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Santa Monica Daily Press

INTRODUCING THE MARINADE
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Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE ONLINE AND ON TIME ISSUE

High gas prices impact local market

BY CHIARA CANZI
Special to the Daily Press

DOWNTOWN With gas prices peaking at $4 a gallon and a looming recession at hand, Southern California farmers are becoming increasingly concerned about their livelihood.

Every Wednesday, Jim Brantley of Pritchett Farms packs up his truck with fruits and vegetable and travels 190 miles to the Santa Monica Farmers' Market, sets up shop and begins his day. But in the last few weeks, Brantley's journey has become more and more problematic.

"The last round trip I have made at the ranch two weeks ago cost about $120 in fuel and today's about $150 in fuel," he said. "With prices going up we are going to have to raise our prices and there is no way around it."

Brantley is not alone. Laura Avery, the market's manager, has heard about farmers facing tough times across the country.

"There is one farmer that said that her diesel truck costs hundreds of dollars to fill up every day," she said.

California's average price for regular gasoline increased 13.1 cents from last week. According to the Energy Information Administration, this week's average price is $3.45, an increase of 56.2 cents over last year. The increase is attributed to the price of crude oil, which reached $102.45 per barrel early this week.

Despite the hike, farmers are reluctant to raise their own prices.

"We haven't yet," Brantley said. "So far we have been able to hold our prices, but we are going to eventually raise them and it's just going to have to happen."

Avery hasn't heard anything on the matter from farmers yet, but she knows how committed to their customers they are.

"They hate to raise prices," she said. "They have set prices and their customers expect it and I really don't know how they are going to deal with it."

Santa Monica resident Gosia Probosz has been buying locally grown produce for the past 20 years and has seen a steady increase in the cost of her favorite foods.

"Everything is more expensive," she said. "It's going to affect me, I will be very selective in what I buy, and I'll be buying in less quantity."

Probosz has noticed the price of certain items skyrocket in the last few weeks. Cauliflower used to be $1 and today's standard has risen to $3 each; celery used to be one of the cheapest veggies, she said, going for an average of $1.50 and now it has topped $3 per bunch.

Even federally funded land trusts are having a hard time surviving. Representatives from the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, in Goleta, have seen their small enterprise shrink in staff and profit.

"We try to remain local," the representative said. "We are trying to transport our produce as little as possible in order to make money."

The farthest they travel is the Santa Monica Farmers' Market and even that trip has seen changes.

"With gas prices so high we are using our small van instead of our more convenient truck that is also refrigerated," the representative said.

The 12-acre property grows a diversity of crops and they rely mostly on the Community Supported Agriculture Initiative in Santa Barbara, where people come to farms and buy their weekly share of produce. But they make the trip to Santa Monica because they think it is important to support organic, chemical-free eating as a way of life.

Local farmers' market shoppers share the philosophy of healthy eating, so much so, that they would be willing to pay more for their organic produce than going to chain grocery stores.

"I like the fact that my fruits and vegetables didn't travel 700 miles and they are not frozen," Probosz said. "I am willing to pay more as long as I get organically grown foods and I like to support the farmers."

SEE PRICES PAGE 12



STANDING FOR TREES

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Local activist Jerry Rubin (right) addresses supporters of the Santa Monica Treesavers during a sit-in at City Hall on Wednesday. The group hopes to save 54 ficus trees slated to be removed from the downtown area as part of a streetscaping project.

Newspaper thefts leave racks empty

BY MELODY HANATANI | Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE The newspaper bandits have struck free weeklies and dailies in Santa Monica once again.

Thefts of free newspapers have been on the rise in recent weeks as the hard-copies have apparently been popular for a service other than informing the public.

The Santa Monica Police Department is investigating reports from the Santa Monica Daily Press that excessive amounts of its copies have been disappearing from news racks during the brief window from when the papers are delivered to when they're picked up by the public.

Newspapers thefts have occurred sporadically throughout the past few years on the Westside, coinciding with the rising rates for recycled newspapers, according to SMDP Publisher Ross Furukawa.

The loss in distribution coupled with the impact of advertising can be costly for newspapers that suffer from the thefts.

"Most of our distribution is free and there is a significant cost to printing the newspaper," Furukawa said, adding that the paper has been losing thousands of dollars a week as a result of the thefts.

Taking an inordinate amount of free newspapers was prohibited last year in the state of California when Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a law that made it illegal to swipe more than 25 copies of a free paper with the intent to

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS

Calling all docents

5905 Wilshire Blvd., L.A., open times

Finally, a use for that art history degree! The LACMA's Art Docent Council is seeking volunteers to lead tours of the museum's diverse collections. Information and applications can be obtained by e-mailing a request to Admissions@lacmadocent.org. Applications are due no later than February 22, 2008.

Improve eclectically

1323-A Third St. Promenade, 7 p.m. — 10 p.m.

Westside Eclectic's Level 1 Improv class is an introduction to the art of improv comedy. The intro covers core improv ideals, concepts and vocabulary such as hyper-listening, give and take, yes-anding, efficient communication and emotional response. The WE teaching staff creates a warm and open learning environment that facilitates establishing the foundation of a seasoned improviser.

What's new this week

2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. — 2:30 p.m.

A free-wheeling review and discussion of the week's key news stories at home and abroad.

Kulturas anniversary

1700 Ocean Park Blvd., 11 a.m. — 7 p.m.

Transplant second-hand bookstore, Kulturas, is celebrating its first whole year in Santa Monica by having "rolling sales" around different sections of the store. Check out their "sort-of-vintage" clothing corner and the current artist exhibit. For further information, call (310) 450-8707.

Friday, March. 7, 2008

What's in this Black Box?

12420 Santa Monica Blvd., West L.A., 8 p.m. — 12 a.m.

Black Box Theatre presents Charles Busch's legendary camp comedy, "Vampire Lesbians of Sodom," follows two vampire lesbians through time. We're not kidding, that's really the plot. For information, call (310) 712-5711.

Getting wild on the Westside

Noon — 5 p.m.

For the first time, the true crime archeologists of the 1947project have set their sights on points west of Robertson Boulevard, and the results are truly astonishing. In this new tour spotlighting some of the weirdest, most horrific and downright unbelievable crimes of historic West Los Angeles, you'll thrill and shudder to tales of teenage girl gangs, tortured tots, wicked wives, evil spirits, cults, creeps and assorted maniacs on a tour so wild, we had to say it twice. Seats are $55 a person. For more information, call (323) 223-2767.

Travelin' Dylan

2701 N. Sepulveda, Brentwood, call for times

Skirball's "Bob Dylan's American Journey" exhibit includes handwritten song lyrics, posters, and a recording of his first-ever, never-released concert. Included is an area where you can play drums with Dylan — much like Bono sang with Sinatra. General admission is $10, $7 for seniors and students, and free on Thursdays. Visit www.skirball.org for more information.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.





AGAIN THEY RISE

Alexis Hawkins *news@smdp.com*

The Samohi boys' soccer team continued its current run by defeating Newbury Park, 2-1, in the quarter finals of the 2008 CIF Southern California Regional Soccer Championships at Santa Monica College on Tuesday. The team takes on Banning tonight at SMC at 5 p.m.

The new face of school bullying

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SAMOHI First it was stealing lunch money and calling out playground foes for an afternoon brawl in front of the swings. Now schoolyard bullying has turned to the Web, antagonizing classmates at the click of a mouse.

It's "Mean Girls" — and boys — meets the Web.

In the next few months, officials in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) are expected to tackle the issue of "cyber bullying" that has affected a number of students at both Santa Monica and Malibu high schools in the past few years, reviewing suggested policies on how such incidences could be regulated without overstepping their legal jurisdictions.

Just last week, a mother of a Samohi student posted a message on mailing list Samohi-PALS, notifying parents of an e-mail circulating that specifically named several Samohi students and referred to them using vulgar and offensive language. The concerned parent asked for suggestions as to how she should proceed.

The parent, who asked she remain anonymous, said during an interview on Tuesday that the e-mail was forwarded last week to her daughter and that the letter contained what seemed like every vulgar and sexually-explicit term in existence. The e-mail did not specifically name the daughter, she said.

The mother said she didn't feel like there was enough discourse teaching children about the repercussions of making defamatory statements through the Internet.

"I just think these kids aren't aware," she said.

While educators have embraced technology and have incorporated it in the classroom to enhance the learning experience, they have been met with a number of challenges as a result of emerging new media.

When it comes to schools taking disciplinary action with cyber bullying the trick seems to be determining whether the conflict originated from a school computer or a private one.

The California School Boards Association (CSBA) last summer sent out a newsletter to its member organizations, which includes the SMMUSD, about cyber bullying and possible policies that boards of education could adopt. SMMUSD Superintendent Dianne Talarico said on Wednesday that she intends to distribute the newsletter to members of the school board on Friday.

