

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

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Meganumber: 18

Jackpot: \$9 million

FANTASY 5

10 19 32 34 38

DAILY 3

Daytime: 0 3 8

Evening: 9 9 7

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2nd: 03 Hot Shot

3rd: 09 Winning Spirit

RACE TIME: 1.44.92

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Australia's Attorney-General, Philip Ruddock, announced in December that terrorist suspects being held under house arrest would routinely be sent to anger management classes, to help them address their alienation.

■ In December, a 75-unit apartment house opened in Seattle, funded by grants from the local, state and federal governments, as free housing for what the city considers its most incorrigible drunks, on the theory that keeping an eye on them would be less costly than leaving them free to cause mischief and overuse emergency rooms.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 61st day of 2006.
There are 304 days left in the year.

On March 2, 1877, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes was declared the winner of the 1876 presidential election over Democrat Samuel J. Tilden, even though Tilden had won the popular vote.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Humanitarianism needs no apology. ... Unless we ... feel it toward all men without exception, we shall have lost the chief redeeming force in human history."

RALPH BARTON PERRY

INDEX

Horoscopes

Rest up tonight, Taurus 2

Snow & Surf Report

Water temperature: 57° 3

Opinion

Tweens' time has come 4

State

Calling its bluff 5

Business

Ready for the long haul 8

Local

Release the hounds 9

Comics

Strips tease 16

Classifieds

Your place or mine? 17-19



EDUARDO LOPEZ

Samohi mourns one of its own

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

SAMOH — The mood on campus here was somber Wednesday as students and school staff mourned the loss of 15-year-old Eduardo Lopez, who was fatally shot Tuesday night.

Lopez, a member of both the football and baseball teams at Santa Monica High School, was standing outside of the Sunset Plaza Liquor

& Jr. Market with two friends shortly after 9 p.m. Witnesses said a male Hispanic, wearing a dark-colored hooded sweatshirt and a bandana over his face, approached the group and yelled a Los Angeles-based Hispanic gang name several times, police said. He then fired several times at the three boys, striking Lopez in the upper torso, police said.

Lopez had no documented gang

affiliation, according to police.

Counselors were available throughout the day at Samohi to help students cope with the death of the popular 10th grader, who lived with his family in the Pico neighborhood, sources said.

Students were seemingly in shock on Wednesday, many seen crying before and after school. A

See **SAMOH MURDER**, page 11

Stamp of approval



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Monsignor Lloyd Torgerson bids adieu to ash-stamped parishioners and students at Saint Monica's Church on Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent in the Catholic religion.

U.S. proves hazardous to Hispanics' health

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Millions of Hispanics come to America looking for jobs and educations, but remaining here seems to be bad for their health.

The longer Hispanics are here,

the more likely they are to become obese, to develop diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. And Hispanics born here have even higher rates of those illnesses, a new government report shows.

The analysis of immigrants' health by the federal Centers for Disease Control comes on the heels

of a report calling for more educational programs for Hispanics, who are expected to increase to nearly one-fourth of the country's population in coming years.

"Failure to close Hispanics' education and language gap risks

See **HISPANICS**, page 12

Parking plan leaves both sides idling

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — In attempts to appease both residents and business owners at odds over a dearth of parking, the City Council seems to have satisfied no one.

The council voted Tuesday to approve a pilot preferential parking program for employees, allowing 20 permits to be issued for one year to businesses located near 10th Street and Pico Boulevard. Employees in the area report having trouble finding places to park legally because the neighborhoods there are part of a preferential parking zone, meaning only residents with special placards are allowed to park there during the week.

Residents opposed to the pilot program said the council's decision is the first step towards eradicating benefits reaped from creating preferential parking zones, raising fears that residents will have to park blocks away from their homes and walk with children or groceries in hand.

Business owners who have been pleading with the council for years for more parking for their employees said they were glad City Hall is moving forward with a pilot program, but are disheartened that the council did not approve of an expanded program that would have included more streets.

"I thought it was gutless," said Charles Donaldson, a resident and

See **PARKING**, page 10

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HOROSCOPES

Rest up tonight, Taurus

Santa Monica Daily Press



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

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

 **ARIES (March 21-April 19)**
★★★★★ You could see a situation far more differently than many. The difference is, you are plugging in your creativity and imagination. You find answers when others don't. Take action and soothe others' feathurs. You have what it takes. Tonight: Ever playful.

 **TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**
★★★ Knowing when to say no could make all the difference in the outcome of a situation. Right now, your best role is as a "behind the scenes" player. Your intuition could be helpful with finances. Still, obtain the facts. Tonight: Rest up.

 **GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**
★★★★★ You might be a lot more willful than you realize. If you are drawing odd reactions, your high-voltage energy could be a factor. Follow-through does count. Your ruler goes retrograde today, possibly causing you to feel funky. Be reasonable. Tonight: Where the action is.

 **CANCER (June 21-July 22)**
★★★ Take charge and handle a matter that ultimately might be very important to you. Realize that everyone has his or her limits. You are likely to encounter them today or in the next few weeks. Choose your words carefully, as a misunderstanding happening today or in the near future could last. Tonight: In the limelight.

 **LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**
★★★★ Discipline your spending in the next few weeks. Otherwise, you could jeopardize some of your fondest hopes and wishes by foolish decisions. Postpone strong decisions for now -- OK? Detach as much as you can. Tonight: Take in a movie.

 **VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**
★★★ You could definitely be out of kilter, so take your time. Listen to someone who gives you feedback. Your ability to read between the lines could help you with a partner. You could be the source of your own problems. Your ruler going retrograde encourages you to look within. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

 **LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**
★★★★ Understand that others plan to run the show whether you like it or not. As a result, you will gain because of your ability to deal with others in the present framework. Don't close down options. Review a personal issue with an eye to control issues. Tonight: Follow another's lead.

 **SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**
★★★ Think of how much you could accomplish if you charge into your day to get the job done. Visualize more of what you want from life. You can make it happen. Are you ready? You might want to rethink a partnership. Tonight: Continue in "to do" mode.

 **SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**
★★★★ Your imagination points you in the right direction, if you are ready. Are you? Romance could benefit from more thoughtfulness. A relationship that enters your life right now could be a problem. Tonight: Be naughty and nice.

 **CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**
★★★ Your expectations might be a bit much. You could find this out the hard way -- through disappointment. Think positively with others. You might want to think before you make a major decision involving home and family. Tonight: Happiest at home.

 **AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**
★★★★ Investigate possibilities with an eye to success. You might need to rethink a situation more carefully. Talks could be illuminating but not final. Understand that you can accomplish a lot more than you realize. Tonight: Hang at a favorite spot.

 **PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**
★★ Expenses could be a bit much. Calling a halt to spending could be difficult but ultimately important. You might have had enough of a situation involving a key associate. The first step is to start becoming more independent. Tonight: Pay bills.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Sizing up the state office seekers

By Daily Press staff

The West LA Democratic Club, the Westwood-Westside Democratic Club, the Culver City Democratic Club and the Westside Grassroots Democratic Club are sponsoring an opportunity to size up the competing Democratic legislative candidates. The West LA Democratic Club will endorse candidates after the forum.

The event will take place on March 18, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Venice Center for Peace with Justice and The Arts, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. Admission is free.

The keynote address will be by former Massachusetts governor 1988 Democratic Presidential Candidate Michael Dukakis, who will speak on "making 2006 the year of the Donkey."

Candidates invited to participate are:

41st Assembly District

Julia Brownley

Barry Groveman

Kelley Hayes-Raitt

Jonathan Levey

Shawn Casey O'Brien

42nd AD Assembly District

Mike Feuer

Eric Fine

Abbe Land

47th Assembly District

Karen Bass

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26th Senate District

Mark Ridley-Thomas

Rod Wright

28th Senate District

George Nakano

Jenny Oropeza

For more information, go to www.westlademclub.org or phone (310) 305-9660.

SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 1"	BASE DEPTH 24" - 60"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 18	LIFTS OPEN 10/12
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Wet				

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 8"	BASE DEPTH 72" - 96"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 35	LIFTS OPEN 6/6
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed				

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 96" - 120"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 150	LIFTS OPEN 22/28
CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed				

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12" - 24"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 10:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 0	LIFTS OPEN 4/16
CONDITIONS: Machine Groomed, Hard Packed				

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 1"	BASE DEPTH 12" - 16"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 4:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 0	LIFTS OPEN 0/4
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder				

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 1"	BASE DEPTH 24" - 60"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 18	LIFTS OPEN 10/14
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Wet				

SNOW VALLEY

CLOSED

CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 57°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST 5-8 FT)

Today is a transition day. Another storm is will dive down from the Gulf of Alaska with a bit more west and less south in it. Rain is expected, although lighter than our recent storm. This will have an angle more around 270-280, and with the lack of southerly dynamics, less moisture should get whisked into the region.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

Westerly swell due Friday...
Southern hemi to hit midday on 6th, more on 7th, but NW on radar as well...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

MONDAY	2:10AM	1:0FT	3:07PM	-1.5FT
LOW TIDE	8:20AM	6.6FT	9:23PM	4.9FT

TUESDAY	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LOW TIDE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

WEDNESDAY	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LOW TIDE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

THURSDAY	4:39AM	0.1FT	4:45PM	0.2FT
LOW TIDE	10:42AM	4.9FT	11:05PM	5.5FT

FRIDAY	5:36AM	0.1FT	5:16PM	0.9FT
LOW TIDE	11:37AM	4.0FT	11:44PM	5.4FT

SURF AND SNOW QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? EMAIL ALEX@SMDP.COM



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The Q Line

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The Santa Monica-Malibu School District is on the hunt for its next superintendent now that its current superintendent, John Deasy, has announced that he is moving on. The school board hopes the selection process will be completed before school resumes in the fall.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "What major problems does the new superintendent need to address within the district?"

