Review

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Ashley Judd needs to stop making these ridiculous thrillers, and that's all there is to it. "Kiss The Girls," "Double Jeopardy" and "Eye of the Beholder" were malodorous enough, but "Twisted" stinks so exquisitely that theaters should be required to hand out nostril clamps. To get an idea just how ludicrous the storyline is one needs to look no further than Paramount Studios' very own production notes: "Newly promoted police inspector Jessica Shepard (Judd) is searching for a serial killer and is shocked to discover that men she has recently slept with are the victims. The investigation becomes more and more twisted as her partner, Mike Delmarco (Andy Garcia) behaves strangely, and the police commissioner (Samuel L. Jackson) is being asked to remove her from the investigation as she is a prime suspect. All the clues point to her and Jessica begins to suspect that she might be the killer she is looking for." Read that last line again, and see if you don't begin to suspect "Twisted" is the real crime here, and that the prime suspects are the filmmakers. Moviegoing Public Enemy No. 1 is screenwriter Sarah Thorp, whose laughably lame dialogue reads like something out of a "Naked Gun" spoof. Only, "Twisted" isn't supposed to be a comedy.

The bodies begin piling up in San Francisco and Delmarco learns that not only has his new partner had anonymous one-night stands with every one of them, but that she's a drunk who blacks out and often wakes up with mysterious bruises and blood stains on her body. So he falls in love with her, of



Samuel L. Jackson (left) and Andy Garcia in 'Twisted.'

course. But he's gotta get in line, because even though she's a known tramp with well-documented anger-management issues, there are plenty of cops vying for Jessica's heart, including a creepy patrolman she once bedded and her surrogate dad — police chief John Mills. As the evidence mounts against her, Jessica begins to suspect she might not be the ideal lead investigator on the case. She even has her own blood tested to see if it's a match with the killer's. And speaking of killers, turns out Jessica's father was a cop who went loco and killed his wife and himself 25 years ago. Then again, maybe he didn't.



It's all too twisted to tell, really. After she assaults a perp and a fellow officer, Jessica is forced to see a shrink (David Strathairn) who speculates she may have inherited her father's rage. Ya think so, Dr. Obvious? After yet another former fling — an attorney representing a guy she put behind bars — winds up dead in a hot tub, Jessica FINALLY becomes a murder suspect. Then the results of the blood test come back and things really get silly.

(Rated R for violence, language and sexual activity. Running time: 97 minutes)

Judd revving up after walking a slippery slope

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Ashley Judd is a busy woman these days. She's got a new film opening today — "Twisted" with Samuel L. Jackson and Andy Garcia — just completed production in England on the Cole Porter biopic "De-Lovely," is appearing on Broadway as Maggie in Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," and (most importantly, she says) is gearing up for another NCAA basketball title run by her beloved Kentucky Wildcats. After March Madness, she'll be touring the CART circuit with her husband, Scottish racecar driver Dario Franchitti, and yet, with all this going on, Judd still finds time to stop and smell the roses ... literally.

QUESTION: You just wrapped shooting in London on "De-Lovely." How did it turn out?

ASHLEY JUDD: The movie's wonderful and London is the greenest city on earth. It has the most parks. The rose gardens were in bloom while we were there, and I got to see them right before they bloomed, the peak bloom, and then the repeat bloomers. Other than sharing the hair and makeup trailer with Kevin Kline, checking out the roses every week and charting their progress is how I'll always remember "De-Lovely."

Q: Rumor has it you had a bit of a mishap while on a hike during "Twisted" production. What happened?

AJ: I fell in a lake (laughs). I went down



Ashley Judd

to the water's edge and it was really slippery and craggy, and I slipped and fell in. I had on my heavy-duty hiking boots, and they got caught in some stuff, and I started to panic a little. So I had to take my shoes off and throw them ashore ... it was funny, and I got a good story out of it.

Q: Your run on Broadway is ending soon. What's next for you?

AJ: I'm going to go home and watch the

daffodils grow.

Q: Seriously?