The CSBA suggests that policy regarding cyber bullying should clearly distinguish between conflict that was initiated on and off campus since the latter would raise first amendment issues. Civil liberties could also be at stake if the district chooses to monitor students' online activity and filtering access to certain sites from school activities, the CSBA states.

But even if the conflict started off campus, the district could have some regulatory power if those issues spill over into the classroom.

SEE **BULLYING** PAGE 12

A stairway worth climbing comes to the Civic

By Daily Press Staff

DOWNTOWN The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District will present the 58th Annual Stairway of the Stars event at the Civic auditorium this week.

This event, which begins tonight and will continue Friday, remains one of the most popular annual events in the city as it spotlights the talents of the district's music students and teachers.

One of the highlights of this year's performance will be the addition of an Elementary Honor Choir, which developed as a result of the district's expansion of the music program this year. This year, the guest conductor will be Lawrence Stoffel.

This year's honor award recipient is Zen Gesner. He was drum major of the Santa Monica High School marching band for two years, 1987 and 1988, as well as being in the symphony orchestra — under the guidance of Gary Horimoto and Doug Hargis. He also served as the drum major during the same time that Stoffel completed his work as a teacher at Samohi.

"Those were very exciting years," Gesner said.

While attending Santa Monica High School, Gesner became an aspiring actor after landing a small part in the school's production of "Hamlet," and went on to play supportive roles in the school's rendition of "Nicholas Nickleby" and "The Sound of Music."

Gesner's mother, Nan Martin, and his father, Harry Gesner, were both Stairway of the Stars award winners, and his mother was

SEE **STAIRWAY** PAGE 13

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EDITORIAL

It's about time

Congratulations Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District for stepping into the 21st century by spending roughly $9,000 to design a Web site that is attractive, informative and much easier to navigate than its rudimentary predecessor.

It has been a long time coming and parents and reporters alike welcome the change and the newfound access. No longer will we have to be taken on an electronic journey to nowhere, repeatedly clicking on bogus links only to end up at an expired page or one with stale information — at least that's the hope now that the new site, designed by SMMUSD parent Maryanne Solomon and her company Art Meets Technology, is online and the district seems committed to keeping it updated.

The new site, which includes 200 supplementary pages consisting of 1,400 PDF documents and about 150 images, features a calendar with school board meetings and holidays listed as well as other events such as the 58th Annual Stairway to the Stars musical performance tonight and tomorrow at the Civic Auditorium. There are also links to the district directory, complete with phone numbers and e-mail addresses, making it easier for parents to reach out and touch someone instead of doing the "I'll transfer you" two-step that can be very frustrating. There are also links to the Facilities Master Plan effort, the PTA Council and the Education Foundation, which helps raise money to keep valuable programs alive.

By being able to easily access this information, hopefully parents and other community members will be more apt to volunteer their time.

If anyone remembers the former Web site they know how difficult it was to navigate and find essential information. It seemed at times that the site was stagnant with no new information being added for weeks on end, something which is unfathomable considering how much is going on around the district. What was available was oftentimes wrong, such as listing district advisory committee chairs who no longer served. It certainly wasn't a Web site befitting "World Class Public Schools," which is the district's new slogan, an attempt to draw attention back to the classroom instead of the district's board room, where allegations of secrecy and a lack of transparency brought criticism from city officials and the public and shed negative light on the district.

Now that the Web site is up and running, the school board should focus its attention on hiring a public information officer to keep the community informed and to disseminate information to the media so that we can highlight some the positive things happening in the district.

So many times we in the media are criticized for not covering a particular event or a student who makes the grade, instead always focusing on the negative, something which is certainly not true (just check out our coverage of our local sports teams being crowned champions).

But how are we to report on positive things when no one in the district tells us about them? We cannot be everywhere at all times. With a staff member dedicated to working with the community and the press, stories like these will be covered with more regularity.

A public information officer would also help in making the district's position known when a not-so-favorable story breaks, ensuring that all stories include the district's point of view.

Overall, the district's leadership has shown a willingness of late to want to work with the press and parents. Now it's time to keep the momentum going. Find money in the budget for public relations and perhaps there will be no need to spend money on a "World Class Public Schools" campaign.



The Rand Stand

Alex Epstein

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Reject the recent push for neutrality

AMERICA'S LEADING INTERNET SERVICE providers (ISPs) have spent many years and billions of dollars upgrading their transcontinental networks, which constitute the backbone of the Internet. Now they are eager to profit by offering new, compelling services. One plan is to give certain Web sites high priority on their data, so as to guarantee "quality of service" — the speed, frequency, and reliability with which data is delivered. This would enable content providers to offer high-quality live TV and videoconferencing or advanced remote medical monitoring, without the delays and unreliability that plague the Internet today.

Unfortunately, data prioritization is fiercely opposed by advocates of "net neutrality" — an idea that politicians and activists unsuccessfully attempted to make into law last year, but which is now being resuscitated. U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan, a leading advocate of "net neutrality" legislation — which is supported by Microsoft, Google, and many other software companies — promised last month at the Future of Music Policy Summit that the push for this legislation would continue. Americans, he said, to a standing ovation, must "fight back and say this is something that's important for our country's interests."

What exactly is net neutrality? It is the idea that ISPs should not be able to favor some types of data over others; their networks must be "neutral" among all the data they carry. Net-neutrality supporters claim that if ISPs are free to give preferential treatment to certain websites' data, they might drastically slow down un-favored or less-wealthy websites, diminishing their ability to offer content and make innovations. A prominent net neutrality coalition cautions: "If you are an aspiring entrepreneur, you may be impeded from providing the 'next big thing' on the Internet."

But such scenarios make no economic sense. For any of the nation's competing ISPs to offer customers slow, patchy, let alone nonexistent access to the websites they seek to visit, would be commercial suicide. As for innovation, websites are free to continue using standard, non-prioritized Internet service — which ISPs would have every incentive to preserve at appealing speeds by expanding their overall bandwidth. The fact that this would be slower than premium service does not mean that it would be slow, just as UPS's decision to offer overnight delivery did not lead them to suddenly degrade their Ground shipping. Premium Internet services would enable, not stifle, innovation, by giving Web sites creative options they did not have before.

The specter of ISPs offering glacial access to certain Web sites is a smokescreen, designed to obscure the net-neutrality movement's goal: Preventing anyone from having superior, unequal access to customers. In the minds of net neutrality advocates, the Internet is a collectively owned entity, to which all Web sites have an equal claim and are entitled "equal access."

The Internet is not a collectivist commune; it is a free, voluntary, and private association of individuals and corporations harmoniously pursuing their individual goals. Because the Internet is based on voluntary association, no one can properly compel others for their ad space, bandwidth, publicity — or network priority. Those who create these values have the right to use and profit from them as they see fit. Google has no more right to demand that Verizon be "neutral" with its network than Verizon has a right to demand that Google be "neutral" with its coveted advertising space.

The only thing equal about the participants on the Internet is that all have equal freedom to deal with others voluntarily. This means they are equally free to compete for the bandwidth, dollars, and talents of others, but not entitled to an unearned, equal portion of them.

It is the freedom of participants on the Internet to offer and profit from whatever products, services, or content they choose that has made it such a phenomenal source of content and innovation. Net neutrality would deny ISPs that freedom. It would deny their right to engage in creative, innovative, and profitable activity with those networks — in the name of those who demand their bandwidth, but are unable or unwilling to earn it in a free market.

The widespread support for net neutrality among successful Internet companies — including Google, Microsoft, Yahoo, eBay, and Amazon — is shortsighted and contemptible. The Internet is one of the great bastions of freedom and innovation in our civilization. Let us keep it that way by rejecting the latest push for "net neutrality."

ALEX EPSTEIN is an analyst at the Ayn Rand Institute, focusing on business issues. The Institute promotes Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand, author of "Atlas Shrugged" and "The Fountainhead"



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PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Kevin Herrera
editor@smdp.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Daniel Archuleta
daniela@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER
Melody Hanatani
melodyh@smdp.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Brandon Wise
brandonw@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Bill Bauer, David Pisarra, Meredith Carroll, Kenny Mack, Jack Neworth, Lloyd Garver, Seth Barnes, Taylor van Arsdale, Dane Robert Swanson, Ryan Hyatt, Steve Breen, Mark Marchillo, Ken Tarr, Mike Heayn, Brian Hepp Mariel Howsepian and Cynthia Citron

NEWS INTERNS
Natalie Edwards
news@smdp.com

Chiara Canzi
news@smdp.com

Jon Haber
news@smdp.com

PHOTOGRAPHY INTERNS
Geoffrey Dunn
news@smdp.com

Morgan Genser
news@smdp.com

Alexis Hawkins
news@smdp.com

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Rob Schwenker
schwenker@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Julie Martinez
juliem@smdp.com

Liam Blume
Liamb@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ASSISTANT
Cynthia Vazquez
advertising@smdp.com

OPERATIONS MANAGER
Connie Sommerville
connies@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Tessa Vergara
tessav@smdp.com

CLASSIFIEDS SALES MANAGER
Annie Kotok
anniek@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Keith Wyatt
Osvaldo Paganini
circulation@smdp.com

Santa Monica Daily Press
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410 Broadway, Suite B
Santa Monica, CA 90401
OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913

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Meredith Pro Tem

Meredith C. Carroll
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Time for women to start fighting back

DESPITE GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE with a minor in women's studies, I've never been too quick to wave a burning bra (especially when having a door held for me if my arms are full or being offered a free drink on ladies night). Countless magazines, newspapers and "hot topic" segments on "The View" have carried on about the struggles of women in a man's world, forced to find balance or choose between career and family, but I've only ever read or watched with a mild curiosity.

