

FREE

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Photos by Carolyn Sackariason and Seth Kotok
Above: SMC campaign manager Denny Zane explains preliminary voting results to college president Piedad Robertson on Tuesday night.
Below: Inspector Jon VanNess, right, and election volunteer Eva Park look over voter rolls Tuesday afternoon at a precinct located at 17th Street and Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Monica.



College bond gets tentative approval by city voters

Absentee ballots used as gauge for college's victory

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica College supporters were celebrating victory late Tuesday over what appeared to be an approval of a \$160 million bond measure to fund the school's facilities.

Shortly before midnight, no precincts had reported. But SMC's campaign manager Denny Zane was confident that a majority vote on absentee ballots was enough of an indication that Measure U garnered the required votes.

"I have never been in a campaign with that positive of a margin," he said. "It signifies a likely positive outcome."

SMC President Piedad Robertson remained cautious throughout the night even though 67 percent of the esti-

mated 2,000 absentee voters approved the bond.

"I'm nervous," she said shortly after the polls closed. SMC officials, students and supporters spent most of the night at the restaurant Back on Broadway, which was the designated poll watching site.

The advertising war chest for "Vote Yes on Measure U" had reached about \$200,000, with \$115,000 raised by SMC's Associated Students over the past two years. The funds are collected through student fees.

"The students strongly believe in the future of this college," said Jeff Gordon, the president of SMC's Associated Students. "My kids will be able to benefit from this."

The money will be used to renovate buildings at the campus on Pico Boulevard. It also will partially fund the purchase of the 10-acre BAE Systems property that the college recently bought for \$30 million near the airport for a satellite campus and more parking.

Opposition to the measure

See ELECTION, page 4

At midday, voters hadn't turned out

By Daily Press staff

Turnout at one precinct during Tuesday's primary election was holding steady at about 12 percent at the mid-afternoon point, according to one election official.

"I read somewhere they were expecting 35 percent (turnout)," said Jon VanNess, inspector at the precinct at 17th Street and Wilshire Boulevard. "If we get that, we're lucky."

VanNess said the precinct, which is located inside the service department at the W.I. Simonson Inc. Mercedes Benz dealership, usually logs a 50-55 percent turnout. However, VanNess said he was expecting more traffic from people coming home after work.

"Up to now this is the lowest (turnout) I've seen," he said, adding that he is a veteran of six elections.

At about 3:30 p.m., 50 of the precinct's 150 registered Republicans and 60 of the 400 registered Democrats had voted, VanNess said.

He attributed the difference to the competitive race for the Republican gubernatorial nomination between former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan, businessman Bill Simon and Secretary of State Bill Jones.

At the precinct at 2903 Santa Monica Boulevard, Michael Harges, Calvin Crowe and Linda Cooper managed the polls from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Just before noon Crowe said 7 a.m. was the busiest time of the day.

"And since it's been a steady dribble," said Harges. "Then there's an intermediate spurt of people."

Alena Brown, a UCLA student, rushed into the polling place at 11:40 a.m.

She said decided to vote now and risk being late for class rather than miss the chance to vote.

"I'm the only one of my roommates who votes," Brown said.

Loews Hotel fined by U.S. Dept. of Justice

Hotel illegally asked for immigration documents

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel has been forced to pay \$12,000 in fines after it illegally demanded immigration documents from a former employee.

The nationwide resort chain conceded Monday that it had unknowingly broken a federal law when it suspended Mario Guevera, who is a legal permanent resident, from work last July when he could not produce immigration documentation.

When Guevera produced a valid unrestricted social security card, the hotel refused to accept it and suspended him from his job as a busser. Even though Guevera

produced a residency card the next day, he lost \$60 in wages.

"We made an error. It was not an intentional error. It was a part of the law we were not aware of."

— SARA HARPER

Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel spokeswoman

"Eventually he came back with a residency card, but the fact is he never should have been asked for anything at all," said Kurt Petersen, a union organizer. "He is a permanent resident of this country, and he doesn't have

to prove that."

The Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees local 814 union filed a complaint last August on behalf of Guevera with U.S. Department of Justice. But after it's all said and done, Guevera will only get \$60 in back pay — the rest will go to the Department of Justice, the entity that issues the fines.

Loews resorts across the country must now retrain their human resource departments on immigration documentation, as part of the settlement.

The fine should serve as a message to the entire resort industry in Santa Monica, said Tom Walsh, president of the local union chapter.

"In the wake of September 11th, discrimination against immigrants still has no place in our society," said Walsh. "We feel that Loews assent to pay \$12,000 fine and the re-training speaks volumes about their unfair treatment of immigrant workers."

See LOEWS, page 4

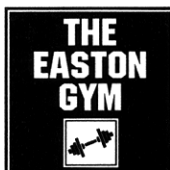
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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Experiment with ideas. Think outside the box. A friend and associate triggers many ideas within a discussion. What might be scheduled as a business meeting turns into a social occasion. Though you might have a reservation or two about this get-together, remain confident. All will work out. Tonight: E-mail a friend.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ As of late, you've been trying to ignore a boss or superior. You might have even discarded his or her opinions. Shake yourself out of this limited thinking. Discover what this person is really saying. A key partner instruments greater success, both personally and professionally. Tonight: Say thank you, nicely.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Grab your notepad, even if you think you have the memory of an elephant. When as much information gets dropped on you as will today, you're bound to forget a detail or two. Think of greater opportunities through an unconventional, but perhaps brilliant, scheme! Tonight: Let another lure you into his or her idea of a good time.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Think positively despite another's attempt to make inroads, perhaps, in your financial situation. Use this person's multiple ideas for your gain. Learn new ways to increase your productivity. Avoid using the word "no." Try out the words "maybe" or "possibly." Tonight: First finish work, then decide.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Lying back won't work. Hop right in, even if it means a rather volatile discussion. Brainstorming could provide a rather provocative solution. Let another know just how deeply you feel, through actions as well as words. Cupid's arrow heads in your direction. Tonight: Let the good times roll.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Check out investments involving your security early on. You will need to dedicate your concentration to work and a new innovation that shakes up procedures. Listen well to a co-worker. Information you receive could surprise you. Be willing to join in. Tonight: Be spontaneous.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Speak your mind. Don't sit on a loved one or special friend who might be a bit flirty or imaginative. Keep communication open with an eye to changing your tone or approach toward someone. Another clearly delights in teasing you. Tonight: Catch up on errands first.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Indulge another, but realize more of what you want from this situation. Unexpected developments force you to redirect your energy. A child or loved one demands attention whether you're up for it or not. Let another tease you. Tonight: Nap and then decide.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Allow your reputation to speak for you when dealing with others. You might need to clarify surprising news. Don't let the cat out of the bag by letting another know how happy you are just now about information. Make a call to a family member. Share your good news. Tonight: Celebrate. You have reason.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★ The less said right now, the better. You won't regret being an observer rather than a participant. Still, stretch your hands out when dealing with a financial matter. Maintain your standard conservative stance — for now. Enjoy letting another convince you to play ball. Tonight: Take it easy.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Don't even question your role in a present discussion, be it a work-related or personal discussion. If you provoke another, you'll decide to soft-petal the situation. You want what you want, but don't lose a close friend or associate over it. Tonight: Make a scheduled meeting.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ Unexpected news and feedback heads you on another track. Your good nature comes through and puts others at ease. Carefully disclose a personal perception that might not have been tested out. You might want a private audience! Tonight: The lead actor.