AJ: Yep. I planted some Blue Bells and Lily of the Valley that I can't wait to see. And, you know, we're a two-career household, and it's Dario's (racing) season. So I'm really excited about going racing, since he didn't race much last year because of an injury.

Q: Has your husband gotten you behind the wheel of a racecar yet?

AJ: I'm going to do a two-seater with Mario Andretti. (Dario) said Mario is the only person he'll let me ride with.

Q: You're an avid sports fan. What's it like to watch your husband race?

AJ: When I first started going to races after we met, I was extremely nervous to be down in the pit area. It's like being backstage at a concert and hoping you don't trip over something or break an amp or accidentally speak into a live microphone and make an ass out of yourself. So I was real hesitant to get too excited. And then (a picture appeared in a magazine) where I'm stretched out on the pit wall during morning practice reading The New York Times the day of a race. I thought maybe I was a little too relaxed (laughs).

Q: Tell us how you do what you do.

AJ: The definition of acting is always the same: Live truthfully under imaginary circumstances. My objectives are always the same, and those are to be honest and in the moment, to work off the other person, and to be emotionally full and vibrant. That, for me, is always the same.

Gibson's 'Christ': Exit the glory, enter the gory

Review

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Forget the passion, this movie is all about the bashing. According to the Gospels, the last 12 hours of Jesus of Nazareth's life were frightfully grueling, and director Mel Gibson has dedicated the entirety of his controversial film to the "how," not the "why." The result is a misguided, almost unendurable frenzy of explicit violence intended to inspire exaltation, but that ultimately leads to revulsion. Unless your idea of an uplifting cinematic experience is to be drenched in blood and shredded flesh, it's likely the two-plus hour beat-down that is "The Passion of the Christ" will leave you feeling vanquished. As for charges that the film will stoke the fires of anti-Semitism, well, those looking for bias will no doubt find it, but truth be told, the barbaric Roman guards come off as bad, if not worse, than the bloodthirsty Jewish Pharisees who fire up the rabble to condemn Christ to the cross. In interviews promoting the film, Gibson has maintained that all of us are complicit in the crime, and his film is testament to that belief.

As Gibson's Messiah, Jim Caviezel ("Frequency," "High Crimes") is given scant opportunity to explore the psychological burden of Christ's duality as man and mankind's savior. Instead, he's a human piñata. As depicted here, Jesus endures relentless, savage torture, that, without some sort of divine intervention, would no doubt have killed him long before he reached Calvary. Gibson's intent seems to be to force viewers to atone for their sins — again, we're all complicit — by battering us with grisly visuals of Christ's intense suffering. With the exception of a few brief flashbacks, he all but ignores the message of love and tolerance that leads Jesus to make the ultimate sacrifice. We witness the carnage, but we're not adequately informed as to why he's enduring it since Gibson presupposes a high level of familiarity with the New Testament. The other actors in the film play to extremes, be it Monica Bellucci's perpetually wailing Mary Magdalene or Mattia Sbragia's obdurate turn as the high priest Caiaphas. The Roman guards are murderous cretins, Christ's followers are tearful bystanders. There is no gray, only black, white and lots of blood red.

Caleb Deschanel, who worked with Gibson on "The Patriot," was charged with making "The Passion of the Christ" look like the paintings of Caravaggio, and the cinematographer's mastery of chiaroscuro here is the stuff that wins Oscars. Ditto for production designer Francesco Frigeri and set decorator Carlo Gervasi, who combine to make this a most visually striking film. Gibson's decision to have his actors speak in the language of the times (with subtitles) works well, and John Debnay's score is appropriately weighty. But, for as authentic as it all looks and feels, there's no getting around the fact that this is a difficult film to watch. There is unbounded beauty to the so-called greatest story ever told, yet Gibson has chosen to drown it in blood. He forsakes the glory and embraces the gory, and that's a cinematic sin not easily forgiven.

(Rated R for sequences of graphic violence.)

ENTERTAINMENT



Film critic Dunn pushes the Oscar envelope

BEST PICTURE

The nominees: "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King;" "Lost in Translation;" "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World;" "Mystic River;" "Seabiscuit."