My parents instilled in me the belief that among the most important choices I ever will make are where do I want to go, and what's the best and most efficient route to total achievement. As such, the most pressing decision I was forced to make recently was paper or plastic (I know, I know, I should've used a reusable organic cotton bag), and the only thing I've had to balance is my checkbook.

I get the feeling Hillary Clinton operates on a similar philosophy (although the checking accounts she oversees probably have much more favorable interest rates). Which is why it's so irksome that lately she's been treated as if she's got a bull's-eye tattoo on her forehead. If I thought she was being picked on because she has lousy ideas or she's given some indication she'd be an ineffective leader of the free world, then I wouldn't care. But it's become increasingly obvious that she's a target mostly because she's a strong woman (Cue the smoke coming out of my ears).

While even some of her harshest critics have applauded her policies, Hillary has been incessantly ridiculed for her wardrobe and hairstyles. And there's little doubt she'll be judged until her last breath for defending and sticking with her husband after he lied about and then ultimately admitted to an extramarital affair.

John McCain cheated on his first wife (the mother of three of his seven kids) and left her for his current wife. Whispers of him engaging in yet another extramarital affair grew to a roar recently in The New York Times. But amazingly, he had defenders on both sides of the aisle universally aghast that the questionable relationship was made public. And barely a word ever is spoken about McCain's teeth or Barack Obama's ears.

Hillary takes heat for personal decisions that kept her family intact. She's accused of having ulterior motives (the nerve!). She's been dogged for tearing up before the New Hampshire primary. Forget that she's incredibly bright and extraordinarily qualified. She's apt to start sobbing if the president of Ireland breaks a teacup at a White House state dinner, so off with her head.

As bad as it's been for Hillary lately, I've been slightly out of sorts, too. Not so much because I'm struggling with the classic working woman choices, but because, like Hillary, there are those who think they can intimidate me into moving out of the way.

There's this work acquaintance who has proved time and again to be utterly incapable of accepting that a woman occupies a higher place than he on the professional food chain. He's made it crystal clear he thinks women are good for little more than secretarial duties and that men should do the figurative heavy.

And despite the fact that he rarely does even a minimum amount of work, he keeps foaming at the mouth, waiting for me to pop out a kid just so he can jump up and down and say, "See! I told you she'd get pregnant and leave! Give me her job! I might not be good at it, but at least I won't desert you!"

Then there's a neighbor who's ripped a page right out of Fred Flintstone's caveman book. He can't understand how my husband lets me speak for myself, make my own decisions and even, sometimes, decisions for our family (perish the thought!). When I speak at homeowners' association meetings, instead of responding directly to me, he looks at my husband as if to make sure I've been given proper authorization to open my mouth. To him, women are little more than pests requiring the service of an exterminator.

It's no secret that overt racism has long been considered socially unacceptable. However, somehow it's never become a faux pas to wear sexism as proudly as this season's It bag.

Still, the critics have misjudged Hillary. And I know I'm being underestimated. Thankfully, the latest word is that bitch is the new black. So bring it on. Because this bitch is in the house. And in the office. And the other one is in the Senate, and maybe someday the Oval Office. Either way, I can promise neither of us is on a path off which we can easily be pushed.

E-mail questions or comments to meredithccarroll@hotmail.com.

The Q Line

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Practical side of plastic bags

City Hall is currently considering banning plastic bags at all local stores and restaurants. While the bags are obviously environmentally unfriendly, there are some that believe the plastic pariahs can be quite useful around the house.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

What do you do with your plastic bags once you get them home from the store?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. Please limit responses to a minute or less.


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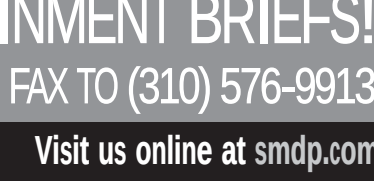
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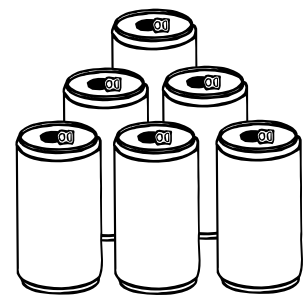
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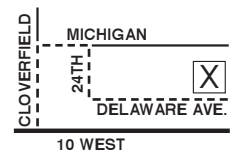


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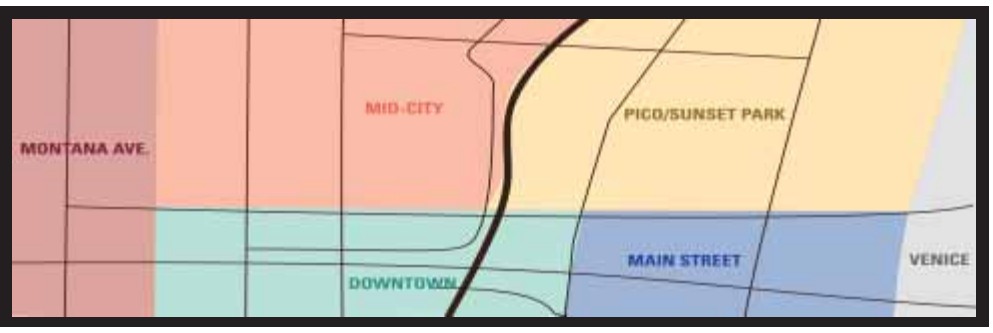
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Sushi King 1330 Wilshire Blvd (310) 395-0120
Tacos Por Favor 1406 Olympic Blvd (310) 392-5768
Taqueria Chihuahua 1909 Lincoln Bl (310) 874-2057
Tazzina 1620 Wilshire Blvd (310) 413-4270
Thai Dishes 111 Santa Monica Blvd (310) 394-6189
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Wilshire Restaurant 2454 Wilshire Blvd (310) 586-1707

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Kaiten Restaurant 1456 Third Street (310) 451-8080
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Promenade Cafe 321 Santa Monica Bl (213) 700-2373
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The Marinade

Maria Rohloff
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Let them eat tapas

HOW OFTEN DOES ONE GET TO TRAVEL TO Spain and eat at an authentic tapas bar? If you're lucky, many times, but if you're of the norm, probably zero to one — maybe.

No need to book your airfare to Spain to sample authentic tapas because Santa Monica is all the rage with its new hot spot called Bar PintXO (peen-cho). Located just next door to Boa Steakhouse on Santa Monica Boulevard, this tapas bar has a line out the door during dinner hours. Standing room mostly with several bistro style tables and bar stools gives foodies a sense of how social and intimate a tapas bar in Spain would be like.

Decked out in mahogany wood furniture and shelves, tchotchkes indigenous to Spain adorn the space while the entrance greets customers with the actual "tapas" bar and an open kitchen. The shelves lining the walls are filled with imported Spanish products that are for sale to the public. This eatery is open for lunch and dinner. My suggestion, if you want to experience the menu without the wait, visit during lunch hours while it's not so crowded.

Representative of an authentic Spanish tapas bar is the Jamón Iberíco which is cured pork leg, sliced thin, from the acorn-fed black-footed (patta negra) iberico pigs — a culinary treasure like the white truffles of the Piemonte and the endangered beluga caviar. This ham is darker in color and has more of a caramel sweetness. It is also less salty and can be more or less chewy than prociutto, depending on the particular ham and how it is cut. Visible to the eye in Bar PintXO are actual jamón and serrano hams hanging from the ceiling above the bar.

The menu at Bar PintXO is broken up by tapas ranging from $2 to $6 per tapas; platos (entrées) ranging from $2 to $9; postres (deserts); café (coffee drinks); cava/sparkling by glass or bottle; and vino tinto and blanco by glass or bottle. The wines by the glass are reasonably priced and they give a generous pour.

I had the pleasure of being invited by owner, Joe Miller (famous for Joe's Restaurant on Abbot Kinney in Venice Beach) for a tasting and candid interview one afternoon. He served me the jamón and serrano hams to compare the difference. I must say, I stay true to my expensive tastes … I preferred the ever-so pricey and hard to get jamón because it was milder and buttery as opposed to the serrano ham which was a bit chewier and saltier but has lots of flavor.