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

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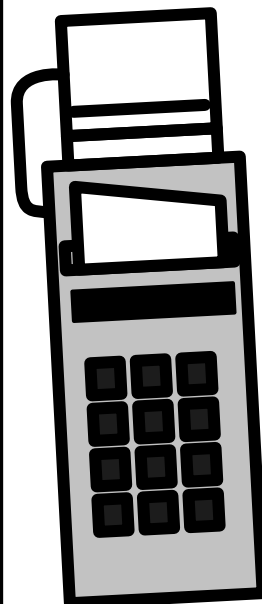
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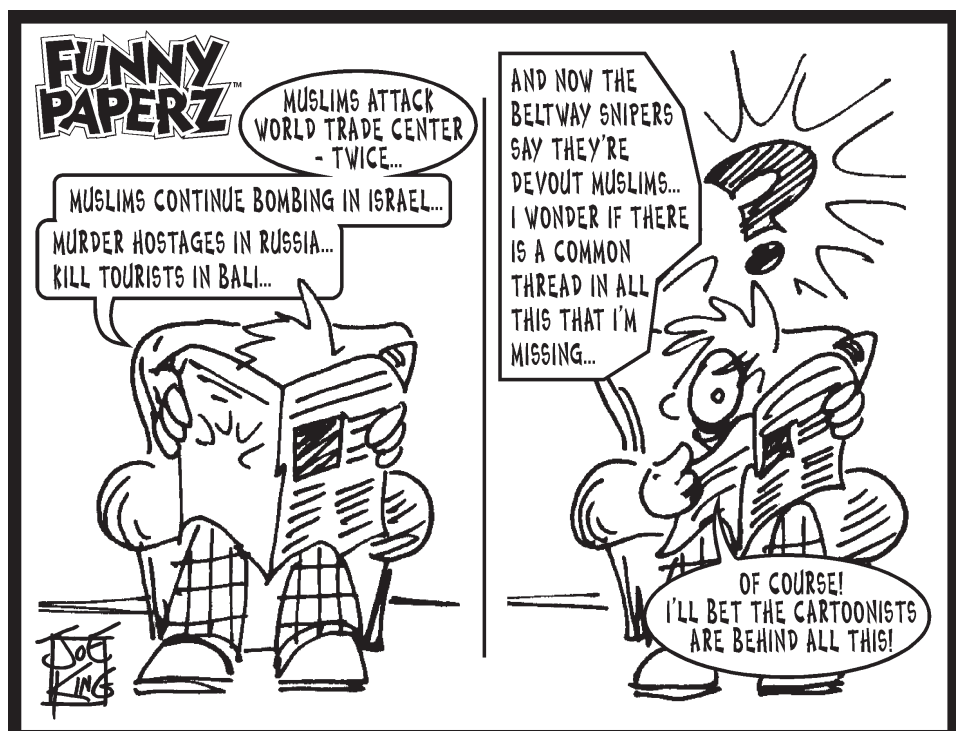
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OPINION



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Crime overtaking the streets

Editor:

Yet again another young person has been shot and killed on Pico at a place where many others come to eat and shop. And a good family grieves at their loss.

I know that the police are doing everything that they can to prevent and solve such crimes — several weeks ago officers were shot at, and in a car chase the police exchanged gunfire with, and felled a criminal intent on his escape.

It's far too many times now in Santa Monica that these things happen, this is neither the wild west nor the streets of Baghdad, but still the statistics sober the observer.

So what I would say is be a part of the solution? Support the family that has lost a promising son who by all accounts had no ties to such as those who did this deed most foul, shooting down an unarmed person where we live?

Stand up for our community by declaring we do not forget what has been done yet again and we are one in watching out for one another.

Take to streets and carry this message to those who skulk in the shadows today.

Stewart Resmer
Santa Monica

Special of the day has gone away

Editor:

The wonderful old green-and-white clapboard Ocean Park Cafe has closed. The venerable hangout by the Santa Monica Airport on Ocean Park Boulevard near Centinela Avenue, next to the old-time Cadillac repair shop, served the finest in breakfast sausage and an even better hot turkey plate special for nary more than \$5.95 every Thursday. The family of Alejandra and her brothers say their father has sold it to the motel owner around the block on 32nd. But it is closed for a while now and I'll miss it dearly while cherishing the memories: The time they stayed open late and sold sodas to the overheated on both sides out front protesting or praising Bush and Arnold's appearance at a posh Republican fundraiser at the airport, we lining the corners as the cops kept us apart and out of the intersection, all of us waiting for a glamorous presidential limousine -- men in suits in vans, actually — that never did roll by (they took the back way in). And did I mention the turkey special every Thursday? Where am I gonna go now for giblets? The neighborhood's going through them changes ... ARGGGGGHHH!

Henry Rosenfeld
Ocean Park

Tween you and me, kids ain't what they used to be



ICONOCLAST BLAST

BY SETH BARNES

I don't have children. I'm not a teacher, and I stridently ignore the little people incessantly playing portable videogames in every public place imaginable. But I've just found out that I'm seriously in the dark about a modern phenomenon: I thought those little people were "kids." Well buster, they're not. Those are "Tweens," the latest American sensation.

I might as well have been sailing across the world for the past few years in an exact replica of the Mayflower. I had no clue. Merrily, even cheerfully, I've gone about my business, thinking nothing was amiss. When I was a child, the system was pretty straightforward. If I asked my parents for something, anything, that was non-essential to my day-to-day survival, I received a stern lecture on frugality, was forced to execute 50 push-ups in rapid succession, and was sent off to sleep on a concrete slate to further consider the virtues of thrift. If you were a kid, you were supposed to be at least semi-miserable. You were the young goat of the human kingdom, and nobody was impressed. Why? Well nobody really knew why, that's just the way they had been doing things for centuries. But it was OK, because eventually you graduated from the serfdom of little-people land and became an adult.

Somewhere along the line, the whole kiddie-cart as it were, was tipped over. All of a sudden adults became fascinated with kids who were too old to derive satisfaction from a clean game of Ring Around the Rosie (toddlers), but too young to have their first inkling that it might be fun to smoke a carton of cigarettes while making prank phone calls all afternoon (teenagers). Kids were no longer fantastically obnoxious twerps who were just a few years removed from soiling their pants on daily basis. A new classification emerged for this "between" group suspended in the purgatory of not-adult land. These runny-nosed adolescents, this self-ish, narcissistic clan of tantrum throwing spoilsports and whiners had a new name: they were Tweens. Mini adults. While it would have been entirely excusable to leave this group of people alone until they had actually done something to warrant our attention, a cadre of child psychologists and Just Do It! Suburban housewives decided that we all needed to stop fast in our tracks and devote a solid portion of our waking hours to this confederacy of brats.

Contrary to every intuition of mine that is decent and pure, I've learned the following: Tweens have opinions, identities and personas. They have important feelings and emotions that have to be considered and lavished-over. Tweens mean business, they want the world, and they want it

now. Tweens have zest and zing. They are sophisticates. Life is not hard for Tweens, it is a comfortable escapade that one saunters through with a stuffed belly full of fried jalapeno poppers. Tweens live by several mantras, here is one: "Gimme! Me!" If a Tween falls in the forest, the current protocol is to immediately run to his or her aid with a newly purchased iPod and a knapsack full of DVDs. Tweens should be lauded and respected. If you are a parent, and your Tween is not the most utterly stupendous, most amazing once-in-a-lifetime miracle that has ever happened to you, you are a hideous, unworthy ogre.

Tweens have clout. As has been widely reported in the media, after several high-level meetings, the nation's advertisers placed a seething-red bulls-eye on the Tween age group. The reason for this, and for their ever-expanding power, is so obvious: Tweens are practically drowning in cash.

How's your discretionary income looking? Well, as any advertising Jack or Bob worth his Sprite will tell you, Tween's wallets are practically snow-blowing cash day and night. "Tweens are so reliable, so consistent. They, collectively, are an unstoppable cash cow ... picture Godzilla in braces with a Visa gold card, and that's your average Tween," says dazed marketing executive Taylor Trumbell. "When I was a lad, sometimes I'd pop down to the corner store to buy some animal crackers or marbles with my meager allowance, but this generation is different ... they come into the mall guns blazing, and they don't stop until the amount of merchandise is literally impossible to carry. Then, they hire a team of elephants or a helicopter to cart it away."

How did they get this cash? Who cares. There is a nasty internet rumor that behind every Tween stands an exasperated father or mother with a gargantuan credit card bill, but to that I say, "Stuff it in your craw, Daddy," to which Daddy would say, "Um, OK sport. Sounds great!" The truth is, Tweens are high functioning and operate as autonomous purchasing machines that will stop at nothing until every silly machine, overpriced wardrobe, and ridiculous gadget has been emptied from the country's malls.

While this might seem like a positive for us adults (if only because it will allow us to find the things that we want and can actually afford, like bananas and paper clips), in reality it is an ominous sign. We are at the cusp of the French Revolution in parent/tween relations and things are only going to get increasingly ugly. You see, when the lower classes gain momentum, and can see the mantle of power glowing on high, the rebellion is truly under way and nothing can stop its progress.

Which is why I fully expect to be led to the guillotine by a pack of gum chewing Jessica Simpson look-alikes in the not-to-distant future.

(Seth Barnes can be contacted at barnesseth@hotmail.com).

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to editor@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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STATE



Hilltop conservation effort proves too costly

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A conservation group has abandoned an effort to save a hilltop plot in Westchester from development after learning of its \$114 million price tag. The nonprofit West Bluffs Conservancy had hoped to secure a \$2 million grant from the Santa Monica Bay Restoration commission and use the money to buy 17 of the 114 lots being developed into homes, group members said. The tract would serve as a buffer between the houses being developed by

Standard Pacific Homes and the Ballona Wetlands below.

But the preservationists backed off when they realized that the money would buy less than one acre of land, with the bluff-facing lots going for \$1.5 million apiece.

"We have to be realistic," said the conservancy group's president, Edgar Saenz. "We can't afford the bluff top."

The two-story homes in the subdivision are expected to sell for between \$1.5 million and \$1.9 million. The development received city approval in 1999, but construction has been delayed by lawsuits and appeals.

College cartoon discussion draws a crowd, protesters

BY GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press Writer

IRVINE, Calif. — A student panel discussion that included a display of the Prophet Muhammad cartoons descended into chaos, with one speaker calling Islam an "evil religion" and audience members nearly coming to blows.

Organizers of Tuesday night's forum at the University of California, Irvine said they showed the cartoons as part of a larger debate on Islamic extremism.

But several hundred protesters, including members of the Muslim Student Union, argued the event was the equivalent of hate speech disguised as freedom of expression.

Although there were numerous heated exchanges, no violence was reported.

The panel, which included one Muslim speaker, was sponsored by the College Republicans and the United American Committee, a group that says it promotes awareness of internal threats facing America.

During the discussion in a nearly packed 424-seat campus auditorium, six cartoons were displayed: three depicting Muhammad and three anti-Semitic cartoons.

The discussion got off to a contentious start with the Council on American-Islamic Relations — an invited guest — boycotting the event and calling the United American Committee a "fringe group."

Tensions quickly escalated when the Rev. Jesse Lee Peterson, founder of the conservative Brotherhood Organization of a New Destiny, said that Islam was an "evil religion" and that all Muslims hate America.

People repeatedly interrupted the talk and, at one point, campus police removed two men, one of them a Muslim, after they nearly came to blows.

Later, panelists were cheered when they referred to Muslims as fascists and accused mainstream Muslim-American

civil rights groups of being "cheerleaders for terror."

"I put out a call to Muslims in America: Put out a fatwa on (Osama) bin Laden, put out a fatwa on (Abu Musab) al-Zarqawi," said panelist Lee Kaplan, a UAC spokesman. "Support America in the war on terror."

Thousands of Muslims worldwide have protested, sometimes violently, after the cartoons were published in a Danish newspaper and in other European newspapers. Islam widely holds that representations of Muhammad are banned for fear they could lead to idolatry.