Should win: "The Return of the King" is the exclamation point on what many consider to be the finest film trilogy of all time. The first two films were slighted in this category by the Academy, and it's hard to imagine it happening again.

Could win: "Mystic River" or "Lost in Translation," but highly unlikely.

Will win: "The Return of the King."

BEST ACTOR

The nominees: Johnny Depp, "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl;" Ben Kingsley, "House of Sand and Fog;" Jude Law, "Cold Mountain;" Bill Murray, "Lost in Translation;" Sean Penn, "Mystic River."

Should win: Penn and Murray are the favorites, but plenty of people will be rooting for Depp, the surprise winner at last week's SAG Awards for his fantastic turn as a whacked-out buccaneer in "Pirates of the Caribbean." Good as Johnny is, though, Murray deserves the gold statue this year.

Could win: Murray's campaign has a lot of momentum behind it. Kingsley has had his name called before ("Ghandi," 1983), and Oscar loves a winner. He might sneak up on the Big Three. The only sure thing in this category is that Jude Law won't win, so lay off him in the office pools.

Will win: Penn. The questions are will he show up to accept the award, and how outrageous will his acceptance speech be?

BEST ACTRESS

The nominees: Keisha Castle-Hughes, "Whale Rider;" Diane Keaton, "Something's Gotta Give;" Samantha

Morton, "In America;" Charlize Theron, "Monster;" Naomi Watts, "21 Grams."

Should win: Great performances by all the nominees in this category, but Theron's was transcendent.

Could win: Keaton's been around a long time, and so have the majority of the Academy's voters. Plus, there's always the "Jack factor" — her co-star is an Oscar magnet, so maybe she wins by association.

Will win: Nothing impresses Hollywood more than a stunning beauty making herself look ugly for a role. Theron became a monster and for that she'll get an Oscar.

DIRECTOR

The nominees: Fernando Meirelles, "City of God;" Peter Jackson, "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King;" Sofia Coppola, "Lost in Translation;" Peter Weir, "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World;" Clint Eastwood, "Mystic River."

Should win: Jackson, with a nod to Meirelles.

Could win: Coppola

Will win: Jackson

SUPPORTING ACTOR

The nominees: Alec Baldwin, "The Cooler;" Benicio Del Toro, "21 Grams;" Djimon Hounsou, "In America;" Tim Robbins, "Mystic River;" Ken Watanabe, "The Last Samurai."

Should win: Robbins and Del Toro are both deserving nominees, though the latter should have been included in the leading man category. Baldwin, though, steals every scene in "The Cooler" and ought to be honored for it.

Could win: Anyone but Hounsou, at a disadvantage because few saw Jim Sheridan's marvelous film.

Will win: Robbins has already nabbed a Golden Globe and SAG Award. He'll add another trophy to his collection Sunday.

SUPPORTING ACTRESS

The nominees: Shohreh Aghdashloo, "House of Sand and Fog;" Patricia Clarkson, "Pieces of April;" Marcia Gay Harden, "Mystic River;" Holly Hunter, "Thirteen;" Renée Zellweger, "Cold Mountain."

Should win: Zellweger is the best of the bunch.

Could win: Clarkson was great in two films this year, "April" and "The Station Agent," and the voters may have taken that into account when they filled out their ballots.

Will win: Three-time Oscar nominee Zellweger is virtually a lock.

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

The nominees: Denys Arcand, "The Barbarian Invasions;" Steven Knight, "Dirty Pretty Things;" Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson and David Reynolds, "Finding Nemo;" Jim Sheridan, Naomi Sheridan and Kirsten Sheridan, "In America;" Sofia Coppola, "Lost in Translation."

Should win: Tough one. There's some truly inspired work on display. My vote, if I had one, would go to the Sheridans.

Could win: "Nemo" was a huge hit, and with so little family-friendly fare represented at the Awards, it might get the nod here.

Will win: Coppola wins this one as consolation for losing the director's award.