CORRECTION: A story in the March 5 edition should have stated the Santa Monica Planning Commission issues all alcohol permits to businesses in the city. The Santa Monica City Council is being asked to amend an ordinance changing permit conditions.

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STATE



Simon wins GOP primary; Condit loses re-election bid

BY ERICA WERNER
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Conservative businessman Bill Simon upset the moderate former mayor of Los Angeles in the GOP gubernatorial primary Tuesday in an election that also cost Rep. Gary Condit his re-election bid.

With roughly 40 percent of precincts reporting, Simon had 48 percent, or 426,163 votes, and Richard Riordan had 28 percent, or 246,727 votes. Secretary of State Bill Jones had 21 percent, or 188,860 votes.



“Now we’re just going to sit back and let the people tell us what they want us to do.”

— **BILL SIMON**
Republican candidate for Governor

“It’s really great to have come through a long campaign and have a chance to get our message out,” Simon said at the GOP’s election night party in Los Angeles. “Now we’re just going to sit back and let the people tell us what they want us to do.”

Two-and-a-half hours after polls closed, Riordan called Simon to concede. “We must back Bill Simon,” Riordan told supporters. “Bill Simon is the hope to bring glory back to the Golden State.”

Simon, a political newcomer who was a virtual unknown just months ago, will face Democratic incumbent Gray Davis in November. It’s a matchup Davis himself

helped engineer: He spent some \$10 million on an unprecedented barrage of attack ads against Riordan during the primary.

The governor fired the first shots Tuesday in what aides said will be a campaign to paint Simon as too conservative for California.

“Bill Simon is a true-blue, think-tank conservative,” Davis said in his victory speech. “...I respect the sincerity of his beliefs but I believe many of his ideas are out of step and out of touch with most Californians.”

Many analysts believed Riordan, a moderate who supports abortion rights and gay rights, had a better chance than Simon to beat Davis. Simon holds traditional conservative views, opposing abortion rights and gay rights.

In the Democratic primary, Assemblyman Dennis Cardoza led with 9,929 votes, or 54 percent, to 6,640 votes, or 36 percent, for Condit. Four other candidates split the rest. Seventy-two percent of precincts were reporting.

“Today the people of the Central Valley stood up for their values, the values that are central to our lives,” Cardoza said at a victory party in Modesto. “You stood up for opportunity, you stood up for responsibility and you stood up for our community.”

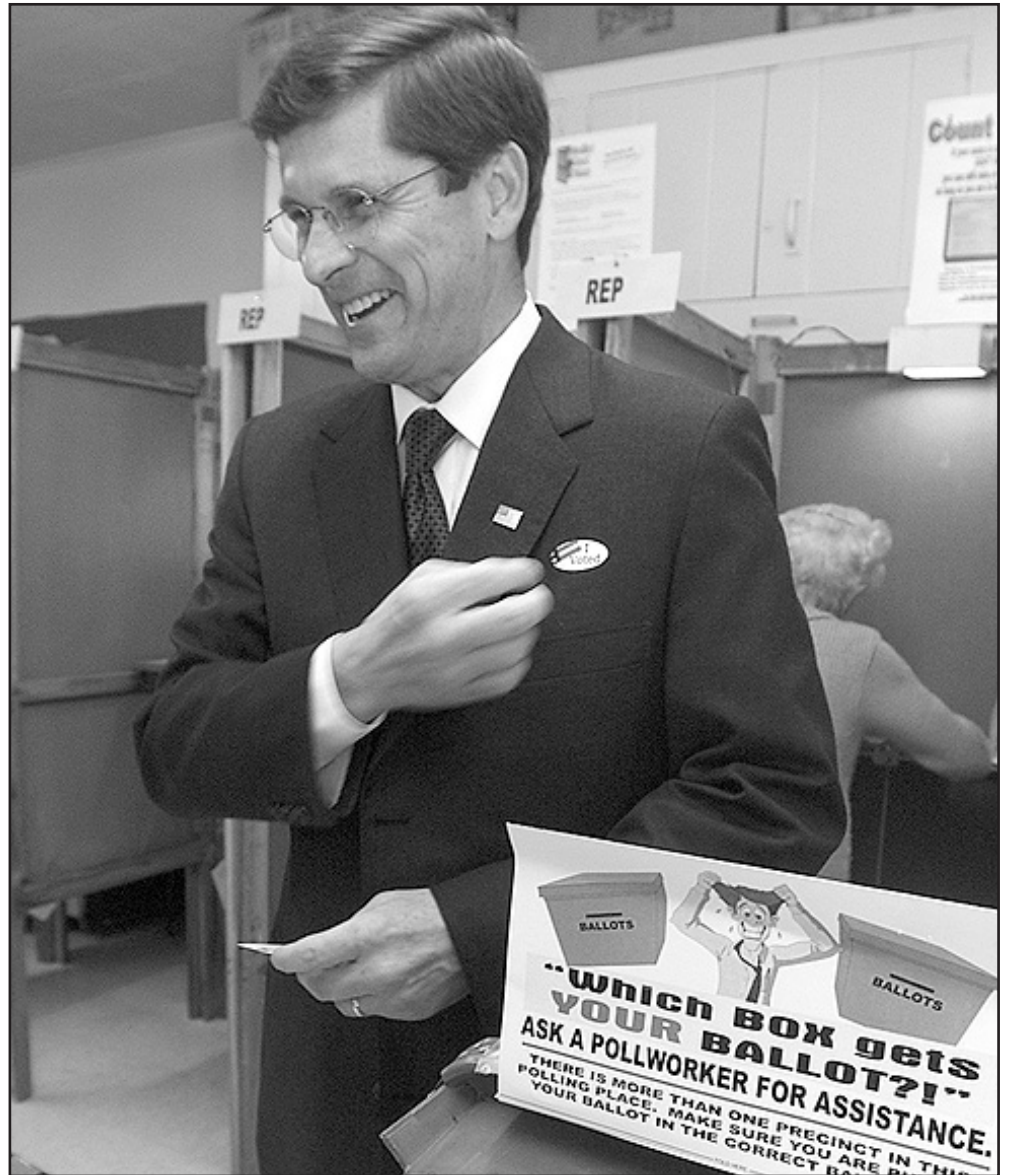
Cardoza will face Republican Dick Monteith in November.

Ignored by his fellow Democrats and unable to shake the scrutiny of his relationship with missing intern Chandra Levy, Condit, who was seeking a seventh term, for the first time had to invest his own money in his campaign.

Condit, 53, admitted he had an affair with Levy, the 24-year-old Washington intern last seen April 30, according to Washington police sources. But they have said he is not a suspect in her disappearance.

Condit campaigned in a reconfigured district in which 40 percent of the voters had never seen his name on a ballot.

Sounding wistful in a brief appearance outside his home Tuesday night, Condit noted that he will have served 12 years in Congress when he finishes his term.