Osman Umarji, former president of the Muslim Student Union, equated the decision by the student panel to display the prophet drawings to the debasement of Jews in Germany before the Holocaust.

"The agenda is to spread Islamophobia and create hysteria against Muslims similar to what happened to the Jews in Nazi Germany," said Umarji, an electrical engineer who graduated from Irvine last spring. "Freedom of speech has its limits."

Brock Hill, vice president of the College Republicans, said his group had a First Amendment right to display the cartoons.

"We're not going against Islam whatsoever," he said. "This is about free speech and the free marketplace of ideas."

Mohamed Eldessouky, 20, a criminology student who attended the discussion, said he was disappointed because he felt the panel and the audience were biased against Islam.

"I entered it with an open mind, but I thought it was totally biased. I thought the panelists would be more balanced. I think it did more harm than good," he said.

Lauren Chramosta, 18, a freshman, said she didn't know much about Islam and attended hoping to learn more.

"It was helpful to listen to different views," she said. "But I think (the Muslim panelist) was shut down so many times that he didn't get a fair shake."

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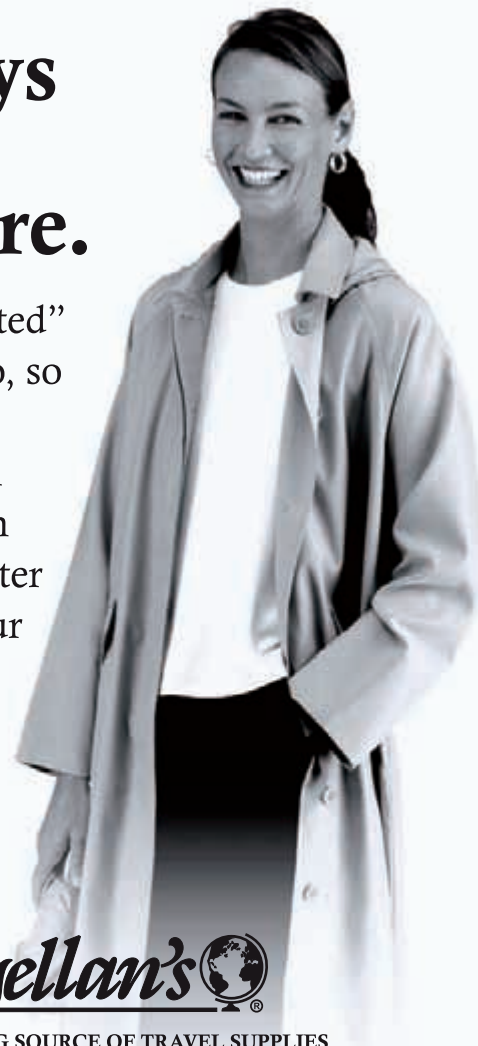
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STATE

Schwarzenegger meets with Feinstein, Boxer on levee funding

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger pressed lawmakers and the White House Tuesday for emergency help for Sacramento's river and delta levees. Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer pledged to try to get money for the levees in an upcoming spending bill for Iraq and Hurricane Katrina.

California's senators want \$23.5 million to complete high-priority flood-control projects identified by the Army Corps of Engineers. They sent a letter to the chairman and top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee asking that the money be added to a multibillion-dollar spending package for Iraq, Afghanistan and hurricane relief that Congress will take up in coming weeks.

Feinstein also said she would try to get levee money in the 2007 federal budget. President Bush's 2007 budget proposal included \$65 million for flood control projects in Sacramento, but left out \$6 million the state wanted for delta levee projects.

At a joint press conference, Feinstein and Schwarzenegger said it wouldn't be easy to free up more federal money but said they had to try. Sacramento has less than 100-year flood protection — the lowest of any large urban area in the nation — largely because of weaknesses in the 1,600 miles of federal-state levees that

protect the Sacramento-San Joaquin delta and the rivers that flow in and out of it.

An earthquake or catastrophic flood in the area could jeopardize the water supply for 22 million Californians.

"You'd lose a third of Sacramento, you'd have 20 feet of water, you'd lose two-thirds of the water supply for California, the economy would stop," Feinstein said. "The question is do you wait for it to happen or do you do something about it now. And there's only one answer — you do something about it now."

Schwarzenegger said: "We're asking the federal government to go and spend a little bit of money in order to save a lot of money."

Schwarzenegger, wrapping up a Washington visit to attend the National Governors Association annual conference, also met with White House Chief of Staff Andy Card to push for a federal disaster declaration for the levees. Schwarzenegger declared a state emergency for the area on Friday to free up funding and allow repairs to go forward without waiting for environmental reviews.

Schwarzenegger said he didn't get any assurances about a disaster declaration, but that he made his case and officials said they would help. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff agreed after a meeting with Schwarzenegger on Monday to visit California to view the levees.

The law that allows presidents to declare federal disaster areas in states is

"We're asking the federal government to go and spend a little bit of money in order to save a lot of money."

GOV. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

normally used after a disaster hits, though in the case of Hurricane Katrina, President Bush declared a disaster two days in advance.

"I think it's very difficult to get a federal disaster declaration for a disaster that hasn't taken place," Feinstein said. "But I do believe it has an overwhelming value in that it elevates it to the priority that it is. Nobody wants to wait for a Katrina-like syndrome to happen, and then of course you're eligible for a disaster declaration."

Schwarzenegger's \$68 billion public works bond proposal would spend \$2.5 billion in state money over 10 years on Sacramento-area flood control and assumes an additional federal contribution of \$3 billion. But Feinstein has cautioned him it will be difficult to obtain such a large federal share, and he said Tuesday that wants to increase the state piece. The plan must be approved by the Legislature to go before voters on a ballot.

Earlier Tuesday Schwarzenegger joined the Western Governors Association in

passing a policy resolution calling on Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform including a temporary guest worker program.

Schwarzenegger also met with House Appropriations Committee Chairman Jerry Lewis, R-Calif., and other lawmakers on the House and Senate spending committees.

Schwarzenegger sought to strike a bipartisan note on his Washington trip but criticism from California Democrats eager to oust him in November wasn't far behind. Rep. Zoe Lofgren, head of California's House Democrats, state Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and state Senate President Don Perata all issued press releases Tuesday criticizing his trip.

Nunez and Perata said the governor failed to produce any tangible federal promise after several days in Washington, and Lofgren said he should have met with the entire California congressional delegation.

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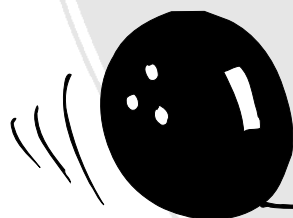
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NATIONAL



Western governors call for guest worker plan

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Western Governors Association called on Congress Tuesday to pass comprehensive immigration reform, including a temporary guest worker program.

The group that represents 18 western states passed the policy resolution unanimously while meeting at the National Governors Association annual conference. The vote came as the Senate prepares to take up immigration legislation this spring.

"When you think about issues that impact the West, this immigration issue is really the top issue right now," said Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano, a Democrat, who chairs the Western governors group.

"We believe that some of the rhetoric coming out of our nation's capitol vis a vis illegal immigration is unfounded and unwise, and what we really need is a very comprehensive approach to this issue," she said.

There's strong disagreement on Capitol Hill over immigration legislation.

The Republican-controlled House passed an immigration bill in December that tightened border controls, authorized fencing portions of the border and made illegal presence in the United States a felony. The House measure did not include a guest worker plan. Democrats criticized the bill as too punitive.

The Senate Judiciary Committee will take up legislation Thursday by Chairman Arlen Specter, R-Pa., that includes a guest worker program and creates a new "conditional nonimmigrant work authorization" status for illegal immigrants already in the United States. The immigrants could gain temporary legal status by paying back taxes and getting an employer to pay a fee.

Specter's guest worker proposal is similar to a plan advanced by President Bush, and to a bill by Republican Sens. John Cornyn of Texas and Jon Kyl of Arizona. Those proposals would allow immigrants to

stay in the United States for up to six years before returning to their home country.

The Western Governors Association's resolution — the group's first attempt to tackle the immigration issue — did not offer details on how the temporary guest worker program would work. It also did not offer ideas on what to do about the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants now in the country.

The resolution called for building regional federal prisons to house illegal immigrants who commit crimes. States now have to pay much of the cost of jailing criminal aliens.

The resolution also said that the number of employment-based visas, or green cards, should be increased, and so should the popular H1-B visas that go to high-tech and other skilled workers. It encouraged enforcement of existing sanctions on employers for knowingly hired illegal workers but did not advocate new ones.

The resolution did not discuss the border fence proposal, calling instead for enhanced border security and surveillance through technology.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., were asked about the immigration issue at a news conference Tuesday on California levee funding. Feinstein said she didn't think guest worker programs that require immigrants to leave the United States after several years were realistic but that there should be a way to allow agricultural workers already in the country to continue to work.

Schwarzenegger, who in the past has said he supports a guest worker program that would require the worker to leave the United States after some years, said immigration policies are outdated and the federal government must deal with them.

"Ideally we have a perfect situation where you have people that want to work and you have companies that need workers, so you have supply and demand, but how do you make that work is really the big challenge," Schwarzenegger said.

If we don't change our direction, we're likely to end up where we're headed. —Chinese proverb

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Wednesday, March 1

- 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
- Virginia Park, Thelma Terry Center, 2200 Virginia Ave, Santa Monica (use Lines 5, 7, and 11)

Thursday, March 2

- 12:00 noon – 2:00 pm
- UCLA Athletic Dept., J. D. Morgan Center, Press Room (use Lines 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, and Super 12)

Saturday, March 4

- 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
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Business

Retirement savings geared for long haul

MIND YOUR BUSINESS

BY KIRK G. AGUER

Almost every working person in America is, in some way, planning for retirement. Most of us are aware that traditional sources of retirement income, such as Social Security or an employer-sponsored pension, probably will not fully fund our retirement as they did for past generations. It is up to us to prepare financially for our retirement years. As we build our personal retirement assets, we generally estimate our needs based on the cost of our expected or desired retirement lifestyle, the current outlook for inflation, what we can currently afford to save and our estimated life expectancy.

This seems reasonable, but what if one or more of these factors prove to be other than anticipated and the money doesn't last? People are living longer today, and it's especially necessary to plan for the possibility of a longer life span. What if you run out of retirement savings at age 85 and live 10 or 20 more years?

Ensuring that retirement savings last long enough is where annuitization comes in. Annuitization, available through insurance contracts called annuities, guarantees the annuity owner income payments for a pre-defined period of time, typically ranging from as short as five years to as long as the lifetime of the owner and his or her spouse. Additionally, many financial advisers consider this an excellent method of building future income because annuities are tax-advantaged investments — that is, their assets grow on a tax-deferred basis during what is called the initial "accumulation phase."