Other menu items include tapas like grilled shrimp, piquillo pepper; tomato yogurt and orange; tuna stuffed tomato, garlic and parsley; dates wrapped in bacon with cabrales cheese; tapas of chorizo and fried quail eggs; crimini mushroom, jamón and diced vegetables; and tortilla Española. Most tapas and platos on the menu are in Spanish so don't be afraid to ask your server what they are.

The service is warm, friendly and helpful. From what I've heard from my foodie friends who've actually been to Spain, tapas bars allow you to just throw things on the ground. I don't get it. Tapas are small bites so how would you have anything left to throw on the ground? Guess I need to book that flight soon to find out. My friends weren't great research tools unfortunately but Joe Miller, owner of Bar PintXO had some insight to shed.

Bar PintXO is located at 109 Santa Monica Blvd. For more information visit online at barpintxo.com or call (310) 392-5655.

QUICK QUIZ

Q: How would you describe the cuisine at Bar PintXO?

A: Traditional Spanish tapas bar cuisine. In Spain they specialize in tapas such as jamón, cured pork leg, sliced thin from the black footed pig which is very expensive, paella, banderillas (skewers), and tortilla Española. All of our tapas are displayed in a clear case at the bar, somewhat similar to a sushi bar. We also cook everything on a plancha which is a big flat-top griddle that creates more heat than a typical stove.

Q: What are your plans for the evolution of Bar PintXO?

A: I would like to systemize things. Use the best ingredients that I can find, using lots of things from Spain. All of our products for sale on these shelves in front are imported from Spain. Also, expand this concept to other states.

Q: What do you think significantly sets this restaurant apart from others serving "tapas"?

A: Staying true to traditional Spanish tapas bars that one can find in Spain. We only serve Spanish wines and beers, unique one's that are hard to find in L.A.

MARIA ROHLOFF is a food enthusiast and one heck of a cook. She can be reached at diningdivasm@live.com.

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American Indians face major health problems

BY GARANCE BURKE
Associated Press Writer

FRESNO Rich or poor, American Indians in cities across the country are facing startling health challenges unlike those of any other urban population, according to a new study of federal data.

Even as urban American Indians move up the income ladder, researchers found rates of binge drinking and tobacco use in the community are staying the same — or sometimes even increasing — in cities from New York to Helena, Mont.

"When Indian folks drink, it appears to have nothing to do with how much money they have, and that's not true for any other racial group," said Maile Taualii, scientific director at the Seattle-based Urban Indian Health Institute, which announced the findings Wednesday. "There seems to be a sense of hopelessness, a sense that diabetes, alcoholism and other health problems are inevitable in the community."

More than half of all American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States live in cities.

And for years — decades in some places — native people have been receiving health care at government-funded tribal clinics in or near the urban areas where they live.

Yet rarely have medical studies focused on the population's health as compared to other city dwellers, or to illness rates among Indian people living on tribal lands.

The nonprofit institute — which gets federal money to track disease trends among native people — analyzed five years of data from a random digit dial telephone survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 34 cities.

Analysts were alarmed by what they found: Among Indian respondents who reported drinking, rates of binge drinking sometimes grew higher as respondents' income increased, instead of declining as with all other races, Taualii said.

Researchers also concluded that rates of diabetes, obesity and smoking remained about the same among low-income and wealthy urban Indians. That's not the case in the general population, where people with lower incomes tend to experience higher rates of those health problems, Taualii said.

Those results — and data showing that native people in some cities reported having more difficulty getting health care than urbanites of other backgrounds — show special attention must be paid to the health disparities for urban Indians, Taualii said.

For the third year in a row, President Bush's 2009 budget proposal calls for the Urban Indian Health Programs' funding to be cut.

Newman Washington, who runs drug and alcohol programs at a government-funded Indian clinic in Wichita, Kan., said tight finances already make it difficult to meet the needs of patients from the Kickapoo, Potawatomi and other nearby tribes.

Clients trying to detox from alcohol often have to wait two months to be admitted to a hospital bed, or travel 75 miles to Ponca City, Okla. to be seen in an inpatient facility, Washington said.

"People go away and get an education, but then they come back home and have a really hard time changing their behavior," said Washington, a member of the Eastern Shoshone tribe of Wyoming. "Whenever you start looking at the core, there's some shame and guilt that people are carrying around from past generations."

Clinics like Washington's are one of the few places urban American Indians can seek out culturally competent health care. Providing health care to all Indians has long been part of the government's trust responsibility, but several in the government's network came under fire last year for mismanagement.

A bill approved by the Senate last week would boost programs at the federally funded Indian Health Service, prompt new construction and modernization of health clinics on reservations and attempt to recruit more Indians into health professions.

Officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the urban clinics, did not return messages seeking comment on the study.

Staff for the Senate Indian Affairs Committee was examining the report, a spokesman for its chair, Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), said Wednesday.

STATE BRIEFS

TRUCKEE

Research camera spots rare wolverine in Sierra

A research project aimed at martens has turned up a bigger prize: a picture of a wolverine — an elusive animal scientists thought had been driven out of the Sierra Nevada long ago by human activity.

The discovery could have major implications for land-use decisions if the wolverine is declared an endangered species, a step the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering.

A graduate student at Oregon State University, Katie Moriarty, got a picture of a wolverine recently on a motion-detecting digital camera at a remote field station between Truckee and Sierraville.

Moriarty was trying to get pictures of martens, which are slender brown weasels, for a master's thesis.

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COSTA MESA

College sells its Canadian island for $2 million

Orange Coast College has sold its 40-acre Canadian island for $2.2 million.

The 40-acre island off British Columbia was a gift to the Costa Mesa school in 2002, but college officials say it cost too much to maintain.

Rabbit Island was sold to three buyers who formed a corporation to buy it for use as a personal vacation retreat.

Orange Coast College foundation chief says it's a relief to have finally sold the island.

AP

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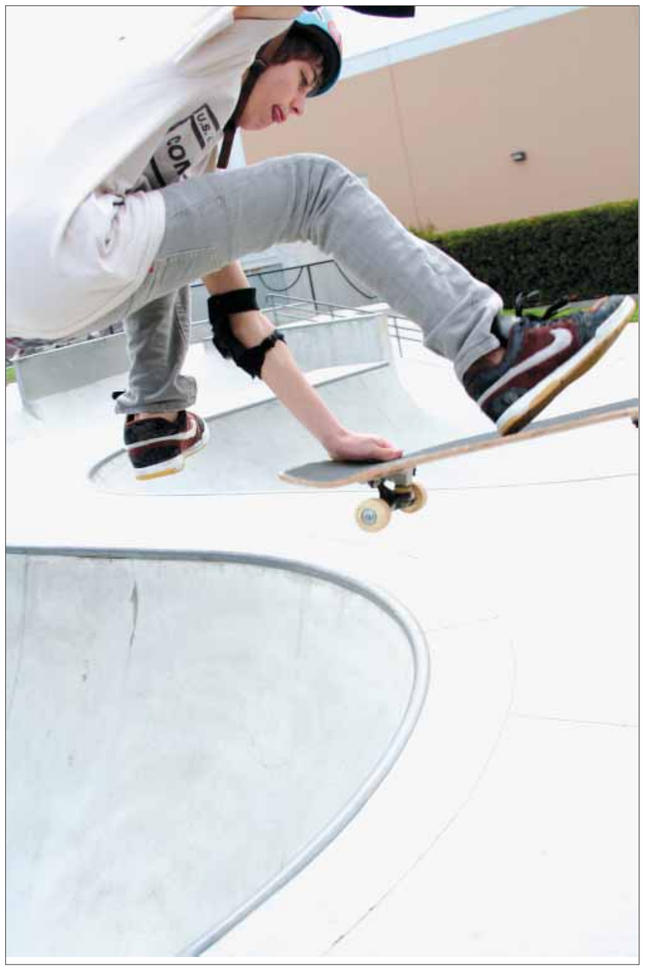
INTERESTED IN YOUR DAILY FORECAST?
CHECK OUT THE HOROSCOPES ON PAGE 15!

A DAY IN THE Life

A weekly slice of life culled from one of Santa Monica's most interesting places, "A Day in the Life" turns the focus on the everyday and thrusts the oftentimes overlooked into the spotlight for all to see.

LOCAL PARKS | THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2008









The city's parks offer a host of different things to do. There's a skate park, plenty of playgrounds for the kids to play in, classes teaching everything from soccer to ballet and even some urban wildlife. From Douglas Park to Airport Park, the city is filled with unique and interesting green spaces for residents and visitors alike to head out of doors and enjoy the sunshine.
Photos by Alexis Hawkins news@smdp.com

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McDonald's is back at 2nd and Colorado with a new look, a McCafe coffee bar and great signature McDonald's food.