Damian Dovarganes/Associated Press

Republican gubernatorial hopeful Bill Simon smiles after casting his ballot Tuesday, March 5, 2002, in California’s gubernatorial primary, at a polling place in the Pacific Palisades section of Los Angeles.

“It’s been a great opportunity to be in public service,” Condit said as his family and friends gathered behind him. “I’ll never forget it.”

In the governor’s race, Riordan, 71, ran partly at the urging of a White House eager for Republicans to retake California. But he largely ignored the conservative voters who make up the Republican Party’s base.

That gave an opening to Simon, a 50-year-old investor with traditional conservative views and a GOP pedigree. His father, William E. Simon Sr., was treasury secretary under Presidents Nixon and Ford.

Voters also considered six propositions, among them a \$2.6 billion water and parks bond which would be the largest measure of its kind in the nation’s

history. With more than a quarter of precincts reporting, the measure led with 741,227 votes, or 54 percent.

A proposition that would have let members of the state Senate and Assembly serve up to four years longer in office than now allowed, lost Tuesday. Proposition 45 would have allowed legislators to run again if they got signatures from 20 percent of registered voters in their district.

With more than 30 percent of precincts reporting, 950,208 voters, or 60 percent, defeated the measure.

Meanwhile, in a newly created Los Angeles County congressional district, Democrat Linda Sanchez hoped to join her sister Rep. Loretta Sanchez in the House. If elected, they would be the first sisters to serve in Congress.



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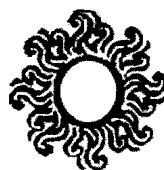
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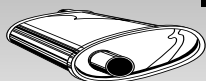
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LOCAL

Measure U will fund SMC campus facilities

ELECTION, from page 1

came late, with an ad campaign estimated at under \$1,000 and little public protest until just weeks before election day.

Opposers argued that the bond would spur more uncontrolled growth at the college. The idea of more satellite campuses concerns many residents who have been impacted by the school's expansion over the years.

The bond's average cost to taxpayers will be \$1.12 per month for renters and \$77 per year for the average homeowner in Santa Monica and Malibu.

Opposers also argued that the local community shouldn't be funding a college that has 32,000 students, many of which commute from outside of the city. Their third argument is that the measure reduces local bonding capacity.

The bond's average cost to taxpayers will be \$1.12 per month for renters and \$77 per year for the average homeowner in Santa Monica and Malibu, according to Graham Pope, the co-chair for the committee supporting the measure.

The bond issue in the first year is estimated at \$16.21 per \$100,000 in assessed

valuation and the average cost over the bond's life will be \$19.21 per \$100,000.

A facilities assessment completed earlier this year outlined 21 projects at the college. Priorities are to replace the earthquake-damaged liberal arts building and temporary buildings with modern labs and classrooms. Facilities for the nursing, environmental studies, earth sciences and math programs also need upgrades and improvements are needed to meet standards for campus lighting, security and the American Disabilities Act.

Other pressing needs are to find space for student parking and the emeritus college program, which is geared to students ages 55 years or older.

The emeritus program is housed on the ground floor of a city parking structure on Second Street and the city has plans to turn property into a park at Santa Monica Airport, where students park and ride shuttles to the main campus a mile away.

Renovations are expected to be completed over the next 10 to 12 years. The college's last bond issue was for \$22 million in 1992 to build an addition to the science building and library.

The measure needed a 55-percent approval from residents in Santa Monica and Malibu to pass.

As Jay Zabriskie left his polling precinct on Santa Monica Boulevard Tuesday morning, he shared his thoughts on why he voted for Measure U.

"I do a lot of research on the propositions before I vote," he said. "I've been to the Santa Monica campus and it's a good school, but its infrastructure needs help."

Dept. of Justice forces hotel to re-train personnel staff

LOEWS, from page 1

Both the union and the Department of Justice have the right to enforce the settlement in federal court if Loews should default.

"We made an error," said Sara Harper, a Loews spokeswoman. "It was not an intentional error. It was a part of the law we were not aware of."

But Petersen said the hotel chain was well aware of the law and chose not to follow it.

"They spend millions in legal fees every year," he said. "They should have known."

Harper said the union is spreading misinformation that the hotel had singled out immigrant workers.

"We were uniformly checking residency documents," said Harper. "We didn't single one person out, but rather employed a uniform practice."

Petersen disagrees. He said the hotel has a long history of treating immigrant workers differently than nationalized laborers.

"When people were recalled after 9-11 they only asked workers who were immigrants for their documents," Petersen said. "We believe there is a pretty clear pattern of applying laws specifically to immigrants."

Harper said the union's claims are out of line.

"It's certainly not the case," she said. "We are not targeting any union sympathizers or otherwise."

Check point nabs drunk driver

By Daily Press staff

A Santa Monica Police Department checkpoint nabbed one intoxicated driver and issued 61 citations during a five-hour period last week.

Officers stopped 365 vehicles at the entrance of the 1550 beach parking lot last Friday, in search for invalid driving licenses and drunk drivers.

Of the citations issued, 41 vehicles had to be towed to the city's impound lot.

The state's Office of Traffic Safety paid for the checkpoint through a grant as part of a program called "Removing Irresponsible Drivers," also known as RID. The grant is designed to remove unlicensed drivers from local roads.

"The goal of these programs aim at educating and bringing awareness to our community while at the same time detecting and removing drunk and irresponsible drivers from our roadways," said Lt. Frank Fabrega, a police department spokesman.



Americans going to the movies the most since 1959

BY ANGIE WAGNER
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Americans haven't gone to the movies this much since President Dwight D. Eisenhower sat in the Oval Office.

Even after the Sept. 11 terrorists attacks and with the country in a recession, movie admissions for 2001 were the highest since 1959.

"A lot of people thought that after Sept. 11, the movie industry would go into the tank. ... but for some strange, and to me not bizarre, reason, the opposite happened," Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, said Tuesday.

"A lot of people thought that after Sept. 11, the movie industry would go into the tank."

— JACK VALENTI
Motion Picture Association of America

Admissions last year were 1.5 billion, a 5 percent increase from the previous year and a 30 percent increase from 1991, according to the motion picture industry's key trade group.

Valenti said the numbers prove that even in uncertain times, people still want to be entertained.

Frequent movie-goers and family friendly films helped drive ticket sales even though the number of movie screens continued to decrease, Valenti said during ShoWest, an annual convention for theater operators meeting in Las Vegas through Thursday.

Frequent movie-goers — those who see at least 12 films a year — accounted for 82 percent of all admissions, he said.

The number of theater screens, which

peaked at almost 38,000 in the middle of 2000, fell to 35,459 by the end of 2001, said John Fithian, head of the National Association of Theatre Owners.

"This is a worldwide phenomenon for us, where admissions are going up during a time of economic challenge," he said.

Valenti called last year the "greatest box office year in film history," with total receipts of \$8.41 billion.

A record 20 films reached the \$100 million mark, with five reaching \$200 million.

Of those five, none had an R rating, proof that people want more family oriented films, Fithian said. Of the top 20 films, only three were rated R.