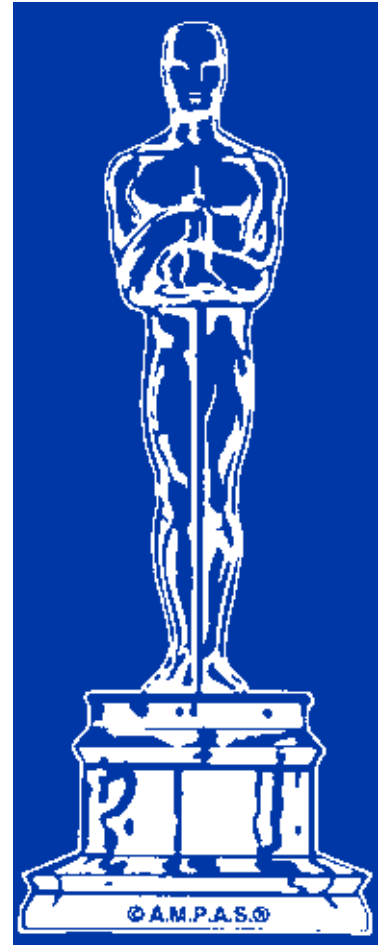
ADAPTED SCREENPLAY

The nominees: Robert Pulcini and Shari Springer Berman, "American Splendor;" Braulio Mantovani, "City of God;" Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Peter Jackson, "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King;" Brian Koppelman, "Mystic River;" Gary Ross, "Seabiscuit."

Should win: Jackson, et al.

Could win: Pulcini and Berman for critic fave "Splendor," and Mantovani.

Will win: Jackson, et al ... this is "The Lord of the Rings" year.



"Get A Life ... A Nightlife, That Is"

BY MAUREEN TOBIN & THOMAS YOUNG

Special to the Daily Press



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— Moore

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sometimes forget he is "on." Escape reality — something we should all do more often. Here is an exceptional diversion for all ages, with all of the cast pros. Come with your sweetie, your parents, your kids, yourself. Magic gives you a chance to open your eyes wide, be child-like in your curiosity and wonder. We sat close and kept asking, "How did they do that?" It all looked so easy. Steve and Bozena are such flawless performers.

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■ It's Mardi Gras and the celebration is

happening at Uncle Darrow's Cajun Creole Eatery, in Marina del Rey, near Costco. The Uncle Darrow's Family "prides itself on making the best quality gourmet foods, this side of the 'Mason-Dixon Line.' Oooweee baby! This food is mouth-watering. Elmer Dills loves this place and it won 'Best of LA' for Cajun Creole food from LA Magazine last year. Indigenous peoples from the South love it here, including actor John Laroquette.

Four cousins — Norwood Clark, Sam Small, Ronald Smith and Ronald Washington — own Uncle Darrow's, all authentic home-grown gentlemen from Louisiana, and all chefs. They started this restaurant in Los Angeles in February 1994, and have been here for more than three years. Norwood Clark, the main host, is animated, smart, and full of joie de vivre. His family cooked for the famous Commander's Palace in New Orleans for 27 years, so it stands to reason he would have inherited their fervor for designing exciting foods. These four men have a passion for their cooking and for crafting an excellent, pleasurable experience and adamantly feel if you walk in here a stranger you will walk out family. Don't expect frou frou here. This is down-home Louisiana food at its finest with chicken, fish and shellfish on the menu. They don't serve meat or pork, and guess what? You won't even miss it. Special on Saturday and Sunday is the Crawfish Etouffee (crawfish stew) which was Maureen's favorite, and the catfish, both raised in Louisiana. Of course, they make all of their own spices. If you are not used to these flavors, you may need a moment to acclimate yourself. Then watch out. The food was scrumptious and

everyone was raving. Though stuffed to the gills, we shared their home-cooked peach cobbler. Whew, it was good.