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TUESDAY, MARCH 11
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Free small coffee with the purchase any breakfast sandwich

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12
Snack Attack — 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Free Snack Wrap with the purchase of any beverage

THURSDAY, MARCH 13
Happy Hour — 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Half price specialty coffee

FRIDAY, MARCH 14
Leap Year Celebration — 29 cent ice cream cones all day
Friday Night Jazz — 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Every Friday in March

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File photo

GOING UP? **The recent trend of rising gas prices is forcing some vendors at the Santa Monica Farmers' Market to consider price hikes.**

Prices could be on the rise

FROM **PRICES** PAGE 1

Longtime resident and shopper Vida Bowling has been coming to the Wednesday market since it started.

"I have seen a big increase in the prices," she said. "But we've got to support our farmers. They are trying so hard traveling long distances and working with expensive machinery and they never give up."

Even with the commitment of shoppers, some farmers are eventually forced to go against their will and raise prices.

"We are seeing a lower profit margin," Brantley said. "If it gets to cost more to get the stuff down here, than you are going to see a slacking in profits."

Pritchett Farms is currently near the end of their fall season and they are trying to keep the same prices they have had for the past six months.

"But when we start our summer fruits and vegetable, then we will have to go up in prices," Brantley said.

While gas prices may be a current obstacle for farmers, the 2007 winter freeze has cost many people the chance to even show up.

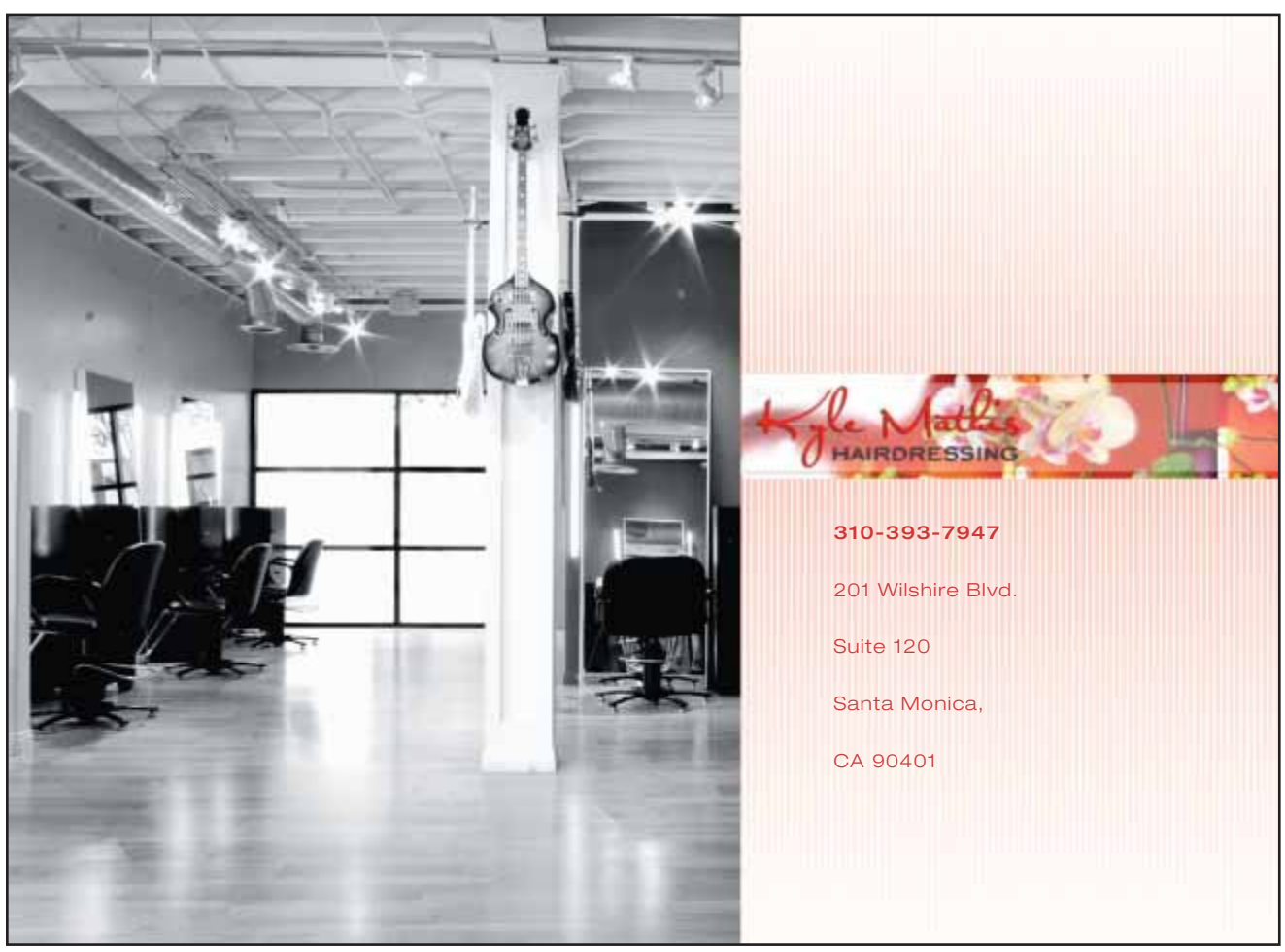
"Today is not as busy as it usually is," Bowling said. "There are a lot of empty spaces where there used to be farmers that had all their crop freeze."

According to reports done by the California Citrus Mutual, the below freezing temperature of last winter destroyed more than $480 million worth of California citrus and damaged at least 50 percent of the total citrus crop throughout the state.

Looking toward the future, farmers like Brantley have no idea what it will take to raise prices and keep a constant profit.

"We will look at what the price for gas is, and we will look at what the trend is, because at some point it is going to top out," he said. "If it's going to become so expensive that people will stop buying produce and a surplus will be created, then prices will have to come down a bit or at least level off, and only then we can set our prices accordingly."

news@smdp.com



Samohi parents concerned about cyber bullying

FROM **BULLYING** PAGE 3

"We are learning by experience in this age of technology because as these issues arrive, districts are working diligently to find a response that protects the civil rights and civil liberties of individuals, but also make sure all kids feel safe in their learning environment," Talarico said.

Candice Kelsey, a Venice resident and author of "Generation MySpace" said that administrators need to formulate a very specific and clear code of conduct that every student matriculating through the district understands. The code needs to include a statement that anything disruptive to learning would not be tolerated, even if the conflict didn't originate on school grounds, Kelsey said. Within those policies needs to be a clear definition that harassment is anything that is inflammatory, derogatory and humiliating, she added.

"If it affects the learning environment, it's the school's right to address it," Kelsey said.

The responsibility also falls on the parent to take some initiative and understand their children's world, learning about the trends in which adolescents are interested, Kelsey added.

"It's no longer cute for parents to laugh and giggle about how tech savvy their kids are," Kelsey said. "It's affecting kids as they're growing up and they need to know they can go to their parents about something as serious as cyber bullying."

> **"WE ARE LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE IN THIS AGE OF TECHNOLOGY."**
>
> **Dianne Talarico**
> Superintendent,
> Santa Monica-Malibu Unified
> School District

COMFORT FROM BEHIND THE COMPUTER

In January of last year, Malibu High School made headlines after administrators discovered that several videos poking fun at teachers and students were posted on YouTube. Among the videos were some that questioned the sexuality of several students. Both videos were subsequently removed by YouTube at the request of the school.

"I think that we continue to face the challenges of what is going on the Internet," Malibu Principal Mark Kelly said on Tuesday.

But aside from the e-mail and video Web sites, bullying has also made its way into the social networking realm, finding a venue through sites like Facebook and MySpace where antagonism can come in the form of comments being posted on a student's personal page.

There are numerous factors going into the shift in bullying from the real world to the cyber world, most notably the instantaneous nature of the Internet.

"Before, when you get into a fight with someone at school, you went home, festered about it ... slept on it and maybe weren't so pent up [the next day]," Vanessa Van Petten, a family manager and author of book "You're Grounded."

"The problem is now when they get home, they can instantly post a mean thing on someone's (Facebook) wall, can slander them through an IM," she added.

Van Petten, who was expected to conduct a workshop on social networking for Samohi parents on Wednesday night, added that the Internet and cyber bullying has eliminated that tense and nervous feeling that some students might have in face-to-face confrontations, making online bullying an even more attractive alternative.

"It's hard to walk up to someone in their face and say to them that I hate you," she said. "It's much easier to write in a message and send it to a few friends so you don't see the repercussion."

melodyh@smdp.com

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Send letters to **editor@smdp.com**



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

PAPER-LESS: **Police officials believe that individuals are stealing newspapers from local news racks to recycle the papers for cash. Newspaper thefts have been going on for the past 10 years.**

Police investigating newspaper thefts

FROM **THEFTS** PAGE 1

harm a competitor or deprive a reader of its content. The penalty for a first offense is a $250 fine with the second offense possibly resulting in a jail sentence and a fine up to $500.

In December, several San Francisco Bay Area newspaper publishers formed a coalition to pressure law enforcement authorities to pursue newspaper thieves.