"It's very simple, R-rated pictures don't sell," he said. "It's family pictures that work the best."

Fithian also said that after Sept. 11, there was speculation that movies needed to be less violent.

"It didn't take long to realize we didn't need to make any changes at all. Our film buyers are buying just like they did before Sept. 11," he said.

Valenti noted the news coverage of the burning and collapsing World Trade Center towers "and yet we're worried about putting out a movie that shows the same thing. That doesn't make any sense to me."

The average cost to make and market films from major film studios decreased 4 percent last year to \$78.7 million. That's an average of \$47.7 million to produce a movie and \$31 million for prints and advertising, Valenti said.

The average ticket cost, which includes matinee and other cinema discounts, was \$5.65, up from \$5.40 the year before, Fithian said.

Valenti also said Hispanics watch the most movies per capita — 9.9 films a year, representing 15 percent of admissions. Blacks view 7.6 films a year for 11 percent of admissions and whites see 8.1 films a year with 68 percent of admissions.

Father suing daughter's friends for her Ecstasy death

BY TODD SPANGLER
Associated Press Writer

PITTSBURGH — A man whose daughter died of an Ecstasy overdose filed a \$275,000 lawsuit Tuesday against her friends and a woman who took the teen-ager into her home, saying they waited too long to get medical help.

Don French alleges four of Brandy French's friends knew she took the drug at a concert and was having difficulty walking and talking, according to court papers.

The lawsuit also names Rosalind Hopkins, whose son Lewis brought 16-year-old Brandy back to the Hopkins home after the concert in May. The teenagers told Mrs. Hopkins that Brandy had been drinking, according to testimony at a coroner's inquest.

French alleged that even though Brandy was unable to talk and her breathing was abnormal, Rosalind Hopkins waited more than three hours to call paramedics, who arrived after mid-

night and could not find a pulse.

"Her chances of survival got slimmer and slimmer the longer they waited," said John Gismondi, French's lawyer.

Brandy's friends have said the concert was the first time she used Ecstasy. A man accused of selling the pill that killed Brandy is charged with homicide.

French is suing the Hopkinses, Michelle Maranuk, Paula Wilson and Robert Sontag, alleging negligence. He also named Clear Channel Entertainment, operator of the concert site, saying employees failed to help Brandy.

Rosalind Hopkins' lawyer refused comment on the case, and an attorney for Maranuk did not return a telephone call to The Associated Press. A representative of Clear Channel Entertainment, based in San Antonio, said company officials were reviewing the case and had no comment. Wilson and Sontag could not be reached.

Maranuk's lawyer has said his client believed the drug was not lethal.

STATE BRIEFS

Going back to the streets

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — In an effort to rehabilitate drunks, petty thieves, vandals and other minor offenders, a San Fernando Valley court program is trying to keep dozens out of trouble by having them clean up the neighborhood.

Van Nuys Community Court officials said Monday that the experiment, which often involves picking up trash, planting trees and removing graffiti, is making gains toward closing the revolving door of repeat offenders often seen in the traditional court system.

Since the program's debut nine months ago, only four of the 211 participating offenders have been re-arrested.

Superior Court Commissioner Martin Wegman said it has been a great help to those who want to help themselves, including problem drinkers who join Alcoholics Anonymous and get sober.

"In nine months of doing this, we've touched people. We've had 20 people going to AA meetings," Wegman said.

Getting to heart of the matter

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Sixty heart defibrillators are being distributed to middle and high school campuses, and the school district expects to have 1,000 employees trained to use the devices by summer.

There were nearly two dozen sudden cardiac deaths on district campuses last year, according to the American Heart Association, which lobbied for the defibrillators after counting the deaths using media reports and other research.

The school district does not keep records of deaths related to cardiac arrests and couldn't confirm the number, district spokeswoman Cricket Bauer said.

"I think what LAUSD is doing is right on time," said Kathy McInerney, an official with CARE Foundation, which educates the public about sudden cardiac death. "The defibrillators can and will save lives."

The defibrillators cost about \$2,800 each. School nurses already have been trained to use them.

BH attorney sentenced for gun carrying

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A former Beverly Hills attorney was sentenced to eight months in prison for carrying a gun into a U.S. Bankruptcy Court in the San Fernando Valley.

Ronald Wayne Sampson, 63, pleaded guilty to possessing a firearm in a federal court facility. He was sentenced Monday by U.S. District Judge George King, who also fined him \$5,000.

Sampson, now an optometrist and real estate broker, admitted he had a loaded .38-caliber handgun inside his briefcase when he entered the court in suburban Woodland Hills on Oct. 12. The firearm was discovered after the briefcase was put through a scanner.

Sampson told authorities he kept the gun, which was registered in his name, for protection. He said he had planned to take it to a gunsmith to be cleaned after his court appearance.

Anthrax scare catches up with fire captain

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A federal judge refused to accept a guilty plea and ordered trial for a city fire captain who allegedly sent a threatening letter containing a brown powder to his ex-wife's lawyer during the national anthrax scare.

U.S. District Judge Edward Rafeedie on Monday ordered an April 2 trial for Christopher Antonio Cooper, 44, of suburban Encino on a felony count of mailing a threatening communication.

Cooper reached an agreement with prosecutors to plead guilty to a misdemeanor count of mailing non-mailable matter, but the judge said there wasn't a factual basis for pleading to a lesser count and he ordered Cooper to trial on the felony.

If convicted, he faces up to five years in prison.

Cooper is on paid leave from the Fire Department.

The letter he is accused of sending to the San Bernardino law office of Yolanda Garza was received Oct. 11, shortly after the U.S. anthrax scares began. Authorities said it contained a brown powder and a check with the words "Choke On It" written on the memo line.

He was under a court order to make monthly \$100 payments to Garza's law firm to satisfy the \$2,500 legal bill his wife incurred during their divorce.



Relatives in Woodland, Camarillo mourn losses

BY JENNIFER COLEMAN

Associated Press Writer

WOODLAND, Calif. — A former Woodland man and longtime U.S. Navy SEAL was one of seven Americans killed when two helicopters took heavy enemy fire from al-Qaida and Taliban forces in eastern Afghanistan.

A Camarillo family's son-in-law was also among the casualties.

The deaths were the largest loss of Americans in battle in nearly five months of fighting, according to the Pentagon.

Petty Officer 1st Class Neil Roberts, 32, who joined the service after graduating from Woodland High School in 1987, was the son of Jan Roberts and the late Chris Roberts, former manager of Contadina Foods in Woodland, according to the Daily Democrat. He has a twin brother and 10 other brothers and sisters.

Lt. Katie Licup, a spokeswoman for the Navy Special Warfare Command, said Roberts was the first Navy sailor killed in Operation Enduring Freedom. He is survived by his wife and 18-month-old son, who lives in Virginia Beach, Va., she said.

Roberts' parents and siblings in Woodland stayed indoors Tuesday and declined to be interviewed.

"He was a real nice kid — kind of a tough kid who didn't let things bother him," said Jeff Sheline, a high school wood shop teacher who taught Roberts. "He was probably a good candidate for the SEALs."

Jeff Nichols, who grew up with the Roberts family, recalled how there were always lots of children playing in their front yard.