Sunday, Feb. 29 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., is Mardi Gras here — Fat Sunday. In the parking lot the music will be wailing with blues, jazz and zydeco bands on the stage, and crawfish and catfish will be flown in specially from Louisiana for this party of all parties. Of course, you can also go inside to get the usual excellent menu choices. We hear breakfast on weekends is just like being in the South and is a hot ticket. Uncle Darrow's is all about bringing people together. Open every day, until 9 p.m. during the week, 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. Web site: www.uncledarrows.com. 2560 S. Lincoln Blvd. (310) 306-4862

■ Here is a way for an entertaining, educational, fun evening any time. Stroll over to your favorite Borders or Barnes & Nobles bookstores. Naturally, you'll want to browse. Of course, we wish you wonderful nightlife happenings. But we also desire that you bury yourselves in a good book occasionally. This should be one of your preferred pastimes. At many of these megastores, you can have coffees, meals and an assorted mix of events to woo you like book signings, music evenings, workshops, lectures, storytime. Almost always, these events are free. Take advantage. Check out their Web sites: www.borders-stores.com and www.barnesandnoble.com.

(Please e-mail your comments or suggestions to smdp4nightlife@yahoo.com, and keep having fun).

DID YOU KNOW?: A full moon always rises at sunset.

NATIONAL

Humane Borders dedicates memorial to fallen crossers

BY GERALD M. GAY

Associated Press Writer

TUCSON, Ariz. — The Rev. Robin Hoover lives by Isaiah 49:10 — “They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat upon them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.”

Hoover is the founding president of Humane Borders — a faith-based organization dedicated to preserving the lives of migrants coming into Arizona from Mexico.

Three years ago, he began setting up water stations in areas known for migrant

deaths. The first two were at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument near Ajo. Then he installed four more. Then 12.

Today, more than 40 stations are placed strategically throughout Southern Arizona. “There’s no reason people have to pay with their lives trying to get here,” said Hoover, 51.

Unfortunately, in his opinion, too many do pay.

With thousands of immigrants crossing into Arizona monthly — many through Tohono O’odham territory, where Humane Borders is forbidden to set up stations — he knows he can’t save them all.

It was for this reason Hoover decided

to build a memorial to remember those who did not complete their journeys.

“Each year we have people who come looking for family members, trying to find out about them,” he said. “This memorial will be a way of honoring the dead and bringing closure to these families.”

The simple wooden structure is a ramada with benches and a table. The fir planks that make up the support beams are coated with blue paint. Blue is an important color for Humane Borders. It signifies water and is the color of the organization’s water stations.

C. Fester Prose, 25, youth minister at the South Hills Christian Church in Fort Worth, Texas, traveled with a youth group to Tucson last July to help build the frame.

The 15 high school students worked through harsh Tucson summer days to get the frame completed during their week-long stay.

“It’s something physical that has a story associated with it,” said Prose. “Anything that can be used to help bring the stories and happenings about life on the border is something to be proud of.”

The solitary wall of the structure, built by local Humane Borders volunteers, is the heart of the memorial.

It contains an enlarged photo of fresh migrant shoe prints in the desert sand. A map of Arizona, with red dots signifying

where immigrants have died within the last year, takes up a third of the surface, while simple wooden crosses with the word “Desconocido,” “Unknown,” written across them line the edges.

Perhaps the most powerful message is conveyed by the list of names and when they died. “1-4-03 Oscar Borbon Mendoza, 1-22-03 Jorge Becerril Cruz, 1-25-03 Jose A. Perez Rubio” are among the more than 500 names of those who died since 1999.

“No single authority of the government collects all of the names and information dates of these deaths,” Hoover said. “This year we are undertaking a project to gather all of the names.”

In the summer, when Humane Borders’ volunteers take daily trips into the desert to fill the water stations, the memorial will serve as a gathering point to plan out the day’s routes. It also will be used as an interpretive center to teach students and others who want to learn about border issues.

Students from the Fenster School of Southern Arizona visited in February.

“It kind of gives you an idea of the reality of what’s going on,” said teacher Andrew Collins. “When you start seeing names and understanding those are real people, it brings a certain aspect to it. I think people are kind of immune to the humanity of the issue.”

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BY SONJA BARISIC

Associated Press Writer

NORFOLK, Va. — Three aircraft carriers at Navy bases on both coasts are fighting a war this week, without ever leaving port.

The Norfolk-based USS Harry S. Truman carrier strike group is joining carrier groups in Bremerton, Wash., and San Diego in a virtual exercise that uses computers to simulate battle conditions at sea.