In Santa Monica, police officers just completed a stint in which they monitored several news racks in "hot spots" early Wednesday morning. The morning investigation didn't lead to any suspects.

"We didn't find anything unusual," Officer Scott Pace said on Wednesday. "We just saw several people delivering."

Police have no leads on possible suspects and whether the crime is being committed by one individual or different groups of thieves. Pace added that in speaking with recycling centers and distributors, the stolen papers do seemed to be used to make money at area recycling centers.

The Argonaut intentionally distributes fewer papers at certain popular news racks on the day it's published, restocking copies over the weekend, according to Carol Hector, the publisher and editor of the paper.

"It's a problem," Hector said. "If the price of recycling newsprint was lower, it wouldn't be worth it for them to pay the gas [to drive and pick up newspapers]."

Newspaper thefts are hardly a new trend and are something that has been going on for at least the past 10 years, according to Tom Ponton, the owner of News to Go, which distributes both the Santa Monica Mirror and The Argonaut.

"Whenever the price goes up at the recycling center, it seems to get worse," Ponton said.

Ponton noted that most of the thefts seem to occur early in the morning, between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m.

Keith Wyatt, who handles the circulation for the Santa Monica Daily Press, said that he saw a man remove a stack of newspapers shortly after the distributor delivered them to a news rack on Santa Monica Boulevard last month. Wyatt said he chased the man, who was driving a blue or green van, for several blocks and lost him after a pursuit on Pacific Coast Highway.

"Certain locations, I would expect them to be empty, but not every night," Wyatt said.

melodyh@smdp.com

Stairway of the Stars comes to the SM Civic Auditorium

FROM **STAIRWAY** PAGE 3

the very first female student body president of Samohi back in the early '40s. She received her Stairway award in the late '60s, for accomplishments on stage and on screen. Gesner's father received his Stairway award in the late '70s for his accomplishments in the field of architecture. Coincidentally, they both played violin in the school orchestras at Lincoln Middle School, and then at Samohi.

The ensembles that will perform this year's Stairway of the Stars' concert are, the All-District Honor Orchestra and Choir (Elementary), High School Jazz Ensemble, Middle and High School orchestras, choirs and this year the middle and high School bands will be featured. Some of the musical selections this year will be: "Simple Gifts," "Rodeo" and "Haitian Fight Song".

Tickets can be purchased at the Professional Development and Learning Center, (PDLC), Formerly Washington West on 2802 Fourth Street, Santa Monica or call (310) 450-8338 ext. 79538.

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SURF REPORT



SURF CONDITIONS **WATER TEMP: 56°**

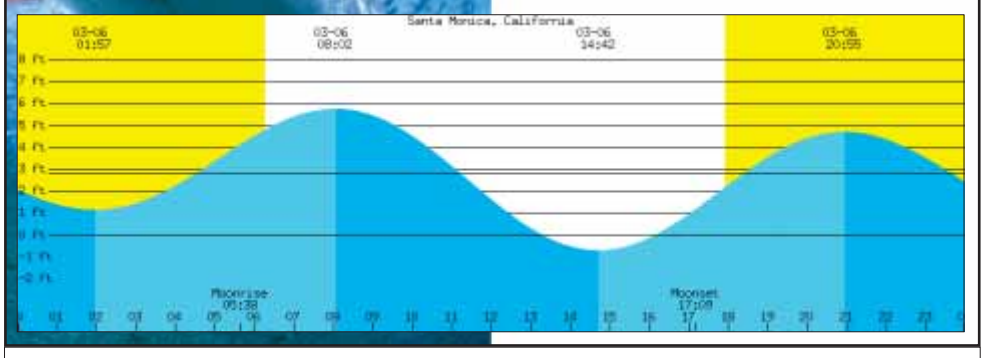
SWELL FORECAST (4-6 FT)

Today the south swell should continue with at least chest high waves. NW energy should get a slight boost from some Gulf activity, but nothing over waist to chest is expected for west facing breaks. Winds may be a bit more offshore in the morning Thursday than they would be Wednesday. Tide will run rather high early in the morning, dipping to a negative low early afternoon.

LONG RAANGE SYANOPSIS

TRACKING SOUTHERN HEMIS FOR NEXT WEEK...

TIDE FORECAST FOR TODAY IN SANTA MONICA



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **February 26, 2008**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - www.healthebay.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 1
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 2
- Number of wet days -- 14
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 35 / 18
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 10 / 28

The Beach Report Card is made possible by a grant from Ford

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth	A+	A
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Aliso creeks	A+	A+
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	F
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	F
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	A+
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	F	F
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	A+	A
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	D
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach	A+	A
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth	F	F
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	A+	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	F
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily	F	B
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	F	F
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	A+
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	B	A+
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	F	A
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	A+	A+
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	A	F
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	F
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	A+	F
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	F

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	A+	F
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain	A+	F
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua)	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	A+	F
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	A+	F
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	D	F
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain	B	F
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms)	A+	C
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A+	A
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	B
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	D	F
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A	A+
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	D
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St.	A+	D
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower	B	C
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	D	D
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A+	A+
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty)	A+	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	A+
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A+	D
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	D

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
ns -- no sample taken

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay

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Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card℠ is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A–F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

NFL

Free-agent market isn't what it seems

BY DAVE GOLDBERG
AP Football Writer

Before free agency started a week ago, Tennessee general manager Mike Reinfeldt suggested that in a market filled mostly with midlevel players, the best strategy would be to sit back and let things settle down.

After the Titans lost five players and signed just tight end Alge Crumpler, defensive tackle Albert Haynesworth begged to differ.

"We are not doing anything. We are really just making ourselves worse the way I look at it," Haynesworth, protected as the Titans' franchise player, told The Tennessean. "It doesn't look like we're trying to get better."

Haynesworth, like countless impatient fans around the country, might be better off heeding his GM's words and waiting. Because, for the most part, the first week of free agency has been marked by teams overpaying players who are average, slightly better than that or over the hill.

Exhibit A: The New York Jets, who are trying to compete in their division with New England and in their region with the Super Bowl champion Giants.

They guaranteed $21 million to G Alan Faneca; $20 million to DE/LB Calvin Pace; and signed OL Damien Woody to a five-year, $25 million deal. They also traded for DT Kris Jenkins, an overweight underachiever in Carolina the past two seasons and renegotiated his deal to give him $20 million straight up.

Finally, they traded LB Jonathan Vilma, a Pro Bowler just two seasons ago, to New Orleans for just a fourth-round pick and left DT Dewayne Robertson, the fourth overall pick in the 2003 draft, in limbo because neither fits Eric Mangini's 3-4 defense.

Exhibit B: Cincinnati, Arizona and St. Louis. Those three clubs threw $91 million at three of Haynesworth's ex-teammates — DEs Antwan Odom and Travis LaBoy and G Jacob Bell. OK players all, but just OK — Odom and LaBoy benefited by playing on a line with Haynesworth and Kyle Vanden Bosch.

Exhibit C: San Francisco, which apparently didn't learn after signing CB Nate Clements to an $80 million deal last year and finishing 5-11. This time they guaranteed $20 million to "pass rusher" Justin Smith, the fourth overall pick in the 2001 draft, but a guy who had just 43 1/2 sacks in seven seasons with the Bengals.

Those teams should consider that the Giants, Colts, Steelers and Patriots, the last four Super Bowl winners, have been moderate free-agent players at best.

Last year the Giants signed just one, linebacker Kawika Mitchell, for $1 million for one year. He played well, but so did six of the eight draft choices who made the team, including fifth-round TE Kevin Boss and seventh-round RB Ahmad Bradshaw, who along with CB Aaron Ross, WR Steve Smith and DT Jay Alford all had big plays in the Super Bowl.

Mitchell was allowed to leave for Buffalo this year, in part because the Giants think LB Gerris Wilkinson, a third-rounder in 2006, has long-term potential. New York also lost S Gibril Wilson to Oakland for $16 million in guaranteed money and replaced him with veteran Sammy Knight for about $14.5 million less, figuring the on-field difference isn't that great for a short-term fix with youngster Michael Johnson in the wings.

The Giants have spent in the past for productive free agents: WR Plaxico Burress, LB Antonio Pierce, C Shaun O'Hara and OT Kareem McKenzie.

But all came for reasonable amounts and most of the time New York prefers to pay its own players.

The Giants have extended Osi Umenyiora, Justin Tuck, Jeremy Shockey and O'Hara. They'll probably do the same for Pierce and Burress and at some point will pay more than $30 million in guaranteed money to Eli Manning.

The Steelers spent their money for QB Ben Roethlisberger, a $36 million guarantee. That meant they had to let Faneca go, leaving a hole in a shaky offensive line. But they rationalized it because he's 31 and may have slipped a bit. They also let Burress leave after the 2004 season, perhaps a mistake because he's matured into a more consistent and disciplined player with the Giants.