"He was always a real scrappy guy; not the biggest guy," Nichols said. "We're all real proud of him."

Two MH-47 Chinook helicopters in eastern Afghanistan took enemy fire Monday, killing seven U.S. soldiers and

injuring 11 others.

A spokesman for the U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Fla. said a Chinook helicopter was flying low on a reconnaissance mission when it was hit with a rocket-propelled grenade that knocked Roberts out of the aircraft and caused a hydraulic problem. The helicopter landed about a half-mile away, he said.

"Before it was mostly concerning the people of New York. But there's a real sense of personal loss on my part, and the town's, I'm sure."

— JEFF SHELINE
Woodland High School teacher

A second Chinook was flying in tandem with the first and rescued the downed crew, then returned to the area where Roberts fell out. The second helicopter dropped troops in that area, and six were killed in a firefight, Marine Maj. Ralph Mills said.

Roberts was apparently shot after surviving the fall, and died from a bullet wound, said Mills, speaking for the U.S. Central Command.

The second helicopter returned and picked up the dead and wounded, he said. The wounded were being treated in a hospital in Afghanistan.

Rick Fenaroli, a family friend of almost 20 years who used to work with Roberts' father at Contadina, now Pacific Coast Producers, said he was surprised and shocked to hear about Roberts.



Frank Augstein/Associated Press

A coffin containing the body of a U.S. soldier killed in Afghanistan is carried off a transport jet at Ramstein air base, southwestern Germany, on Tuesday. U.S. Army chaplains held ceremonies Tuesday in Ramstein for seven American soldiers killed Monday in Afghanistan in attacks by al-Qaida and Taliban fighters. The remains were brought to Germany for transfer to the United States.

"They were a real close family," Fenaroli said. "(Roberts) was always pretty outdoorsy. His dad was a submariner in the Navy. And Neil just gravitated toward that."

Sheline said Robert's death brings the war closer to home, a town of about 50,000.

"Before it was mostly concerning the people of New York," he said. "But there's a real sense of personal loss on my part, and the town's, I'm sure."

Another California family also mourned one of the dead. The mother-in-law and father-in-law of Air Force Senior Airman Jason D. Cunningham, 26, got a call early Tuesday from their daughter Theresa.

"She was hysterical. She talked to her mom and said, 'Jason is dead.' That's it," father-in-law Lito D'Castro said by telephone from his Camarillo home in Ventura County. Jason and Theresa Cunningham have two daughters, 2-year-old Hannah and 4-year-old Kyla.

Jason grew up in New Mexico and lived with his wife and daughters at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia. The last time D'Castro and his wife Lucy saw Cunningham was when the family visited Camarillo at Christmastime.

"He's a nice guy. He loves the service," Lito D'Castro said.

Jason grew up in New Mexico and his parents live in Gallup, N.M.

Study ties lung cancer to air pollution exposure

BY LINDSEY TANNER

AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO — Long-term exposure to the air pollution in some of America's biggest metropolitan areas significantly raises the risk of dying from lung cancer and is about as dangerous as living with a smoker, a study of a half-million people found.

The study echoes previous research and provides the strongest evidence yet of the health dangers of the pollution levels found in many big cities and even some smaller ones, according to the researchers from Brigham Young University and New York University.

The risk is from what scientists call combustion-related fine particulate matter — soot emitted by cars and trucks, coal-fired power plants and factories.

The study appears in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

It involved 500,000 adults who enrolled in 1982 in an American Cancer Society survey on cancer prevention. The researchers examined participants' health records through 1998 and analyzed data on annual air pollution averages in the more than 100 cities in which participants lived.

The researchers first took into account other risk factors for heart and lung disease such as cigarettes, diet, weight and occupation.

Lung cancer death rates were compared with average pollution levels, as measured in micrograms per cubic meter of air. The researchers found that the number of lung cancer deaths increased 8 percent for every increase of 10 micrograms. Other heart- and lung-related causes of death increased 6 percent for every 10-microgram increase.

Allen Dearry, a scientist at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, which funded the study, called it "the best epidemiologic evidence that we have so far that that type of exposure is associated with lung cancer death."

"The best epidemiologic evidence that we have so far that that type of exposure is associated with lung cancer death."

— ALLEN DEARRY
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

"This study is compelling because it involved hundreds of thousands of people in many cities across the United States who were followed for almost two decades," said study co-leader George Thurston, an NYU environmental scientist.

Thurston said the lung cancer risks were comparable to those faced by nonsmokers who live with smokers and are exposed long-term to secondhand cigarette smoke. Such risks have been estimated at 16 percent to 24 percent higher than those faced by people living with nonsmokers, Thurston said.

In the early 1980s, when the study began, some major cities had air pollution levels of 25 to 30 micrograms per cubic meter, which would confer a more than 20 percent increased risk of lung cancer mortality, said C. Arden Pope III, an environmental epidemiologist at Brigham Young University and a co-leader of the JAMA study.

The Environmental Protection Agency set average annual limits at 15 micrograms per cubic meter in 1997, when it tightened its standards to include fine particulate matter — pollutants measuring less than 2.5 micrometers. That is about 1/28th the width of a human hair.

That regulation followed another study by Pope linking fine particulate pollution and lung cancer that included many of the same participants as the JAMA study.

Pope said the new study doubles the follow-up time and does a better job of taking other risk factors into account, to address criticism from industry groups who challenged the earlier study and sued the EPA over the 1997 regulations. The Supreme Court last year upheld the way the EPA set those standards.

Industry challenges to the standards are ongoing, said Jayne Brady, spokeswoman for the Edison Electric Institute, which represents most of the nation's major electric utilities, including operators of many coal-powered plants.

Despite those challenges, Brady said, "We are trying to do everything we can to reduce emissions."

Thurston said annual fine-particulate pollutant averages have fallen significantly since the early 1980s but as of 1999-2000 were still at or above the EPA limit in such metropolitan areas as New York, Washington, Chicago and Los Angeles.

He said the biggest sources of such pollution are coal-burning power plants in the Midwest and East, and diesel trucks and buses in the West.

Thurston said the study gives new impetus to efforts in Washington to clean up aging coal-fired power plants.

The EPA said the agency will consider the research as part of its continuing review of air quality standards for particulate matter.

NATIONAL



Pontiac fights image that it's hard on homeless

By The Associated Press

PONTIAC, Mich. — Ranked as one of the nation's meanest communities in treatment of homeless people, the city is working to show it really does have a heart.

Pontiac made the 12 Meanest Cities list compiled by the National Coalition for the Homeless in its January report, "The Criminalization of Homelessness in the United States."

The coalition did not rank the entries but said Atlanta, San Francisco and New York were the "absolute meanest" cities for the homeless. Also listed were Jacksonville and Palm Beach, Fla.; Salt Lake City; Chicago; Honolulu; Baltimore; Santa Cruz, Calif.; and Austin, Texas.

Pontiac earned its ranking because of a feud between former Mayor Walter Moore and the town's largest homeless

shelter, Grace Centers of Hope, the Detroit Free Press said Tuesday.

That feud culminated in a surprise police raid and unannounced building inspection early last year.