How does an investor fund annuitization? First, assets are invested and built up

for a number of years in an annuity, during the accumulation phase. As a hypothetical example, a man who is currently 55 years old places assets into an annuity to begin the accumulation phase. When he turns 75, he will decide for how long he wishes to receive payments and "annuitize" his annuity contract. Thus, he will begin his "income phase" of the contract and start receiving a check every month. If he elects a lifetime payout, he will receive checks for the rest of his life, regardless of how long he lives.

How assets build during the accumulation phase depends on what you buy.

There are many types of annuities from which to choose. Some annuities (fixed annuities) guarantee a fixed rate of return, while others (variable annuities) offer professionally managed portfolios that usually invest in the stock market. Most variable annuities provide a range of features and benefits, including provisions for your heirs in the event of your death. Variable annuities are sold by prospectus only. Read the prospectus carefully before investing.

All offer the advantage of tax deferral on investment earnings which, over the long term, can represent a significant increase in value over investments with earnings subject to annual taxes. As with other investments, diversifying assets can provide a desirable mix of liquidity, stability, lifetime income and opportunity for growth. It is best to talk with an investment professional to learn what choices might suit your individual circumstances.

In the end, one of the greatest advantages of annuitization is that you do not have to know in advance how long you will require income. Therefore, you can rest a little easier knowing that you'll have at least one source of ongoing income throughout your retirement years.

(To reach financial advisor Kirk Aguer, contact him at (310) 319-5220.)

SANTA MONICA BUSINESS BRIEFS

Local architect raised to new heights

By Daily Press staff

Wade Killefer, founding partner of Santa Monica-based Killefer Flammang Architects — the firm that has designed about one-quarter of the 20,000 residential units currently planned or under construction in downtown Los Angeles — has been elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

A key element in Killefer's election, said the AIA, was his pioneering in the adaptive reuse of historic buildings downtown and the trail-blazing pro bono survey his firm conducted of some 200 buildings in the historic core which revealed that about 50 of them would be economically viable for conversion to residential use.

He also was saluted for his leadership in re-writing the city's adaptive reuse ordinance, which played a major role in attracting developers to undertake downtown projects.

Among the landmark structures Killefer's firm has transformed into multi-family housing are the Pacific Electric, Eastern Columbia and Mercantile Arcade Buildings, Gas Company Lofts and the Old Bank District.

Killefer also has been active in the design of non-profit and low-income housing, including Havenhurst Apartments, which was voted "2005 Project of the Year" by the Southern California Association for Non-Profit Housing.

A graduate of Stanford University, the 57-year-old architect also holds a Master of Architecture degree from U.C.L.A.

Web site founder up for 'Entrepreneur of the Year'

By Daily Press staff

LowerMyBills.com, a Santa Monica company, has announced that Matt Coffin, president and founder of LowerMyBills.com, has been selected by the Software Council of Southern California as a finalist in the "Entrepreneur of the Year" category of the 2006 Software Industry Awards.

The awards, which will be presented at a gala dinner event on March 8 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, recognize leaders who have made outstanding contributions to the industry. The awards also measure the continuing growth and influence of the software industry in Southern California, representing more than 8,000 companies and tens of thousands of talented employees. Finalists for Entrepreneur of the Year awards were selected based on sales and revenue growth, team-building skills, product innovation and fiscal resourcefulness.

"I am honored to be selected by the Software Council of Southern California as a finalist for this award," said Matt Coffin, president and founder of LowerMyBills.com. "Building one of the best Internet companies in Southern California has been a goal of mine. The growth of LowerMyBills.com and the development of a strong and successful team has been both rewarding and exciting, making this a terrific acknowledgment of the team's results as well."

LowerMyBills.com is part of Experian InteractiveSM and the premier, free online service for consumers to compare the lowest rates on monthly bills and reduce the cost of living. LowerMyBills.com is the one-stop destination that offers savings through relationships with more than 500 service providers across 20 categories, including home loans, credit cards, long distance, auto and health insurance, and wireless services. To date, LowerMyBills.com has helped more than 5 million consumers save more than \$1 billion with lower rates.

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THE WEEKLY RECKONING

BY BILL BONNER

The five "Big Es" are reshaping the world: The Empire is peaking out; there's an Exodus of money and power from West to East; the Economic cycle has turned against us; the Experimental money system — with no gold backing — is doomed; and the days of cheap Energy are over. So what? What do you do?

As we wrote a few days ago, we doubt that these big trends are easily tradable. You can't buy stocks in China and relax. Nor can you be sure that energy stocks are not already overpriced. And as for the stock market itself, yes it is bound to turn down. But when? And how? It could be that stock prices remain nominally stable for the next 10 years, while inflation lowers real stock values.

Probably the surest trend is the rise of gold and yet, even gold is not guaranteed to follow any known time schedule. In fact, gold is in "correction" mode right now, or should be. The price could fall to \$500, before beginning the next big move upward.

So what do you do?

First, lower expectations. Forget about trying to stay young forever ... and forget about making money from your investments. The whole idea is a bit of a fraud anyway. Why should you get richer without working? The best you should hope for is to earn a reasonable amount for allowing someone else to use your savings. You are giving up something: current enjoyment. You deserve to get something in return. Over the last 200 years, the real return from

lending savings has been between 3 percent and 6 percent. If you are able get that kind of return, you should take it happily.

Lower your expectations. Forget about building wealth. In these circumstances, the best you can hope for is that you will be able to prevent anything from knocking down the wealth you have already built. One way to do that is by buying things you like with value that is not subject to change. A house you enjoy, for example. Don't worry about selling it. Don't think about refinancing it. Don't even ask how much the neighbors got for their house down the street. Just buy it. Enjoy it. Let it go at that.

Likewise, a business — not a stock — can be a decent thing to own. You must understand it and like it. If you do, you can forget about going public ... or about selling it.

There also are many "assets" that bring pleasure to their owners beyond capital gains: paintings, boats, farms, jewelry, vacation houses, cars, collectibles. Just don't expect to be able to resell at higher prices. On the other hand, many of these

things are rare and irreproducible. If wealth really is migrating from West to East, it is possible that these things will migrate, too — at higher prices. We have heard of Chinese and Japanese entrepreneurs buying French châteaux, and then dismantling them, stone by stone, in order to rebuild them in Asia. Increasingly, great works of art are sold to bidders from the Orient. Indian billionaires are building fabulous collections.

Of course, you will need cash to pay expenses. Not knowing the future, all we can suggest is that you keep your cash as safe as possible, so that the future does not steal it from you. Put some in foreign currency CDs, for example, and put some in gold. If there is one big winner as the Big Es evolve, it is likely to be gold. The Big Es are big changes, and big changes come with big risks. When people feel threatened they tend to turn to God, guns and gold. All three might be useful. Gold is likely to be profitable, too.

(For more insight and analysis, visit www.dailyreckoning.com)



Council tells state to release the hounds

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Fully aware they have no control over the creation of a leash-free dog beach here, the City Council voted 4-1 on Tuesday to send a strong message to legislators and state parks officials that it supports residents' efforts to create a place near the surf for their canines to run free.

City staff was directed by the council to forward letters to State Sen. Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, and California State Parks stating that the council is backing legislation in Sacramento that would support the creation of a dog beach at Dockweiler State Beach. The council also directed staff to include in that letter that the council would like for the legislation, AB 359, to be amended to include Santa Monica State Beach.

The move follows years of struggle on behalf of dog owners who have been turned down by the state in their quest to create a dog beach near Wilshire Boulevard.

State Parks forbids the presence of dogs, leashed or not, on a state beach because of health and safety concerns. Environmental protection groups like the Surfrider Foundation, Malibu Chapter have sent letters in opposition to a dog beach.

"I am doing this because it's a pilot program. If it doesn't work, than we're going to retract it," said Councilman Herb Katz, who has two dogs. "I think it's important we try this."

Other members said that while they can't grant a dog beach, by supporting and calling for an amendment to AB 359, they are "leav(ing) the door open" for the future in case State Parks officials have a change of heart.

Councilman Richard Bloom, who cast the lone dissenting vote, said he has struggled with the issue but could not support the ordinance because of its potential to damage the beach.

"This pits two important interests which we have supported and worked with for a very long time against one another," said Bloom, the council's representative on the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission. "I've come to the conclusion (that of) those two important interests, there's one that must give way to the other, and I believe that the environmental commitment that we've made and the importance we have placed on clean and pristine beaches and water quality is a paramount interest."

"We have other recreational opportunities (for dogs and dog owners) and we have gone to great lengths to provide those opportunities."

AB 359, which was introduced by the late State Assembly member Mike Gordon, D-El Segundo, currently has no sponsor and is awaiting action in the state Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee, chaired by Kuehl. Supporters of the bill said there is a possibility that Assembly member Ted Lieu, D-El Segundo, who replaced Gordon, may pick up the bill.

Vikings' quest for title falls short

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

SAMOHI — Irony seemed to play a cruel trick on the Vikings Tuesday night, watching as their CIF Southern Section title hopes were pulled out from under them.

Long Beach Jordan advanced to the Division I-AA finals with a hard fought 62-58 victory.

Santa Monica High guard Bryan Louff, who made a critical steal in the final minute of Friday night's quarterfinal win over Long Beach Poly, had the ball snatched away by junior forward Larry Anderson with eight seconds left in the fourth quarter and the Panthers clinging to a 59-58 lead. Anderson was fouled on a lay-up attempt, sinking one of two free throws to put the Panthers ahead by two.

Santa Monica had the ball with six seconds remaining and a chance to win, but point guard Terrance Boozer was bumped, slipped and lost control of the ball, which was recovered by the Panthers, according to Samohi coach James Hecht.

Jordan, which last reached the Division I-AA title game in 1996, will face top-seeded Los Alamitos at the Pond in Anaheim on Saturday for the championship.

The Vikings trailed for the majority of the game, falling behind by as many as 13 at the end of the third quarter. But with the energy of players like Louff — who finished with 17 points, including four three-pointers — Samohi was able to claw their

way back into the game in the fourth quarter, outscoring Jordan 18-9. Unfortunately for Samohi, it wasn't enough.

"I really have to tip my hat to Long Beach Jordan," Hecht said. "They are a great team, as are we, but we just came up on the short end of the stick."

While players and coaches were disappointed with the loss, Hecht said his team, seeded 14th in the playoffs, should be pleased with their performance Tuesday and throughout the season, in which they went 20-10 and reached the quarterfinals for the first time since 1987 — the last time the Vikings won a division championship.

"After the game, I just told the guys that they made a lot of people proud, including myself," Hecht said. "I think we got the best out of each player. They kept their composure and every day as a team they worked hard to get better. They embraced that challenge."

"They represented Santa Monica very well."

Hecht said he will be sad to see his seniors leave, many of whom he has helped develop since they were freshman. But Hecht is looking forward to a new batch of players and believes the team can build on its success this year.

"We have a lot of good players coming back and some good talent coming up ... so we are excited about next year," he said. "We are still holding on to the memories of this season, but we have to plan ahead. There is a lot of work to do between now and the start of next season."