"WE ARE NOT DOING ANYTHING. WE ARE REALLY JUST MAKING OURSELVES WORSE THE WAY I LOOK AT IT. IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE WE'RE TRYING TO GET BETTER."

Albert Haynesworth
Titans defensive tackle

New England, the dominant team of this decade, has never been afraid to let key players go, the main exhibits being WRs Deion Branch and David Givens. This year it was CBs Asante Samuel and Randall Gay. Samuel, considered the premier free agent on the market, got $57 million with a $20 million guarantee from the Eagles.

Indianapolis rarely signs free agents but lets plenty go. Last year, the Colts lost four defensive starters, yet the defense improved. This year, they re-signed S Bob Sanders, the defensive player of the year, TE Dallas Clark and G Ryan Lilja, then called it a day.

Some teams making big splashes with free agency seem to be doing it for publicity.

Jets GM Mike Tannebaum, who said a year ago "our core philosophy is building through the draft" now seems to have alienated some his remaining stars by throwing money around.

But he seems to have decided that he has to because of the Patriots and Giants, who have made the Jets almost invisible in their own area.

Samuel's signing wasn't out of character for the Eagles, who in the past have added the now departed Terrell Owens and Jevon Kearse. But they needed a wide receiver more than a cornerback and their flirtation with Randy Moss seems to have been done with the halfhearted knowledge that he would stay in Foxborough.

Still, a team that generally builds in all the right ways, needed some love.

After all, the Eagles play in a division with the Super Bowl winner and the team that had the NFC's best record (and T.O.) last season.

New skin

Downey Jr. changes race in new movie

In "Tropic Thunder," one of three summer films featuring ROBERT DOWNEY JR., the actor appears on screen as a black man.

Downey Jr. plays overly committed actor Kirk Lazarus, a white man cast to play a black soldier in a satire of the performing profession. The film also stars Jack Black and Ben Stiller, who co-wrote, directed and produced it.

"If it's done right, it could be the type of role you called Peter Sellers to do 35 years ago," Downey told Entertainment Weekly magazine. "If you don't do it right, we're going to hell."

Stiller said he was "trying to push it as far as you can within reality," with the intent of satirizing over-the-top actors, not African-Americans.

"I had no idea how people would respond to it,"



Stiller told the magazine. But at a recent screening, black viewers liked the film, he said.

Downey explained that he kept the character from becoming a caricature because he "dove in with both feet."

"If I didn't feel it was morally sound," he said, "or that it would be easily misinterpreted that I'm just C. Thomas Howell in ("Soul Man"), I would've stayed home."

Paramount is set to release "Tropic Thunder" Aug. 15.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

FRANKEN FINED

The state of New York fined the personal corporation of Democratic Senate candidate AL FRANKEN $25,000 for not carrying workers' compensation insurance for almost three years.

The New York Workers' Compensation Board levied the fine against Alan Franken Inc. in August 2006 for failure to carry the insurance from June 2002 to March 2005.

Brian Keegan, a board spokesman, said a number of notices were sent to the address the New York agency had listed for Franken, but the television personality and political commentator didn't become aware of the fine until Tuesday, said his campaign.

The fine was reported recently by Minnesota Democrats Exposed, a Web site sympathetic to incumbent Republican Sen. Norm Coleman, whom Franken is seeking to unseat in November.

AP

Time to vanish, Aries

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★ Slow down and let others catch up. Tonight: Vanish. No explanations necessary.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Though you might hold your breath at a squeaky moment or two, when all's said and done, you have a lot to smile about. Tonight: Where your friends are.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★ Responsibility tumbles on you, and you can handle it. Tonight: Easy does it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Understand what is going on with someone at a distance. Tonight: Where there is music.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Relate individually rather than with several people. Tonight: Dinner for two.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ You might feel worn out. Tonight: Turn down an invitation if you want.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ Work demands concentration, yet you get tired quickly because of the intensity of your job. Tonight: Easy does it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Creativity emerges in a difficult moment. Tonight: Kick back.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ Tension builds because you might have pushed way beyond your limit. Tonight: Easy does it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ You might be close to unstoppable, but in your big push, you could cruise over an unusual piece of information or insight. Tonight: Visit on the phone or in person — either works.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★ Look at your spending before you launch into action. Tonight: Pay bills first.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Your smile is a sure-fire winner. Tonight: As you like.

Happy Birthday

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

Be assertive this year. Often you will need to take the lid off pressure and let a situation blow. Don't take too much on or try to handle too much. Ask and expect others to do their fair share. Never assume that your emotional and physical resources are endless, as they are not. If you are single, don't formalize a relationship this year, but feel free to start one. Take your time; you have many more options than you realize. If you are attached, there could be some tension. Though hard to eliminate, the issues need addressing. Relax more, and so will your partner, who might simply be having a hard time. PISCES understands you perhaps too well.

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at http://www.jacquelinebigar.com (c) 2006 by King Features Syndicate Inc.

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Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

Difficulty
BRONZE

				4	8			
9		3		1				7
		5	7			1		3
7		4	6		1		9	8
	8			9			7	
2	5		4		7	3		1
4		6			5	9		
5				2		7		4
			8	7				

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GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

6	5	4	7	1	9	8	3	2
9	1	8	4	2	3	6	5	7
2	3	7	8	5	6	9	1	4
1	7	6	9	3	5	4	2	8
5	4	2	6	7	8	3	9	1
3	8	9	1	4	2	5	7	6
4	6	3	2	9	1	7	8	5
7	2	5	3	8	4	1	6	9
8	9	1	5	6	7	2	4	3

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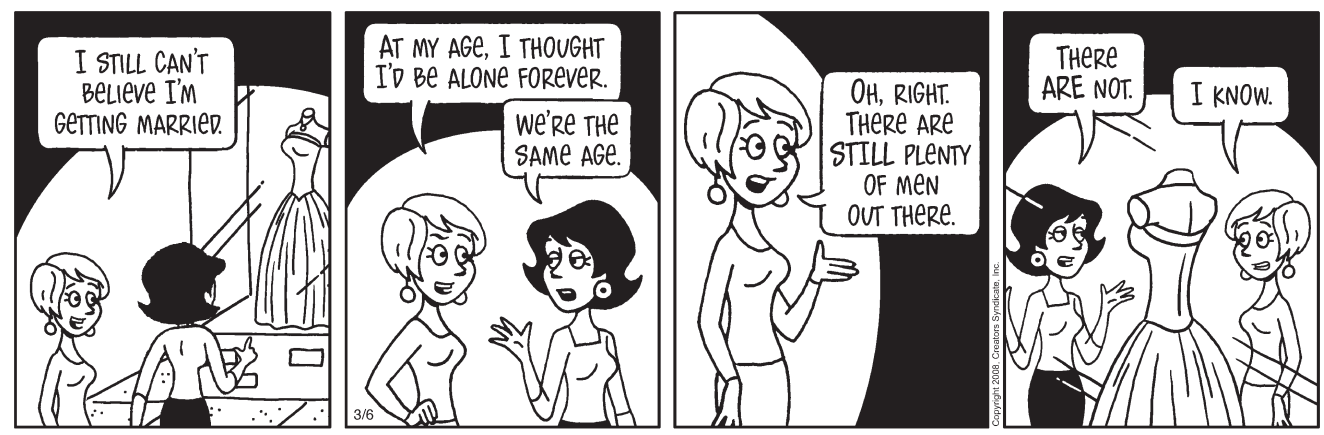
Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



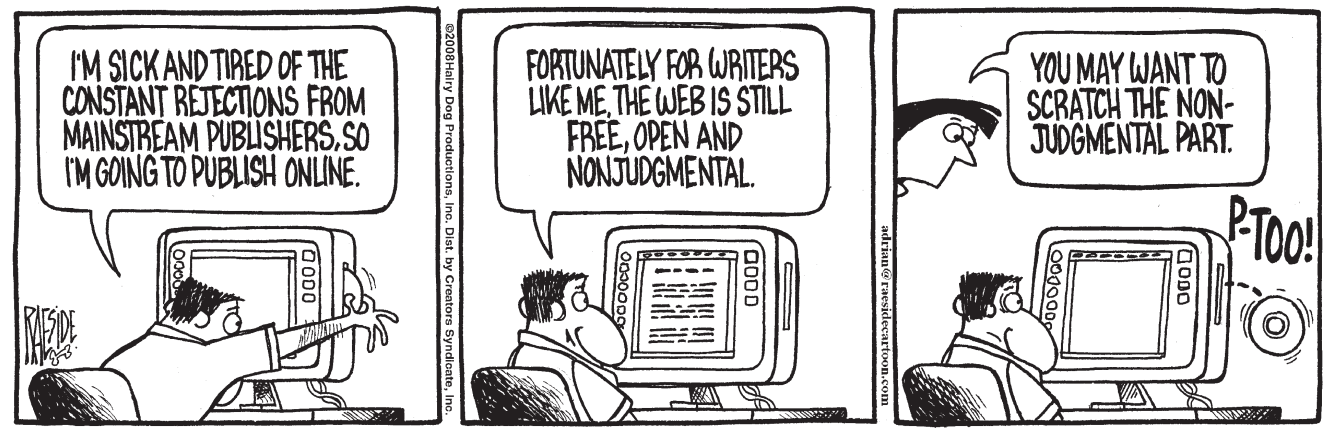
The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