But the feud dissolved with the inauguration of Mayor Willie Payne in January, said the Rev. Kent Clark, the shelter's director.

"He has visited us here three times, and the new police chief also has been in," said Clark. I think we have an open door for the first time in many years."

Payne said he intends to "erase the stigma that may be attached to what happened to the shelter in the past."

He and Clark said they will work together to find a new location for the shelter outside the city's downtown loop. Business owners downtown have complained for years about image problems caused by loiterers.

Motorists take aim at camera system to catch speeders

By The Associated Press

HONOLULU — Some Hawaii drivers mockingly call them the "talivans," and radio disc jockeys take wicked delight in announcing the location of the vehicles.

The Hawaii Transportation Department has begun using van-mounted cameras to catch speeders in the act — a practice some motorists consider so underhanded they are trying to subvert the system.

The cameras, introduced on Oahu two months ago and operated by a private company, are coupled with radar and automatically photograph a speeder's license plate. A ticket is then issued by mail to the car's owner.

The devices are supposed to catch violators the way red-light cameras have been doing for years, without the danger of a police chase. Proponents say that the system will save lives and that it has already proved itself by slowing down traffic.

Drivers and civil liberties lawyers complain that the system unfairly assumes that the owner of the car was the person behind the wheel. They also say that the cameras are an invasion of privacy and that the state is more interested in speeding-ticket revenue than safety.

"It's pretty crazy. Unless they can really identify you and everything, I think it's a pretty worthless situation," said 44-year-old John McGee, who beat his ticket on a technicality.

Even lawmakers who supported the project are having second thoughts. The Senate this week is expected to vote to repeal the program. House lawmakers on Friday voted to require clearer photographic evidence of who was driving.

Republican state Rep. Charles Djou called the program "an unreasonable intrusion by government into individual lives."

"Many of my constituents have complained to me that this photo enforcement system is sort of a 'gotcha' law enforcement," he said. "It is a high-tech bounty hunter system that captures not only the lawbreakers but also law-abiding citizens."

Many states use cameras to catch people

running through red lights. Only about a dozen communities — in Hawaii, Arizona, California, Colorado, Oregon and Washington, D.C. — are using the cameras to try to catch speeders, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

City officials in Denver last week suspended their program and dismissed all tickets after a judge ruled that the system illegally gave police powers to a private contractor. The judge also ruled that the program violated state law by appearing to compensate the contractor based on the volume of tickets issued.

Hawaii, which has only three short freeways, is the first state to pass a statewide law allowing photo-enforced radar along state roads.

But about 200 tickets have been thrown out so far because of technical glitches and legal loopholes big enough to drive a truck through.

Many were dismissed because the tickets did not specifically state that the person issuing the ticket — the camera operator — was certified to run the radar equipment. That problem was later fixed. Last week, a judge threw out dozens more tickets, ruling that drivers going less than 10 mph over the speed limit should not be ticketed because doing so would conflict with Honolulu Police Department practice.

Some radio stations and newspaper Web sites have been gleefully broadcasting the location of vans. State officials, stung by allegations that they were not interested in safety, eventually responded by issuing a list of where the four vans might be at any given time.

KSSK morning disc jockeys Michael W. Perry and Larry Price on Thursday enlisted listeners and got the locations phoned in within a few minutes. "Four for four," announced Price, reviewing the location of each van for motorists.

Transportation Director Brian Minaai described the wrangling over the project as "all part of the learning experience."

"I think we all can admit that the pace of all the cars on the freeways are a lot slower, if not more in line with the speed limit," he said.

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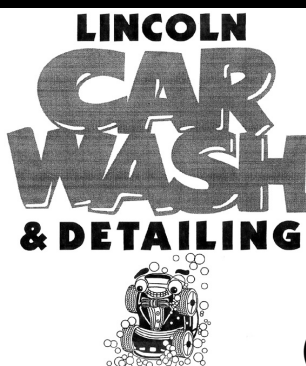


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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Metal head ready to live in middle America

By The Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — The lead singer of the metal band Slipknot says he expects to be accepted when he moves into his new home in a neighborhood of doctors, lawyers and bankers.

"I just hope once they get to know me, they'll understand that — besides the blood worship on Thursdays — I'm an average guy,"

— **COREY TAYLOR**
Lead singer of Slipknot

"I just hope once they get to know me, they'll understand that — besides the blood worship on Thursdays — I'm an average guy," Corey Taylor said, laughing.

The tattooed 28-year-old said Monday he expects to turn the \$350,000 home into "one of the raddest pads on the planet." Taylor expects to close Friday on the purchase of the five-bedroom brick Colonial.

Slipknot is composed of nine Des Moines-area natives known for grotesque masks and extreme metal music. The band they started in an Urbandale basement in the mid-1990s has captured two Grammy nominations and sold millions of compact discs around the world.

The news of Taylor's home purchase came as a surprise to some members of the Linden Heights Neighborhood Association, who learned about it at a business meeting Sunday.

When it was announced that the future homeowner was a musician, one woman said she was "hoping it would be a clarinetist."

Steve Davis, a banker who lives down the street, said he thinks neighbors will adapt.

"We have great diversity in the neighborhood," Davis said. "He will be a great addition."

BAKU, Azerbaijan — Famed cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich received Azerbaijan's highest honor, the Order of Independence, from Azerbaijani President Geidar Aliev.

The medal was a gift to Rostropovich for his 75th birthday from the land of his birth, Aliev said.

"I think we've given a good start to your 75th," Aliev told Rostropovich during the award ceremony Monday in the capital Baku.

The musician, now based in Paris, was born in Baku when Azerbaijan was part of the Soviet Union and spent the first five years of his life there. Over the weekend, Rostropovich presented Azerbaijan's Republican Maternity Center with a check for \$1.1 million from The Vaccine Fund for use in a program for vaccinations against Hepatitis B.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand —

Almost 50 years after the climbing pair of Hillary and Tenzing first conquered the world's tallest peak, they're preparing to climb Mount Everest again — but with a generational change.

This time the mountaineers will be New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary's son, Peter, and Nepalese Tenzing Norgay's grandson, Tashi.

The pair will try to reach the summit next month to begin a year of celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the 1953 climb to the top of the world.

Peter Hillary, 47, will meet Norgay's son, Jamling Tenzing Norgay, at base camp.

The younger Hillary, who made his first ascent of Everest in 1990, then will climb the southern face of the mountain from Nepal — the route his father took in 1953.

Tashi Tenzing is climbing with a Swiss expedition and taking a different route; Hillary plans to meet him on the summit.

Hillary said the climb, which would take up to three months, was a celebration of mountaineering and his father's and Tenzing's achievement.

"It's like a birthday party, and I'm not talking about my own climbing. I'm thinking about what Dad has done and also New Zealanders in that field," he said.

Hillary said his father, who is 82, was excited about the climb but wanted his son to weigh the risks.

"He wants me to be careful, and I appreciate that," he said.

Mt. Everest, at 29,028 feet, has claimed the lives of scores of climbers since the 1920s, when it became a target of mountaineers.

Tenzing Norgay died in May 1986.