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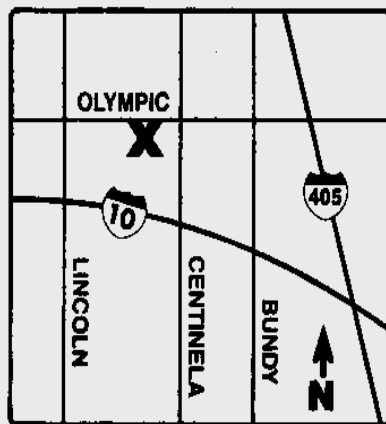
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COUNCIL COUNTDOWN

(The following is a summation of what went on in the Santa Monica City Council chambers during the council’s meeting Feb. 28, including a timeline, notable public comments and excerpts taken.)

TIMELINE:

6:07 p.m.: After waiting roughly 20 minutes for a quorum, Mayor Bob Holbrook called the meeting to order. Absent were council members Pam O’Connor, Ken Genser and Herb Katz. O’Connor was out of town on city business, Holbrook said. Katz arrived later that evening, and Genser was recovering in a local hospital from surgery. The council wished him a speedy recovery.

The council clock was stuck at 7:15.

6:09 p.m.: Holbrook calls for public discussion for consent items on the agenda. There are 16 requests to speak, with two minutes for each person. Residents, business owners, environmentalists and council gadflies discussed the creation of a dog beach near Wilshire Boulevard and the renovation of bathrooms on the pier.

6:37 p.m.: Public comment on consent items ended. Mayor Pro-Tem Bobby Shriver requested to pull an unusual number of items for discussion along with Council member Richard Bloom. The items dealt with the creation of a dog beach pilot program, the city’s investment policy, pier restroom replacement and a sewer easement at the Holiday Inn, 120 Colorado Ave.

Council voted 3-2 against postponing action on the dog beach for later in the evening, which was requested by Shriver so that Mark Gold of Heal the Bay could speak on the item later that evening.

Bloom, who voted against postponement, said, “My concern is that if we make an exemption for Mr. Gold ... why wouldn’t we make that exemption for any one on any night who can’t be here at the beginning of the meeting.”

Dog beach supporters clapped in support and were warned by Holbrook that any display such as cheering or clapping is not allowed in the council chambers. The dog beach item was approved along with the remainder of the consent items. Council voted unanimously to move forward with the pier bathroom construction, but with a request to the Landmarks Commission, which oversees improvements to the historic pier, to seek input from the Architectural Review Board.

Regarding the city’s investment policy, council approved it, but with the condition that no one making investment decisions for City Hall be allowed to have accounts in financial institutions involved in those investments. Shriver said he wanted to add this provision to protect against “leakage,” or financial kickbacks.

Shriver pulled the sewer easement item because he wanted to address why only one company bid on the design contract out of 100 who were contacted. “Only getting one bid makes me kind of nervous,” he said. “This might indicate something’s wrong with our process.”

7:30 p.m.: Council entered into closed session.

8:31 p.m.: Council returned from closed session. City Attorney Marsha Moutrie reported that the council instructed her staff to join an appeal of a court decision decided against City Hall in it’s effort to stop construction at Playa Vista because of traffic concerns the council believes were not discussed in the projects Environmental Impact Report.

8:35 p.m.: City Hall staff gave a report on preferential parking permits for employees of the Pico Neighborhood and Sunset Park. Staff recommended the council approve an ordinance creating a preferential parking pilot program for employees working around 10th Street and Pico Boulevard.

8:54 p.m.: Public comment began on the parking program.

9:39 p.m.: Public comment ended and the council entered into public discussion of the program and ultimately approved it, along with restrictions on preferential parking for streets north of Alta Avenue between Lincoln Boulevard and 17th Street. This was the first reading of the ordinance, which will be brought back before the council for final approval. Council member McKeown voted against the ordinance because he felt it was not fair to prohibit residents north of Alta from creating a preferential parking zone when other neighborhoods have been allowed to do so.

10:30 p.m.: City staff gave a report on the downtown parking program.

10:37 p.m.: Public comment began.

10:47 p.m.: Public comment ended. The council certified the final program Environmental Impact Report and after lengthy discussion and two votes that failed, the council tabled the remainder of the actions related to the item and instructed staff to bring them back in a “timely” manner when, hopefully, all council members are present. Council also directed staff to research and provide detailed information on automated parking systems and how they could be used in Santa Monica.

11:32 p.m.: Staff gave a report on the renovation of the Marion Davies estate at 415 Pacific Coast Highway into a public beach club.

12:04 a.m.: Public comment began.

12:30 a.m.: Public comment ended. Council approved the refined schematic design for the beach club and the conditions for community use. After hearing from residents who are concerned about safety and programming, council included a condition to tie enforcement and maintenance of security to the project permit and ordered staff to continue pushing Caltrans for a full traffic signal at PCH and the south parking lot of the estate. Council also asked for staff to bring back projections of operating revenues and expenditures and to come back with a “break-even” scenario.”

12:45 a.m.: Council reappointed Nancy Greenstein to the Los Angeles County Vector Control District for a two-year term. An appointment to the Pier Restoration Corp. was continued.

12:46 a.m.: Public comment began on items not on the agenda.

12:55 a.m.: The meeting was adjourned.

BY THE NUMBERS

Time spent on the top three issues facing Santa Monicans, based on city surveys:

Homelessness: 0 minutes
Traffic: 35 minutes
Parking: 3 hours
Public Comments: 2 hours and 41 minutes
City Council/staff discussions: 2 hours and 50 minutes.



LET’S TALK CHIT

“Chits” (Public addressing City Council)

■ “This whole issue of parking has become a Gordian Knot, and if it is to be cut, it must be cut with the sword of equity.”

Pico resident Paul Collins, speaking on the residential parking pilot program for employees working near Pico Boulevard and 10th Street.

■ “I do the karma pick-up.”

Susan di Rende, a member of Unleash the Beach, who said she scoops up other dogs’ poop that owners leave behind. Di Rende is supportive of the state creating a leash-free dog beach in Santa Monica.

■ Joy Fulmer Incite: “On the Big Blue Bus fare (increase for UCLA students,) I don’t know about you, but I’m really getting tired of having school kids sharing the buses. They’re getting awfully crowded at certain times of the day. It’s terrible ... Also, I did want to mention, I hope you know, it’s illegal to go into our closets, our cabinets and drawers. That’s a privacy issue. On the dog beach program, I think it should be off-season, be relatively small area and fenced in.”

QUOTE OF NOTE

“I want to remain at my most eloquent, so no comment.”

Council member Bobby Shriver, who decided not to speak further on the downtown parking program because as the newest member on the council, he is unfamiliar with the project and its history.

City gives workers some space

PARKING, from page 1

chairperson of the Pico Business Improvement District, which is comprised of a group of merchants in the area. “We’re happy for the business owners (the pilot program will affect,) but what about the rest along Pico Boulevard? If we don’t do anything to help them, they’ll go out of business and then we’ll be left with nothing but some empty storefronts, thrift shops and massage parlors.”

Resident Thomas Elias, who opposed the pilot program, said the city staff needs to come up with better ideas for alleviating the parking problem before it recommends changes to the preferential parking zones, which residents have fought long and hard to secure by showing a strong need.

The pilot program, which must come back before the council for a final reading before it can go into effect, would issue 20 preferential parking permits for employees to be used on six blocks in the vicinity of 10th Street and Pico Boulevard, according to a city staff report.

Businesses in the area would be able to enter into a lottery for the permits. If selected, a business can claim up to five permits, at a cost of \$120 each. A resident permit sells for \$15. The permits could only be used for that business and couldn’t be sold or transferred were that business to close. Employees would only be able to use the permits during normal business hours, said Lucy Dyke, Transportation Planning manager.

Dyke said city staff recommended the limited pilot program over expanded options because of strong opposition from residents and an equally powerful statement of support from business owners. The pilot program is intended to strike a balance while reducing any potential negative impacts.

While the pilot program is in effect, Dyke said city staff will analyze parking occupancies, solicit community input and return to the council with more suggestions on how to solve the parking problem. Some have suggested stacked parking, requiring businesses with permits to institute car pools, or having employees park in underutilized beach lots and shuttled to work.

Council members said they supported the pilot program because it was small enough to be eliminated if it did not work, while being large enough to gather strong data to determine its effectiveness.

“We are very anxious to see how this is going to work out,” said Mayor Bob Holbrook. “We are hoping this can be a win-win situation for everyone ... The important thing is we need to find out if this works. The goal isn’t to take away parking from residents, but to find a way to use spaces that are sitting there empty during the day. Some residents forget that there are residents who work in Santa Monica and they need parking too.”

Holbrook said businesses play an important role in the community, not only for providing goods and services, but also for the tax revenue they generate, enabling the City Hall to build public projects such as the new Main Library and Virginia Avenue Park.

“I think this will benefit everyone,” Holbrook said.

In a related action, the council voted 4-1 to prohibit the establishment of a preferential parking zone on the blocks north of Alta Avenue between Lincoln Boulevard and 17th Street, where employees working on Montana Avenue park legally. The decision was an attempt to stop the spread of preferential parking zones, which business owners and some residents said has exacerbated the parking problem.

The council ordered staff to work with residents on Alta to consider creating preferential parking for only two spaces in front of the few homes whose primary entrance is on Alta.

Councilmember Kevin McKeown voted against this because he felt is was discriminatory to prohibit one neighborhood from creating a parking zone when others have been allowed.

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LOCAL



From the ground up



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

A colorful array of flowers brighten up the garden in front of the California Art Institute.

Students write good-byes to their fallen classmate

SAMOHİ MURDER, from page 1

crisis team was set up in each house at the Samohi campus, and additional counselors were on hand to individually help students, particularly those who were close to Lopez.

"There is a lot of grief," said schools superintendent John Deasy. "He was a remarkable kid. A top notch athlete, very well known, very well liked."

Deasy said a banner with Lopez's photo was placed in the quad area of the high school so students could write good-bye messages to Lopez. The banner was taken to the family's house shortly after school on Wednesday.

"He was a wonderful student with lots of friends ... It's a huge tragedy, and we're grieving for the family and other families who have lost children to violence," said Ilene Straus, Samohi principal. "There were some student witnesses."

A memorial ceremony is scheduled for today at Samohi's Greek Theater at 2 p.m.

Lopez died at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center about an hour after Tuesday's 9:21 p.m. shooting at 2627 Pico Blvd. After he was shot, Lopez ran across the street and eventually collapsed in front of the Morgan-Wixson Theatre, on the north side of Pico Boulevard.

An employee at the convenience store said Lopez and two friends came in, purchased a taco and left. They were standing

in front of a pay phone on a sidewalk at the corner of 26th Street and Pico Boulevard. The suspect approached from the side of the building and fired about four shots, witnesses said. Police say a witness reported seeing a white pick-up truck fleeing the scene, at which shell casings were found.