This is the first time three strike groups are training together like this, Vice Adm. Albert H. Konetzni Jr., deputy and chief of staff of the U.S. Fleet Forces Command and U.S. Atlantic Fleet, said in an interview Thursday.

“This will bring war-gaming to a new level,” Konetzni said. “It will put the operators, the players, under great stress. They will be making decisions that are truly, truly critical to the carrying out of the operations, and it allows the operators, even down to the unit level, to really understand how they play in these scenarios.”

The Multi-Battle Group Inport Exercise, which began Monday and ends Friday, includes 72 hours of wartime planning and execution using a combination of actual ship command and control equipment and simulation systems. Sailors talk to each other in computer chat rooms and look at intelligence and surveillance reports in real time, Konetzni said.

The exercise is taking place primarily in Norfolk; San Diego, where the USS John C. Stennis is based; and Bremerton, where the USS Carl Vinson is based.

Guided missile cruisers and destroyers and fast-attack submarines also are participating from simulators. Reconnaissance aircraft crews are taking part using a mission avionics system trainer in Fallon, Nev.

Eighteen units in all are taking part. The number of people involved is difficult

to estimate because ships don’t need their entire crew when they are in port.

The opposing force is entirely simulated.

Details about the war scenario being played out are classified for security reasons. But Konetzni did say that the issue of access is a big focus. Access was not a problem for U.S. forces in most of the wars the country has fought in the last 15 years, so the Navy thought it was important to study a scenario in which access was not assured, he said.

“This will bring war-gaming to a new level. It will put the operators, the players, under great stress.”

— **ALBERT H. KONETZNI JR.**
U.S. Fleet Forces Command
U.S. Atlantic Fleet

Lt. Jim Hoeft of Fleet Forces Command said the exercise involves trying to assist another country.

“We’re trying to simulate all conditions of warfare that we could encounter: mine, surface, air, asymmetric threats like a small boat attack,” Hoeft said. “All that stuff that could be damaging to the Navy is put forward into this war game.”

Konetzni said he expects the Navy to do more of these exercises to complement training at sea, saving money in the process. For example, it costs about \$1.5 million in fuel for every day a strike group is at sea, he said.

However, the cost savings are secondary to the unique experience such an exercise provides, Konetzni said.

“This is really going to be, in my mind, a wonderful leadership tool and decision-making venue” that helps the Navy refine how it fights, he said.



NATIONAL □ INTERNATIONAL



Rebel leader says fighters converging on capital

BY IAN JAMES
Associated Press Writer

CAP-HAITIEN, Haiti — Rebels began moving toward Haiti's capital of Port-au-Prince this week and are awaiting the order to attack, a guerrilla leader told The Associated Press.

The leader, Guy Philippe, said their mission was to arrest President Jean-Bertrand Aristide if he did not resign, so he could be tried on charges ranging from corruption to murder.

"I don't want him to die. It would be too easy. He has to pay for what he has done to the Haitian people," Philippe said in an interview with the AP in Cap-Haitien, the country's second-largest city that fell to the rebels Sunday.

Pressure is mounting for Aristide to resign, with France blaming him for the chaos in its former colony in the 3-week-old rebellion and urging that he be replaced by a transitional government. The U.N. Security Council scheduled a meeting for later Thursday.

Foreigners are fleeing Haiti amid isolated looting, and President Bush said the United States is encouraging the international community to provide a strong "security presence."

"We've decided to go toward Port-au-Prince. They're on their way," said Philippe, leader of the uprising that has overrun half of Haiti and killed at least 80 people. "They're taking their places. They know what to do."

Aristide, who has shown determination to keep power, has said a rebel attack on

"I don't want (President Jean-Bertrand Aristide) to die. It would be too easy. He has to pay for what he has done to the Haitian people."

— GUY PHILIPPE
Rebel leader

the capital could kill thousands.

Most of the barricades that had been erected by Aristide supporters in Port-au-Prince were removed Thursday and streets were empty, except for motorists lining up for dwindling supplies of gasoline.

The rebel movement already has sleeper cells in the capital but they would be reinforced by fighters from rebel groups moving in from variety of locations in the north, Philippe said.