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INTERNATIONAL



Coalition forces close in on al-Qaida

BY KATHY GANNON
Associated Press Writer

GARDEZ, Afghanistan — Hundreds of Taliban and al-Qaida fighters were killed in fierce fighting Tuesday as U.S.-led coalition forces pressed their offensive in the rugged mountains of eastern Afghanistan, the American commander said.

"We caught several hundred of them with RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades) and mortars heading toward the fight. We body slammed them today and killed hundreds of those guys," said Maj. Gen. Frank L. Hagenbeck, the commander of the operation near Gardez, 75 miles south of Kabul, the capital.

U.S.-led forces continued inching up the snow-covered mountains, meanwhile, trying to reach hideouts still believed to contain hundreds more al-Qaida and Taliban fighters. Some forces entered at least one cave complex, uncovering weapons caches.

Allied jets flew high over Paktia province, dropping bombs as well as decoy flares to ward off heat-seeking missiles — defensive measures after two U.S. helicopters were hit Monday in incidents

that left seven U.S. soldiers dead.

Front-line commander Abdul Matin Hasankhiel said hundreds of Afghan and coalition forces have ringed the mountain range and trapped the al-Qaida and Taliban fighters higher up.

"They can't escape. They're surrounded. Slowly, slowly we are pushing in," he said.

Hundreds of al-Qaida and Taliban fighters are believed to be holed up in the area, Brig. Gen. John Rosa told reporters at the Pentagon. Bombers and tactical aircraft have dropped more than 450 bombs on the area since the assault began Friday night, he said.

"We've been able to get into at least one of the cave complexes thus far and we've discovered mortars, rocket-propelled grenade rounds, small arms. And in a different location we found more weapons and ammunition, as well as foreign driver's license and foreign passports," he said. He did not say whether there was resistance entering the cave complex.

One fighter, Nawab, who returned from a front-line position Tuesday, said about 50 U.S. special Forces were fighting alongside Afghan soldiers at his position about 2 1/2 miles from Shah-e-Kot,



Lefteris Pitarakis/Associated Press

U.S. soldiers with special off-road vehicles secure an area close to an airfield on the outskirts of the Paktia province town of Gardez, Afghanistan on Tuesday. U.S. warplanes pounded al-Qaida and Taliban mountain strongholds in eastern Afghanistan, while heavily armed defenders responded with bursts of mortars, grenades and machine gunfire.

the village that is the focus of the largest U.S.-led coalition air and ground operation in Afghanistan to date.

Minesweepers were leading the way, clearing the paths along the snowy mountains. Attack jets circled overhead and pounded al-Qaida positions while Chinook helicopters ferried in supplies. A

powerful fleet of aircraft — including A-10s, F-15s, B-1s, B-52s, AC-130 gunships, and French Mirage 2000 and Super-Etendard aircraft — was participating in the assault.

The blitz is concentrating on a 60-square-mile area south of the provincial capital, Gardez.

U.S. and Egyptian leaders to Mideast: ease up

BY BARRY SCHWEID
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak searched Tuesday for solutions to the spiraling violence in the Middle East, with Bush emphasizing the need to stop Palestinian attacks on Israelis while Mubarak demanded that Israel ease up on the Arabs.

Bush said peace in the Middle East is "only possible if there is a maximum effort to end violence throughout the region, starting with Palestinian efforts to stop attacks on Israelis."

Mubarak, for his part, called for an end to forceful Israeli military tactics such as demolishing Palestinian homes and closing roads.

"Nothing can be achieved through violence or resolved by force," the Egyptian said.

Bush also spoke favorably of a Saudi Arabian proposal, which would offer Israel peace, trade and security in exchange for the land the Arabs lost in war, and of Mubarak's offer to be the host for talks between Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

"We're both determined to redouble our efforts to work for peace," Bush said, referring to himself and the Egyptian president.

Mubarak said of the Israelis, "The closure of roads, the siege of towns and villages, the demolition of houses, the collective punishment that make progress

more difficult should stop."

Speaking of the growing violence, Bush said officials in both the United States and Egypt "view this situation with great alarm."

"We both feel deep sympathy for the people in the region who are trying to live their lives in peace," he said.

In Jerusalem, Israeli officials let it be known Sharon considers a meeting with Arafat useless while Palestinian attacks against Israelis continue. Mubarak said he would not meet with Sharon unless Arafat attended as well.

In a speech before his meeting with Bush, Mubarak declared he was not "pro-Arafat" but said the Palestinians would be free to choose another leader after peace is achieved.

"I have no problems with the Palestinians or the Israelis," Mubarak said, as he sought to put Egypt forward as an even-handed mediator between the two sides.

Mubarak, in his speech before the meeting with Bush, left no doubt about his views of Israel's continued hold on part of the West Bank and Gaza and, presumably, east Jerusalem. Without referring to Israel directly, he said "land was occupied by force" and an entire population was denied its right to nationhood.

Israel took Egypt's sprawling Sinai peninsula in the same 1967 war that it took the other lands. A 1979 peace treaty, granting Israel peace and security in exchange for the occupied

territory, eventually returned the peninsula to Egypt.

Similarly, Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has made the price of peace Israel's withdrawal from all of the West Bank, Gaza and part of Jerusalem that Arafat wants as capital of a Palestinian state.

Mubarak said in his speech the aim of peace talks should be to "end the injustice of all the peoples" in the Middle East.

Elaborating, he said the result of the forced occupation of land had been to deny "an entire people its right to a nation."

"Occupation must end," the Egyptian president said to some 1,000 people invited by the private Council on Foreign Relations and the Middle East Institute, a research group. "Palestinians must have their rights. We want an end to the

cycle of injustice."

Mubarak carried to Bush a mixed position on terrorism. He said Tuesday "the world community must work together in confronting terror," but he declined to state his position on Iraq.

It is known to be one of urging caution. Mubarak's view is that U.S. stock in the Arab world, already damaged by the Bush administration's implacable support for Israel, would sink further if Iraqis are killed in a U.S. attack.

On another sensitive subject, a senior U.S. official said the Bush administration was taking up with the Egyptians suspicions that Egypt is importing missile technology from North Korea.

Egypt has denied the allega-

tions, but the administration does not appear to be convinced.

In Dubai, United Arab Emirates, a Saudi official said Abdullah had rejected several requests, including one from Mubarak, to meet secretly with Sharon on the proposal.

Nor would the crown prince, Saudi's de facto leader because of the illness of King Fahd, consider a meeting between lower-ranking Israelis and Saudis, according to the Saudi official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Abdullah "is well aware of the kingdom's standing in the Islamic and Arab worlds, and he (would) prefer to withdraw his proposal if its success depended on a Saudi-Israeli meeting," the official said.

Jaguars kill one employee, wound another at Vienna zoo

By The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Three jaguars attacked and killed an employee while she was preparing the animals' meal at a Vienna zoo on Tuesday.

With zoo visitors looking on, the jaguars entered an enclosure where the 21-year old woman was working at the Schoenbrunn zoo. She was killed when a black jaguar bit her in the neck.

Afraid that the large cats would escape from the cage, many of the visitors standing nearby ran away from the scene, screaming.