**"He was a remarkable kid.
A top notch athlete, very
well known, very well liked."**

JOHN DEASY
Schools superintendent

Santa Monica detectives have not established a motive for the shooting, said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega.

Rod Prasad, who works at AAMCO Automotive on Pico Boulevard said he heard about four gunshots from his home on 27th Street, less than a block away from where the shooting occurred.

"I hear bam, bam, bam, bam and said 'oh, that's on this side of the street,'" said Prasad, who walked to the scene to see what had happened. "I moved to Santa Monica from Fourth and Crenshaw to get away from this stuff and it's here in Santa Monica. It's everywhere, I guess."

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NATIONAL

Education urged to integrate growing Hispanic minority

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — One of every seven U.S. residents is Hispanic, and that will eventually increase to nearly one of every four, according to a new study that calls for improved education to integrate the minority group into society.

“Failure to close Hispanics’ education and language gap risks compromising their ability to both contribute to and share in national prosperity,” cautions the study by the National Research Council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences.

Gabriela Lemus, director of policy and legislation at the League of United Latin American Citizens, agreed that graduating from high school is critical. Without that “they are less prepared to apply for jobs even though they may be intelligent,” she said.

Lack of education “unchains a whole series of events” leading to people not being able to raise themselves up economically, buy homes and raise families, she said.

In addition, lack of fluency in English is a problem, she said, especially for people arriving in their 20s who get caught up in a long work cycle and cannot find time to take classes.

Hispanics are a diverse group, ranging from families that have resided in this country since the days of the earliest Spanish colonies to the million of recent immigrants, many of them undocumented.

The most recent estimates from the Census Bureau show 40.5 million Hispanics in a U.S. population of 285.7 million in 2004. The bureau estimates that immigration and natural increases are adding 1.5 million Hispanics annually, a growth rate that will make then nearly 25 percent of the population by 2050.

The key question for the future, the report says, is whether being Hispanic will evolve into a symbolic identity, as has happened with other groups such as Americans of Italian, Polish, German and Irish descent, “or whether it will become an enduring marker of disadvantaged minority group status.”

Most immigrant communities become ethnic groups within three generations as a result of intermarriage with other groups, improved ability to speak English, residence in integrated neighborhoods and improved economic status, the report notes.

Intermarriage with others is rising among U.S.-born Hispanics, the report said, and Spanish fluency is eroding the longer people are in this country and across generations.

Areas densely populated by Hispanics create the false impression that the United States is becoming a bilingual nation, the report states, and in reality this is a temporary phenomenon because of large numbers of recent immigrants.

The grandchildren of the current immigrants will most likely speak mainly English, the report said.

“Although their experiences in some ways mirror

those of previous immigrant groups, the size of the Hispanic population, its varied immigration experiences, the global economy and an aging majority population have created unique challenges and opportunities for the nation,” Marta Tienda, a sociology professor at Princeton University and head of the panel that wrote the report, said in a statement.

While Hispanics have many things in common with earlier immigrants, they also have differences, the study said. These include:

■ Many are undocumented and have little education, forcing them into low-income jobs where they can face wage discrimination.

■ Hispanic immigration has continued at high levels for several decades, unlike the flow from Europe that ebbed after World War I.

■ Changes in the U.S. economy have increased the demand for skilled workers at a time when the flow of Hispanics was largely unskilled.

■ Hispanics have flowed into many parts of the country away from the so-called gateway cities like New York, Los Angeles and Chicago where earlier immigrants tended to concentrate.

Failure to graduate from high school is the biggest risk facing Hispanics and added funding to improve educational opportunities would help not only them but the country in general, the report suggests, by improving productivity at a time the baby boomers are retiring.

“Significant educational investments will not only foster improvements in their health status, civic engagement and economic productivity, but also contribute to U.S. prosperity,” Tienda said.

Maui shark attack victim remains hospitalized

By The Associated Press

WAILUKU, Hawaii — A 15-year-old Maui girl who was bitten on her right calf by an 8-foot gray shark recalled the pain of the attack Tuesday.

“I really didn’t think that I was going to survive this, because there was so much pain,” Nicolette “Nikky” Raleigh of Kihei said at Maui Memorial Medical Center, where she continued to undergo treatment in the wake of Monday’s attack.

“I’m feeling better but still in a lot of pain,” she said.

Raleigh was at Big Beach near Makena celebrating the 17th birthday of her boyfriend, Shane Wilds, along with friend Jessy Larson, 15, when the attack occurred. The shark knocked Wilds down before biting Raleigh.

“I just started screaming,” she said. “I was like ‘Get him off me.’ And then I kicked him with my (left) foot, and Jessy pulled me out of the foot of water that we were in.”

Raleigh received immediate care from a doctor, two nurses and two firefighters who happened to be at the park.

“I thought it was a dream. It was real scary,” Raleigh said.

Raleigh’s mother and stepfather, Cathy and Ken Johnson, said the ninth-grader at Kihei Charter High School may have to undergo a nerve graft.

Raleigh said she, Wilds and Larson were aware that they had been along the coast where the body of Anthony Moore, 45, of San Jose, Calif., was found Friday. Moore had been bitten by a shark after going snorkeling Thursday, but preliminary autopsy results found he was likely dead before the attack.

The beach remained closed Tuesday. State officials were to decide if it would reopen Wednesday.

Hispanics in U.S. getting sicker

HISPANICS, from page 1

compromising their ability to both contribute to and share in national prosperity,” cautions the study by the National Research Council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences.

Marta Tienda, a sociology professor at Princeton University and head of the panel that wrote the National Academies report, said Hispanics are scattering across the country and “transforming their new destinations even as we evolve as a nation.”

“We are in the midst of the Hispanic moment,” she said at a briefing. But, she added, there are two ominous trends for Hispanics — worsening health status and increased risk of family disruption.

The immigrants report, also released Wednesday, promptly documented her health concerns.

It found that 22.0 percent of Hispanics who have been in the country five years or more are obese, compared to 16.1 percent who have been here for less than five years.

High blood pressure climbs from 13.4 percent for newer arrivals to 19.8 percent for those here longer. As they stay longer than five years, diabetes rates rise from 6.9 percent to 7.5 percent and heart disease increases from 3.5 percent to 7.4 percent. And Hispanic immigrants are among those least likely to have health insurance.

Among Hispanics born in this country, 29.8 percent are obese, 24.5 percent report high blood pressure, 10.8 percent are diabetic and 7.6 percent have heart disease.

Among the native-born U.S. population overall, 22.9 percent are obese, 24.3 percent have high blood pressure, 6.1 percent are diabetic and 7.6 percent have heart disease.

The one positive note, smoking declines from 15.3 percent to 13.8 percent among Hispanics here more than five years. Some 20.1 percent of U.S.-born Hispanics smoke, as do 24.0 percent of the overall population.

Hispanics are a diverse group, ranging from families that have resided in this country since the days of the earliest Spanish colonies to the millions of recent immigrants.

And that causes problems in drawing broad conclusions, Stephen J. Trejo of the University of Texas noted. For example, lack of education is a problem for many Hispanics, especially Mexicans, but Cubans have very high rates of education, he said.

The most recent estimates from the Census Bureau show 40.5 million Hispanics in a U.S. population of 285.7 million in 2004. The bureau estimates that immigration and natural increases are adding 1.5 million Hispanics annually, a growth rate that will make them nearly 25 percent of the population by 2050.

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NATIONAL



Bush just can't seem to get back on track

BY TOM RAUM
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush has been buffeted by one calamity after another. Try what he may, he just can't seem to find traction for his second-term agenda.

With midterm congressional elections approaching, it won't get any easier.

The bad news has been coming in waves, from furors over Hurricane Katrina and warrantless wiretapping to the error-plagued rollout of the new Medicare prescription drug program, Vice President Dick Cheney's hunting accident, growing civil strife in Iraq, and now the Republican revolt over the administration's Dubai port decision.

The controversies have rocked the White House and caused alarm among Republican strategists. Their party's electoral hopes in November may depend on whether Bush is able to right his troubled presidency.

"I'm a big reformer. And it's time to reform congressional relations at the White House," said Scott Reed, a GOP consultant who managed Bob Dole's 1996 presidential campaign.

Some of Bush's recent difficulties were aggravated by the White House failure to consult earlier and more frequently on Capitol Hill, where lawmakers are easily offended by perceived presidential slights.

This failure to communicate was most pronounced in the current dispute over who should manage America's seaports, but earlier surfaced in Bush's decision to direct the National Security Agency to engage in warrantless domestic electronic spying as part of the war on terror.

Republicans, who showed near unequivocal support during Bush's first term, have been backing away as they weigh their own political situations.

Since his State of the Union address Jan. 30, the president has traveled several days a week to promote his agenda, especially proposals on health care, U.S. competitiveness and energy self-reliance. His 2005 proposals to revamp Social Security and the tax code remain, but on a back burner.

Yet most of this time, his message has been eclipsed by the controversies raging in Washington.

White House officials were stunned by the most recent developments — the Cheney shooting accident and then the seaport deal. Aides ruefully wondered out loud, What's next?

No one could have foreseen such offbeat episodes that forced the administration into crisis-management mode and diverted attention from Bush's agenda, said one senior official.

Stephen Wayne, a professor of government at Georgetown University, said many of Bush's woes are self-inflicted but there's still time to revive his presidency and for him to avoid premature lame duck labels.

"But he's got to establish his priorities slowly and carefully in conjunction with Republicans in Congress, then work with them," Wayne said. "He can't just pronounce from his podium and expect people to dutifully march behind him."

In a week that began with a veto threat, Bush lost the support of his top two congressional lieutenants. House Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist threatened to freeze the agreement to hand over management of six U.S. ports to a state-owned company based in the United Arab Emirates.

By week's end, some of the fury had ebbed as DP World voluntarily agreed to briefly postpone its American operations. The White House supported the delay for a security review — and acknowledged it could have done a better job in briefing Congress.

But the controversy threatened to jeopardize what has been the president's strongest suit in the polls — fighting terrorism. A chorus of Democratic and Republican lawmakers suggested the deal would give a company with ties to a government with a mixed anti-terrorism record a distressing level of access to U.S. ports.

"Bush is seen as a good protector for the country. The more the perceived missteps, the greater the chances for further declines in support," said pollster Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center.

Bush's approval was at 40 percent in an AP-Ipsos poll conducted in early February, and most recent polling has shown it at about the same level.

Last week, it was hard to find any U.S. political figure outside the administration, other than former President Carter, ready to defend the port deal.

A few senior Republicans, including Sen. John McCain of Arizona and Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner of Virginia, offered encouragement that matters could be worked out satisfactorily.

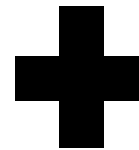
Still, Warner said he hoped at some point "the administration would recognize the very strong sentiment in the Congress." It wasn't exactly a show of support.

Presidents often see their ratings improve when abroad. Even if he doesn't get a bump from this week's trip to India and Pakistan, Bush may welcome the diversion from the unrelenting bad news at home.