Asked if an attack was imminent, he said: "It doesn't mean that we're going to attack today. We're just going to take our positions and wait for the right time."

Scouts were checking "pockets of resistance," he said. That might include the government-held town of St. Marc, on the main road from Gonaives to Port-au-Prince.

On Wednesday night, rebel commander Winter Etienne and others crowded around a map of Haiti on the wall of the Mont Joli Hotel, discussing the best route to take and whether to use boats to get around St. Marc.

"It won't take a lot of days. We don't have all our lives to wait for what a dictator is going to do," Philippe said Thursday.

A government official said Aristide's

National Palace was defended by about 100 officers in Haiti's force of fewer than 4,000. Philippe has boasted he now commands 5,000 men.

Philippe said Wednesday he was going to give Aristide a chance to step down. On Saturday, Aristide agreed to a U.S.-backed plan to share power, but the opposition rejected it, saying he must step down.

"We saw there was no hope for peace," Philippe said. "We spent a week waiting for this peace to come. We can't stay waiting for him to decide while his people are killing people. ... Every day, innocent people are being killed, houses are being burned."

France called for Aristide's resignation, saying "he bears grave responsibility for the current situation."

"It's up to him to accept the consequences while respecting the rule of law," Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin said in a statement.

French diplomatic officials confirmed Thursday that de Villepin was calling for Aristide to resign.

Abel Descollines, a member of the opposition Democratic Platform coalition, praised France's statement and asked the United States and Canada to do the same.

"We hope American and Canadian authorities will rally behind the French position to help Haiti avoid a civil war," he told French RTL radio.

French Defense Ministry spokesman Jean-Francois Bureau said it was too early to discuss whether there would be a role for the military in ensuring a peaceful departure by Aristide, should he leave the island.

Aristide, 50, has steadily lost support as poverty deepened after his party swept flawed legislative elections in 2000 and international donors suspended aid.

De Villepin called for the establishment of a civilian peacekeeping force. "This international force would be responsible for guaranteeing the return to public order and supporting the international community's action on the ground," de Villepin said.

As order in the impoverished country of 8 million unraveled, Aristide's two daughters fled to the United States.

American Airlines delayed three of its five daily flights to the United States on Wednesday because crew and passengers had trouble passing the roadblocks. Air Jamaica canceled its flights to Haiti indefinitely.

U.N. nonessential staff and their families were being evacuated, and dozens of Mormon missionaries also left.

Canada and the Dominican Republic sent small teams of soldiers to protect their embassies.

Fearing an exodus of Haitians, the Dominican Republic doubled the number of troops along its 225-mile border with Haiti.



WORLD BRIEFLY

North Korea may can nukes

By The Associated Press

BEIJING — North Korea on Thursday proposed "the comprehensive stopping of nuclear activities," a Chinese government spokesman said. He said the details were still being discussed among the six nations meeting in the Chinese capital.

The apparent progress came a day after South Korea offered the North a conditional compensation package that officials said included energy aid for the power-starved country.

The development, in the middle of delicate talks about the North's nuclear ambitions, appeared to be the most significant breakthrough since the stalemate between Washington and Pyongyang began in October 2002. Russia said, however, that a "gap" remained before the standoff could be solved fully.

"The various parties welcomed the proposition from the North Korean side for the comprehensive stopping of nuclear activities," Chinese spokesman Liu Jianchao said at a briefing.

"As for the details and specific arrangements for stopping the nuclear activities, it is still being discussed among the various parties," he said.

Plane crash kills president

By The Associated Press

BITONJA, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Macedonia's president was killed Thursday when his plane crashed in a mountainous part of southern Bosnia en route to an international investment conference, officials said.

The Macedonian government aircraft, carrying President Boris Trajkovski and several other officials to

the conference in the western Bosnian city of Mostar, crashed near the village of Bitonja shortly after 8 a.m. local time, the officials said.

Bosnian police said they found wreckage near the village about 50 miles south of Sarajevo. There were no survivors. It was not immediately clear how many people were aboard the plane.