The director of the zoo, Helmut Pechlaner, was

injured by the jaguars after rushing to the enclosure to help the victim.

Pechlaner, 55, was taken by helicopter to a local hospital where doctors operated on his left hand, which had been clawed by one of the jaguars, the Austria Press Agency reported.

Officials at the 250-year-old zoo said they did not yet know how the accident occurred, but suspected that the three jaguars had burst into the cage through a hatch which had not been locked correctly.

The zoo's deputy director, Gerhard Kasbauer, said zoo employees never enter enclosures with dangerous animals.

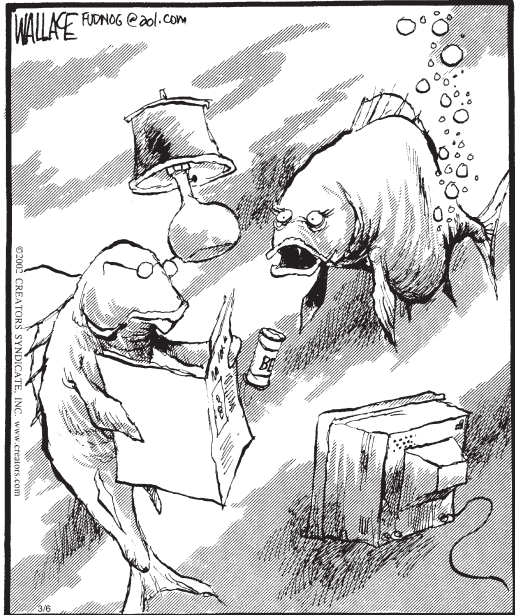


COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Natural Selection® By Russ Wallace



"George, it's time! Call the doctor, and get the car! These eggs are coming any minute! My air just broke!"

edge city

by TERRY & PATTY LABAN



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PULLON	TETE
SEES	AERO
VIOLA	
PETER	STRAUB
OMAR	LOUISA
PUNS	OSPREY

Yesterday's answer

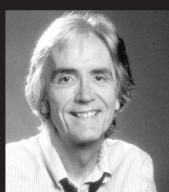
- ACROSS
- 1 Enzyme endings
- 5 One of the "Little Women"
- 9 Computer corrupter
- 11 "Tiny Bubbles" singer
- 12 Concur
- 13 Consumed
- 14 One-million link
- 15 Cornered
- 17 Football pass
- 19 Print units
- 20 Actor Fernando
- 21 Unite
- 22 Say
- 24 Distress call
- 26 Attire
- 29 Sanctuary
- 30 Bit of energy
- 32 Broad streets
- 34 Baseball stat
- 35 Greek enchantress
- 36 Virtues' counterparts
- 38 Egged on
- 39 Jeans fastener
- 40 Jury member
- 41 Jersey team
- DOWN
- 1 Use
- 2 Wave, perhaps
- 3 Print goofs
- 4 Be litigious
- 5 Flotilla unit
- 6 Menu choice
- 7 Familiar last words
- 8 Sharpens
- 10 Painter Georges
- 11 Give out hands
- 16 Bill stamp
- 18 Aussie birds
- 21 Carolina bird
- 23 Pencil part
- 24 Stringent
- 25 Nervous
- 27 Try hard
- 28 Rerent, in a way
- 29 Block
- 30 Campus area
- 31 Fogs
- 33 -do- well
- 37 Coq au —

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
9				10		11		
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38					39			
40						41		

3-6

STUMPED?

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Robotic bears used to comfort residents at retirement home in Japan

Matsushita Electric Industrial runs a state-of-the-art retirement home near Osaka, Japan, and according to a BBC News report in February uses robotic companion bears to comfort the residents (average age: 82) and also to continually check health signs. Among the fur-covered bears' skills: They can respond to voice command and can monitor residents' alertness by timing their responses to spoken questions.



Where will the next "attack" come from?



a) Ideologist at "Ground Zero" New York.

b) Idiot at "Ground Zero" Santa Monica.



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BACK PAGE

Fisher KO'd by parole board in boxing bid with Harding

BY LUKAS I. ALPERT

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — One of the first fighters in Fox TV's new "Celebrity Boxing" was KO'd by her parole board.

Amy Fisher had been scheduled to take on figure skater Tonya Harding, but the state Parole Board decided the appearance "would not be conducive to her continued parole supervision and would send an inappropriate message to victims of violent crime," spokesman Tom Grant said Tuesday.

"They said she can't do any paid media; she can't be paid for her appearance at all. I don't think the parole board should tell her how she can earn her money."

— **BRUCE BARKET**
Fisher's lawyer

Fisher needed permission to travel to California for the taping of her planned bout with Harding. She made headlines as the teen-age "Long Island Lolita" in 1992 when she had an affair with auto mechanic Joey Buttafuoco, and shot and wounded his wife. Fisher served nearly seven years in prison and has been on parole for more than three years.

Fisher's lawyer, Bruce Barket, called the parole board's decision "arbitrary and baseless" and said his

client plans to file a lawsuit.

"They said she can't do any paid media; she can't be paid for her appearance at all," Barket said. "I don't think the parole board should tell her how she can earn her money."

In Fisher's place, Fox has subbed in Paula Jones for the show, scheduled for 9 p.m. EST on March 13.

"Yeah it was rather disappointing, but fortunately we'd been talking to Paula, so she was already on deck," Fox spokesman Joe Earley said.

The producers say "Celebrity Boxing" will feature real — if somewhat tongue-in-cheek — three-round bouts pitting people with familiar names.

Harding gained notoriety in January 1994, when the figure-skating champ was involved in a bungled plot to disable rival Nancy Kerrigan. Jones gained notice after filing a lawsuit against former President Bill Clinton, claiming he made an unwelcome sexual advance in 1991. A federal judge dismissed the lawsuit.

"Celebrity Boxing" also will feature Danny Bonaduce, who played Danny Partridge on "The Partridge Family," against Barry Williams, Greg Brady from "The Brady Bunch." Rounding out the card will be rapper Vanilla Ice squaring off against "Diff'rent Strokes" co-star Todd Bridges.

Smelt eating champion of the world

By The Associated Press

KELSO, Wash. — It's rare the champion who can boast of winning every competition he's entered for 30 years.

Darwin Weber can: Over the weekend he swallowed 77 smelt in 30 minutes to win the Kelso Eagles' smelt-eating contest. Weber, 54, has won each time he's entered since 1972.

"I like fish, but I don't really care for smelt," admitted the 210-pound Weber, who won \$50 and the blue ribbon. "I'm waiting for someone to beat me so I can retire."

Weber's most formidable challenger was Jeff Deaver, who is 22 years younger and 140 pounds heavier. But Deaver appeared to slow as the time ticked away, finishing second with 70 smelt eaten.

"He was born with two stomachs," Deaver said of Weber. "Maybe a sea mammal can do it; I don't know."

"I like fish, but I don't really care for smelt."

— **DARWIN WEBER**
Kelso Eagles' smelt-eating contest winner

Weber's consumption was not a personal best. He's twice eaten 106 smelt in the competition.

He capped off Sunday's triumph with a beer.

"We're going out for pizza after this," Deaver joked.

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