Most of the disputes will still be around when he returns.

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INTERNATIONAL

Bush remains confident bin Laden will be caught

BY TERENCE HUNT
AP White House Correspondent

KABUL, Afghanistan — President Bush, on an unannounced visit to Afghanistan, said Wednesday he remains confident Osama bin Laden “will be brought to justice” despite a so-far futile five-year hunt.

Bush also suggested that the United States and India, where he was headed next, have still not reached a deal over U.S. help for India’s civilian nuclear program.

“People all over the world are watching the experience here in Afghanistan,” Bush said as he stood side-by-side with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Amid extremely tight security, Bush made the surprise visit in Afghanistan at the onset of a scheduled visit to India and Pakistan.

“It’s a thrill to come to a country which is dedicating itself to the dignity of every person who lives here,” said Bush said, making his first visit to Afghanistan.

For his part, Karzai greeted Bush as “our great friend, our great supporter, a man who helped us liberate.”

Asked about the search for bin Laden, the mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks in the United States, and of the president’s call for getting him “dead or alive,” Bush said the search for bin Laden and his associates continues.

“It’s not a matter of if they’re captured and brought to justice, it’s when they’re brought to justice,” Bush said.

Bush flew here secretly to support the fledgling Afghan government in the face of rising violence from al-Qaida and Taliban militants.

Bush’s entourage flew into the city from Bagram Air Base in a flotilla of heavily armed helicopters. Two door gunners on a press helicopter fired off a short burst of machine gun fire at unknown targets as the aircraft flew low and fast over barren countryside.

Bush arrived safely at the presidential palace where he was greeted by Karzai.

The two leaders spoke with reporters during a brief news conference after their meeting.

Afterward, Bush presided over a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new U.S. embassy in Kabul. He told embassy work-

ers they were “on the front line of freedom’s march.”

Before leaving Afghanistan, Bush was to give a pep talk to U.S. troops at the air base where he landed and departed.

Asked twice at his news conference about bin Laden, Bush said, “I am confident he will be brought to justice. What’s happening is that we’ve got U.S. forces on the hunt. ... There are Afghan forces on the hunt, not only for bin Laden but also those who plot and plan with him. We’ve got Pakistan forces on the hunt.”

Bin Laden is believed to be hiding somewhere along the mountainous border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The suspected presence of Taliban militants in Pakistan has become a source of tension in relations with Afghanistan. More than two dozen suicide attacks in recent months have fueled Afghan suspicions that militants are operating out of Pakistan.

Bush said that, when he is in Pakistan later this week, he will raise the issue of cross border infiltrations with Pakistan’s president.

Of hopes to be able to announce a

nuclear agreement with India, Bush said that, “This is a difficult issue. This is a difficult issue for the Indian government. This is a difficult issue for the American government.”

He said officials of both governments were continuing talks, even as he headed to India.

Bush has promised to sell India nuclear technology and materials to help it with its civilian nuclear energy program, but the deal is hung up on reaching accord on how to ensure that the assistance isn’t diverted into weapons programs.

“Our relationship with India is broader than our discussions about energy,” Bush said. “Ours is a strategic relationship.”

U.S. restrictions on providing nuclear assistance to India, slapped on after India’s nuclear weapons testing, remain in place.

Bush was accompanied by his wife, Laura, who visited Afghanistan in April 2005. Vice President Dick Cheney visited there in December 2005.

“We’re impressed by the progress that your country is making,” Bush told Karzai. “I come as a friend and an ally.”

American says Kabul jail rioters threatened to behead him

BY DANIEL COONEY
Associated Press Writer

KABUL, Afghanistan — The prisoners in control of a wing of Afghanistan’s most notorious prison are armed with chains, pipes and knives, and the only American among them says they’ve threatened his life.

Edward Caraballo said he hasn’t slept in days and had been vomiting for 24 hours after eating something bad. Though prisoners have backed off their threat of violence, he still feels in danger.

“The prison has been taken over,” Caraballo, of New York, told The Associated Press by cell phone from the Policharki Prison. “I’m an American citizen.”

An Afghan official said Caraballo told authorities he was safe and that officials were making progress in calming the unrest.

Caraballo, who converted to Islam after being sentenced to two years in prison, is one of three Americans in the facility, but is the only one in the block that rioting inmates — reportedly incited by al-Qaida and Taliban prisoners — seized late Saturday.

At least five inmates have died in the uprising.

“They said they were going to chop my head off. They said they were going to beat me and take my phone. At different times of the day they say different things,” said Caraballo. “At some times, they say I am their Muslim brother and that they mean me no harm.”

Authorities reported they were making progress in resolving the four-day stand-off, and said more than 300 prisoners had been transferred by bus from a wrecked prison block to another that was under official control.

Mohammed Qasim Hashimzai, the deputy justice minister, said the prison was “calm” Wednesday and he was hopeful that another 700 prisoners would be shifted by the end of the day. However, he said 350 Taliban and al-Qaida prisoners had yet to agree to move.

Hashimzai said he had spoken by cell phone to Caraballo and said the American told him he was safe. Hashimzai criticized Caraballo for talking to the media and said he had no right to have a mobile phone in the prison.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Lou Fintor said the embassy was aware of media

reports about Caraballo and wanted to see a peaceful resolution to the standoff at the prison.

“We are continuing to closely monitor the situation at the Policharki Prison and are in regular contact with the authorities. We would like to see the government of Afghanistan resolve this situation in a peaceful manner,” he said.

Caraballo was arrested in July 2004 along with Americans Jonathan Idema and Brent Bennett. The three were accused of running a private jail in Kabul as part of a freelance hunt for terrorists. Caraballo claims he is a journalist and had believed he was chronicling a legitimate counter-terror operation.

The AP also spoke briefly by cell phone to Idema, who said he was in a different part of the prison with Bennett that was not affected by the rioting.

Caraballo said he had been moved to Block One of the prison after a falling-out with Idema. He said all the doors inside the block had been ripped down during the riot and that prisoners were moving around freely inside, and that they had told him to stay in his cell.

“There are no gates anymore. Everyone

is walking around armed with sticks, pipes, chains, knives,” he said.

He said he had been told by other prisoners to contact media — apparently to raise attention to what was happening inside.

Afghan authorities have been trying to negotiate an end to the riot, but on Tuesday, violence broke out after a 24-hour hiatus, with inmates trying to push down a gate. Police opened fire, killing one and injuring three.

In all, five inmates have been killed since the uprising began and at least 41 have been wounded. Police have blamed about 350 Taliban and al-Qaida detainees — held in a different prison block to Caraballo — for inciting the riot.

Caraballo said the prisoners threatened to kill him on Tuesday but had since backed off.

“Now they are afraid of it appearing that they’ve kidnapped me, so they’re backing off,” he said. “Hopefully the situation will quiet down so I can walk out of here ... I just want to get out of here.”

Policharki Prison was built in the 1970s and is notorious for harsh and crowded conditions.



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Stapp claims tape meant to sabotage him

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Scott Stapp thinks a recently released sex video showing him and Kid Rock with several strippers is meant to sabotage him.

“Obviously someone wants to hurt me and doesn’t want me to be successful in my solo career,” Stapp told AP Radio in a recent interview.

Stapp claims the tape, which was made in 1999, was stolen from him. He and Kid Rock have won a temporary court order preventing World Wide Red Light District from distributing the video or promoting any part of it.

Red Light, which sold the infamous Paris Hilton sex tape in 2004, had displayed a 40-second preview clip of the video on its Web site. The company has acknowledged that the tape came from a third party, but has denied that it was stolen.

The tape was released just days after Stapp, the former lead singer of Creed, married former Miss New York Jaclyn Nesheiwat in Miami on Feb. 10.

Stapp, 32, says the tape was made soon after he was divorced from Hillaree Burns.

He said he previously told his new wife about having a wild year and that she accepts the tape as part of his past.

"You think it's part of your rock 'n' roll memories," Stapp said. "I should have burned that tape."

The tape was not the only thing causing Stapp headaches. A day after his wedding, Stapp was arrested for investigation of being drunk at Los Angeles International Airport. He is set for arraignment on March 8.

“You don’t want to say it’s laughable, but it’s just like, my God, there’s so much stuff,” he said. “Somebody does not like you and somebody wants you to fail.”

Stapp, who won a Grammy in 2000 for Creed's song "With Arms Wide Open," released his first solo album, "The Great Divide," last November.

LONDON — Two concert-hall ushers were shot during a Kanye West show, police said Wednesday.

West Midlands Police said the men were wounded at the National Exhibition Center, near Birmingham in central England, on Tuesday as several people were being ejected from the venue for trying to get in without tickets.

“Firearms were discharged and two stewards were taken to hospital with gunshot wounds,” police said in a statement. “Their injuries are

not believed to be life-threatening.”

The concert was the last stop in Britain on West's "Touch the Sky" tour. The 27-year-old rapper was scheduled to perform Thursday in Milan, Italy.

LONDON — Alan Ayckbourn says he is recovering after suffering a stroke.

The 66-year-old British playwright is in a hospital in Scarborough, northeast England, after falling ill a week ago. Ayckbourn is artistic director of the seaside town's Stephen Joseph Theatre.

"I hope to be back on my feet, or should I say my left leg, as soon as possible, but I know it's going to take some time," Ayckbourn said in a statement Tuesday.

“In the meantime I am in excellent hands and so is the Stephen Joseph Theatre.”

The prolific dramatist, one of Britain's most-performed playwrights, is the author of more than 60 plays, including "The Norman Conquests," "A Chorus of Disapproval" and "Absurd Person Singular."

He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1997 for services to theater.

HAVANA — Joseph Fiennes, who co-starred with Gwyneth Paltrow in the 1998 film “Shakespeare in Love,” has helped launch a new Cuban cigar, tossing off a few lines from “Romeo and Juliet” in honor of the cigar’s maker.

Fiennes was the featured visitor as Cuba began its annual cigar festival Monday night, presenting a cigar size called the “Short Churchill” by Cuba’s state-owned Romeo and Juliet brand at Havana’s Gran Teatro.

"I've really gained a newfound respect for the kind of level of attention, detail, complexity and energy that goes into making a cigar," the 35-year-old British actor told reporters.

According to legend, World War II British Prime Minister Winston Churchill smoked more than 200,000 Cuban cigars during trips to the island, Fiennes said.

"I cannot compete with Winston Churchill because sadly, I am only here for three enchanting days," he told the crowd.

WASHINGTON — Besides being the Bush administration's go-to official for working out diplomatic misunderstandings, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is also happy to let the world know she's working out at the gym.

Rice's exercise routine, including weights and a calorie-burning workout, was to be featured in a three-day segment on Washington's NBC television affiliate, WRC, starting Wednesday morning.

“She’s an active, active secretary of state,” said State Department spokesman Adam Ereli.

Asked whether the news feature signals a more muscular U.S. diplomacy, Ereli responded: "Muscular and agile."