The weather in the area was said to be poor, and it prompted Albania's prime minister, Fatos Nano, to cancel his own flight to the conference, Nano spokesman Aldrin Dalipi said.

Trajkovski, 47, studied theology in the United States, where he gave up communism and converted from Orthodox Christianity. He was elected president in November 1999. An ordained Methodist minister, his powers were divided with those of Macedonia's prime minister.

Columbine massacre on display

By The Associated Press

LAKEWOOD, Colo. — It was perhaps the most macabre display ever presented in a county fairgrounds building: Nearly every piece of physical evidence from the Columbine High School massacre laid out for survivors and relatives of victims to see.

"Nothing can be any more horrible than to see your son's bloody chalk line," said Patricia DePooter, whose son, Corey, was killed along with 12 others April 20, 1999, at Columbine. Her teary face belied her attempt to minimize the import of seeing bloodied, bullet-riddled library chairs.

About 60 attended the event Wednesday, and all had to show identification to prove they belonged. An electronic sign outside flashed security messages: "No Purses,"

"No Bags," "ID Req'd." Sheriff's deputies, some accompanied by dogs, patrolled the grounds and building.

Nearly every piece of evidence gathered after the massacre that left 13 dead was put on display at Wednesday's event: computer screens, tables and other furniture, shell casings, pieces of clothing sealed in bags. The family members and survivors who described the items said they were kept about three feet away as they walked past the tables. They could look, but not touch or remove items.

Radio chain tries to Clear the air

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — On the eve of a House hearing on broadcast indecency, the nation's largest radio station chain suspended shock jock Howard Stern's show, saying it did not meet the company's newly revised programming standards.

Stern's suspension Wednesday by Clear Channel Radio was the second time in two days that the company has acted against a disc jockey.

The company on Tuesday fired the DJ known as "Bubba the Love Sponge," whose show drew a record fine of \$755,000 from the Federal Communications Commission. The program aired in four Florida cities and included graphic discussions about sex and drugs "designed to pander to, titillate and shock listeners," the FCC said.

Clear Channel's announcement did not say how many of its 1,200 stations carried the Stern show, which is distributed by Viacom's Infinity Broadcasting and derives most of national audience from being carried by Infinity-owned stations.

Under pressure from federal regulators and lawmakers, broadcasters are revisiting their indecency standards.

Their actions previewed a House subcommittee hearing Thursday on indecency, the second this month. Scheduled to appear were executives from ABC, Fox, NBC, Pax and Clear Channel Communications.

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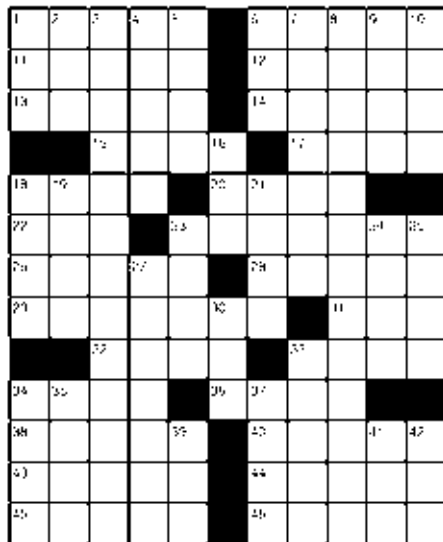
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Obituaries

PALFY, TOM: Born Aug. 6, 1952 in Cleveland, Ohio. Tom was the only child of Sandor & Ysabel Palfy and was the last surviving member of his family. Tom was employed at the Radisson Huntley Hotel for 13 yrs., and Restoration Hardware, SM for 3 years. He was a regular at Gold's Gym in Venice. Prior to his move to LA, Tom lived in NY, Boston, and Europe with his longtime companion: Peter Hamburger. He was a radio disc jockey in New Hampshire after graduating from WIXY School of Broadcasting. Tom will be greatly missed by many friends and co-workers. A memorial service is planned for Sat. Feb. 28, 2004, at St. Augustine's By the Sea, 1227 4th Street, S.M. at 2:00pm. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made, in Tom's memory to APLA or the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center.

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