It's not the first time Rice has showcased her hobbies for the public. Last June she took to the Kennedy Center concert stage to accompany on piano a young soprano battling an often-fatal disease.

Barbara Harrison, anchor of WRC's morning and 10 a.m. news shows, said viewers can gain insight into Rice from her routine and apply it to their own lives.

"If she, one of the busiest women in the world, can work out every day, the rest of us ought to be able to do something," said Harrison, who has been sharing with viewers her quest to lose 10 pounds.

TORONTO — Paul McCartney and his wife will travel to the ice floes off the Canadian Maritimes this week to observe seal pups before the country's annual hunt opens.

The former Beatle and Heather Mills McCartney, both longtime animal-rights activists, will head out to the frigid ice floes in the Gulf of St. Lawrence on Thursday and Friday in their bid to prompt Ottawa to end the annual hunt of seals.

“Heather and Paul’s visit to the seal pups will shine a global media spotlight on this cruel and needless slaughter,” Rebecca Aldworth, director of Canadian wildlife issues for the Humane Society of the United States, said Tuesday.

The timing of this year's hunt is uncertain. Generally the hunt runs from mid-March through mid-April, but the unseasonably mild winter has put the hunt date on hold.

Twenty years ago, the centuries-old industry appeared doomed. Celebrities such as Brigitte Bardot and Martin Sheen pushed to ban the hunt amid a worldwide campaign that featured graphic photos of doe-eyed whitecoats, or baby harp seals, being bludgeoned on the ice floes.

The United States moved to ban the import of seal products in 1972, and the European Union instituted a partial ban in 1983. Prices plummeted to as low as \$5 per seal pelt, and in 1987, Canada banned the killing of whitecoats.

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SHOWTIMES FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2006

Broadway Loews Cineplex
1441 Third St.
(310) 458-6232

The Matador
2:15pm 5pm 7:45pm 10pm
Running Scared
1:45pm 4:30pm 7:30pm 10:30pm
Walk the Line
1pm 4:05pm 7:15pm 10:15pm
Transamerica
1:30pm 4:15pm 7pm 9:45pm

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

Neil Young: Heart of Gold
11:40am 2pm 4:30pm 7:20pm 9:40pm
The New World
1:40pm
Firewall
12pm 2:30pm 5:10pm 7:40pm 10:10pm
Munich
11:20am 2:50pm 6:30pm 10pm
The Pink Panther
11:10am 3pm 4:40pm 7pm 7:50pm
9:30pm
Tyler Perry's Madea's Family Reunion
11am 12:15pm 1:30pm 4:20pm 5:20pm
7:10pm 9:50pm 10:20pm

AMC7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

Eight Below
1:20pm 4:10pm 7pm 9:55pm
Doogal
1:15pm 3:20pm 5:25pm 7:30pm
9:35pm
Capote
7:10pm 10pm
Curious George
1pm 3:10pm 5:15pm 7:20pm 9:30pm
Final Destination 3
2:20pm 4:40pm 7:15pm 9:40pm
Nanny McPhee
1:50pm 4:30pm
Date Movie
1:10pm 3:15pm 5:20pm 7:25pm
9:45pm
Freedomland
2pm 4:50pm 7:40pm 10:15pm

Nuwilshire Theatre
1314 Wilshire Blvd.
(310) 281-8228

Brokeback Mountain
12:15pm 3:45pm 7pm 10pm
Tsotsi
12pm 2:30pm 5pm 7:30pm 9:55pm

Laemmle 4-Plex Theatre
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

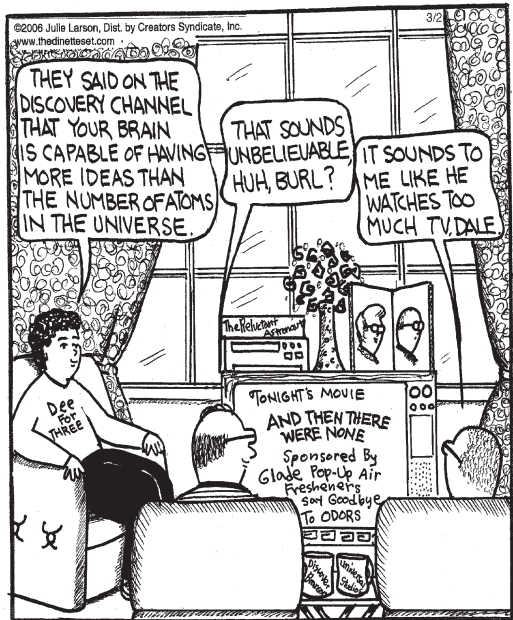
Matchpoint
1:10pm 4:05pm 7pm 9:55pm
The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada
1:40pm 4:25pm 7:10pm 10:05pm
Tristram Shandy: A Cock and Bull Story
1:10pm 3:25pm 5:40pm 7:55pm
10:10pm
Good Night, and Good Luck
1:15pm 3:30pm 5:45pm 8pm 10:15pm

Questions or comments? Email calendar@smdp.com



COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



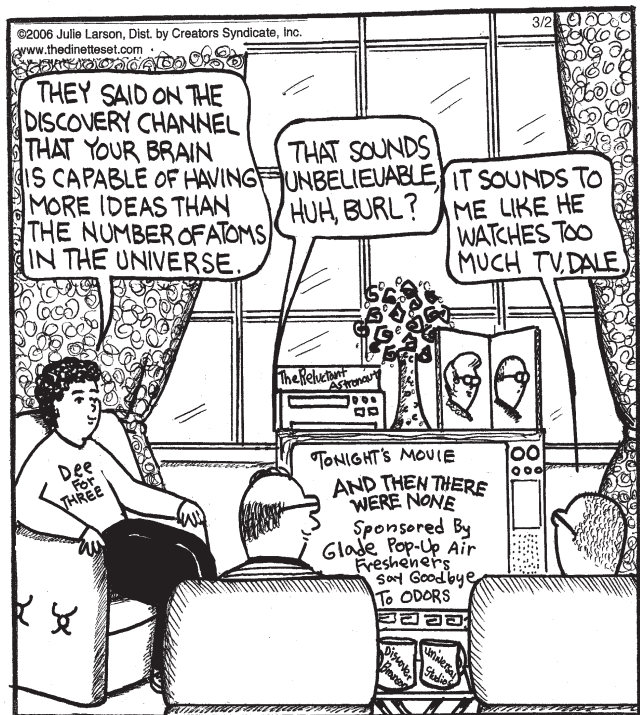
edge city by TERRY & PATTY LABAN



Garfield® By Jim Davis



Speed Bump® By Dave Coverly



Natural Selection® By Russ Wallace



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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Clothes lines
- 5 Blood bank patron
- 10 Oil org.
- 11 Break off
- 12 Tower setting
- 13 Finished a hole
- 14 Al Pacino movie
- 16 One-on-one meeting
- 20 General greeting
- 23 Stable retiree
- 24 Gets ready, briefly
- 25 Tiny
- 27 Dr.'s grp.
- 28 Wealth
- 29 Book designer's choice
- 32 King or queen
- 36 Man in a mask
- 39 River from Pittsburgh
- 40 Records of events
- 41 Hay setting
- 42 Blokes
- 43 Colors

DOWN

- 1 Brewery need
- 2 Heroic story
- 3 Butte's kin
- 4 Eat greedily
- 5 Wild card, at times
- 6 Big singing group
- 7 Snare
- 8 Pindar piece
- 9 Checkers side
- 11 Word separator
- 15 Domino of music
- 17 Foot part
- 18 Foal's mom
- 19 They some-times clash
- 20 Tiff
- 21 Base group
- 22 Bound
- 25 Lab runners
- 26 Freezing
- 28 Indy events

C	E	S	T			P	E	P	E
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C	R	E	E	P		O	P	E	R
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G	A	Z	E	R			U	N	I
A	D	O	B	E		R	E	C	O
R	A	N	T				T	A	N

Yesterday's answer

- 30 Liszt's "Concerto No. 1 in —"
- 31 Goes under
- 33 Tar's call
- 34 Teeming
- 35 Periods
- 36 Joke
- 37 Early hour
- 38 Abby's sister

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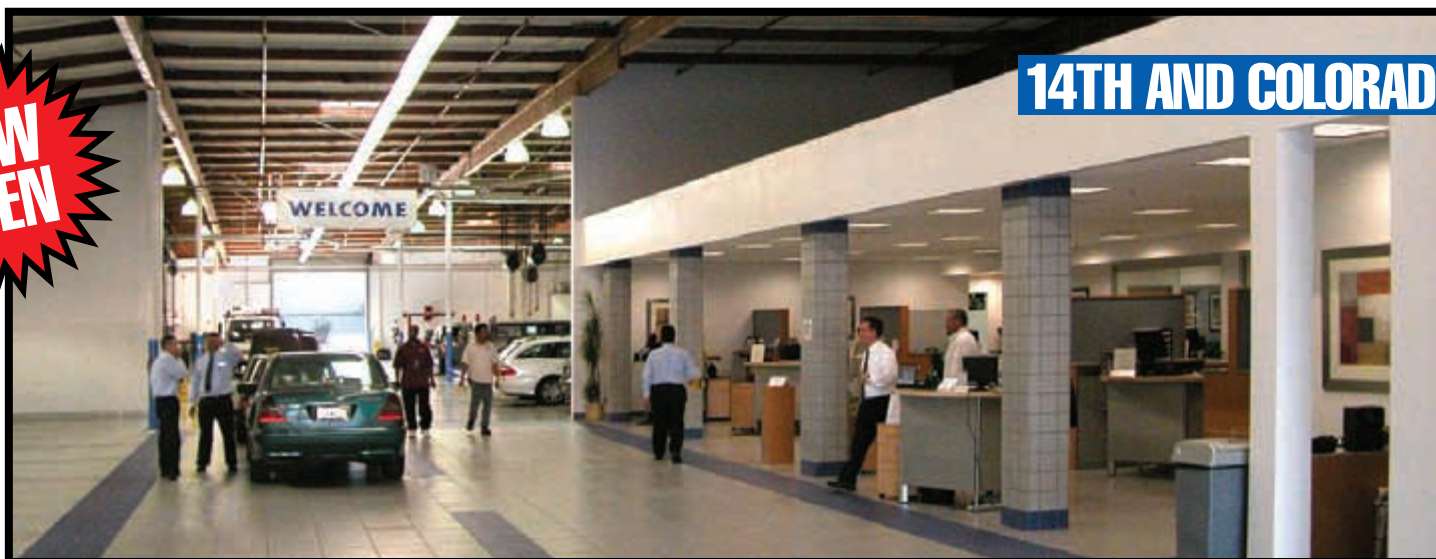
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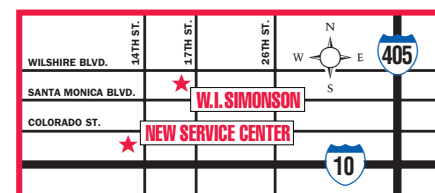
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