The Other Coast

By Adrian Raeside



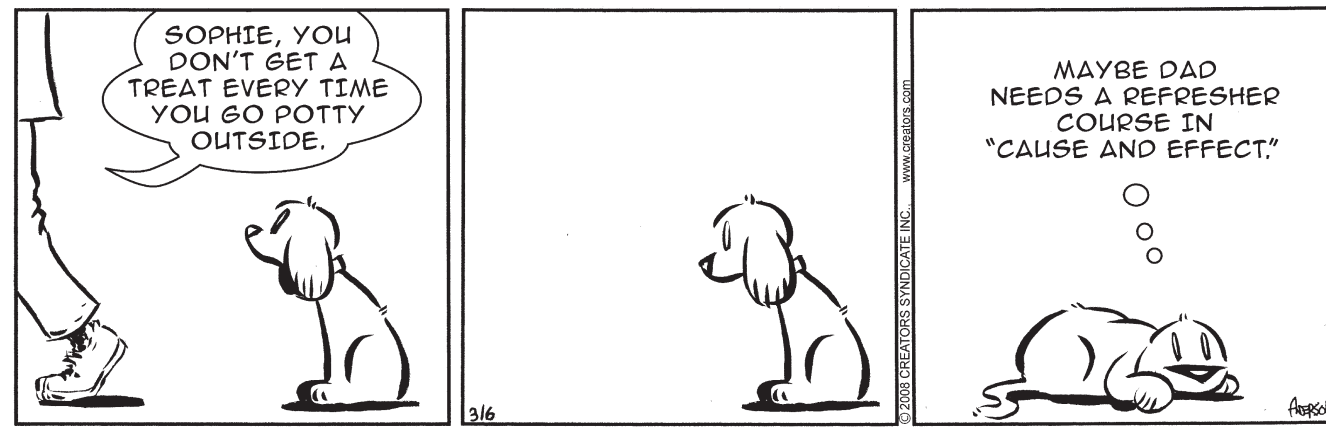
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Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Farm chunk
5 Top Hollywood stars
10 Peru neighbor
12 Tennis great Rod
13 Court score
14 Donald's ex
15 Big bird
16 Enormous
18 Head out
20 Weed whacker
21 Altman film
23 Bruins great
24 Forecast word
26 Farm females
28 Writer Buntline
29 Curbside call
31 Eccentric
32 Asian temple
36 Lettuce variety
39 Dogpatch adjective
40 Passover meal
41 In reserve
43 Door sign
44 When pigs fly
45 Organ parts
46 Lab event

DOWN

1 Took a part
2 Door sound
3 Shred
4 New Haven student
5 Dismounted
6 Kilauea flow
7 Scott work
8 PGA division
9 Shipping inquiry
11 Contest hopeful
17 "— a deal!"
19 Friend to François
22 Pencil cross-section
24 Insignificant amount
25 Augmented
27 Barrister's wear
28 Din
30 Busy mo. for CPAs
33 Green shade
34 Cuts into cubes
35 Vigilant
37 Horn sound
38 Goofs
42 Catch

T	E	P	E	E	S	■	C	A	B	S
A	V	E	N	U	E	■	A	R	I	A
B	E	W	A	R	E	■	S	T	O	W
■	■	■	C	O	M	E	T	H	■	■
S	P	A	T	■	■	R	E	R	U	N
H	E	R	■	B	U	R	R	I	T	O
O	A	T	■	U	S	O	■	T	I	N
A	C	C	U	S	E	R	■	I	C	E
T	E	R	S	E	■	■	S	C	A	T
■	■	I	N	S	O	L	E	■	■	■
D	A	T	A	■	R	I	P	S	U	P
A	V	I	V	■	A	V	I	A	T	E
M	A	C	Y	■	L	E	A	P	E	R

Yesterday's answer

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1	2	3	4	■	■	5	6	7	8	9
10				11	■	12				
13					■	14				
15			■	16	17					
18			19			■	■	20		
■	■	■	21			22	■	23		
■	24	25			■	26	27			■
28			■	29	30			■	■	■
31			■	■	32			33	34	35
36			37	38			■	39		
40					■	41	42			
43					■	44				
45					■	■	46			

3-6

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MEGA MILLIONS: 7 15 30 33 56
Meganumber: 22
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SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 4 10 20 34 47
Meganumber: 19
Jackpot: $9M

FANTASY 5: 6 21 27 29 32

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 5 5 2
EVENING: 7 6 5

DAILY DERBY:
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2nd: 01 Gold Rush
3rd: 08 Gorgeous George
RACE TIME: 1.43.03

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Latest Ape-Human News: The 4th Texas Court of Appeals in January affirmed a lower court decision that monkeys and chimpanzees have no legal right to file lawsuits against an animal preserve for mistreatment. In Apeldoorn, Netherlands, however, one prominent member of the family is full of human nature: Sibu, an orangutan at the Apenheul Primate Park, has so far rejected all overtures to mate with other orangutans and instead appears smitten with blond female zookeepers, especially those with tattoos, according to an October Reuters dispatch.

■ To learn how cockroaches socialize, a research team from Free University of Brussels created tiny robots programmed to act like cockroaches, doused them with the proper pheromones, and set them free within crowds of cockroaches to see if they could influence behavior. While some of the robots coaxed real cockroaches to follow them into an unshaded area (away from a dark area that most normally prefer), nearly half of the robots, despite programming, fell under the "spell" of the real ones and headed for the darkness.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1857 the United States Supreme Court ruled in Dred Scott v. Sandford that Scott, a slave, was not a U.S. citizen and could not sue for his freedom in federal court.

1834 the city of York in Upper Canada was incorporated as Toronto.

1836 the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, fell to Mexican forces after a 13-day siege.

1853 Verdi's opera ``La Traviata'' premiered in Venice, Italy.

1933 a nationwide bank holiday declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt went into effect.

1935 retired Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. died in Washington.

1944 U.S. heavy bombers staged the first full-scale American raid on Berlin during World War II.

1957 the former British African colonies of the Gold Coast and Togoland became the independent state of Ghana.

1967 the daughter of Josef Stalin, Svetlana Alliluyeva, appeared at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India, and declared her intention to defect to the West.

WORD UP!

busker \BUS-kur\, *noun:* A person who entertains (as by playing music) in public places.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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All classified liner ads are placed on our website for **FREE!** Check out ***www.smdp.com*** for more info.

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OCEAN HOUSE, an elegant senior living residence in Santa Monica, is looking for an ideal candidate for it's line cook position. Duties include participating in the daily menu production, preparing and coordinates daily breakfast, lunch and dinners from standardized recipes. Working line shifts daily to ensure speedy service. Ensuring kitchen equipment is clean, operable, and properly maintained on a daily basis. This is a full time position with benefits after 3 months, medical, dental, vision. 401(k) plan and meal plan as well. If you have a great attitude and enjoy working on a great team, please come by and fill out an application at 2107 Ocean Ave., SM,CA 90405 or fax a resume to (310) 314-7356.

DANIEL'S PLUMBING Santa Monica is a local business that prides itself on great service and reliability. We are looking for like minded individuals to join our team. We offer good pay and benefits. Please call (310)954 7709

DANIEL'S PLUMBING Santa Monica

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GIVE OF YOURSELF volunteers wanted at the discovery shop. Help us contribute to the American cancer society by spending 4 hours per week assisting in our resale shop in Santa Monica. Contact Terry or Shaunna at (310)458-4490

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Employment

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LA 1523 Holt ave, unit 3, 2bdrm/1bath upper unit, $1400. stove, fridge, carpet, blinds, laundry, parking, no pets, 9310)578-7512 jkwproperties.com

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Day Light Savings Reminder



When you go to bed Saturday night, **March 8th**.....

Be sure to set your clocks forward one hour.

As promised, I will remind you twice a year to take care of these important safety issues:

Inside your home:

- Change the batteries in all of your smoke detectors
- Clean and/or change the filters in your furnace.
- Clean out any lint and/or fabric from the vents of your clothes dryer.
- Check electrical outlets for potential fire hazards such as frayed wires or loose fitting plugs.
- Check for overloading of electrical outlets, fuse boxes, extension cords etc.
- Keep a filled and ready-to-use, multi-purpose fire extinguisher accessible.
- Check water heater for leaks and corrosion.

In your yard:

- Remove all dead trees & keep healthy trees & shrubs trimmed & away from utility wires.
- Remove dead leaves and all debris from your gutters and downspouts.
- Repair driveway & walkways that are cracked, broken or uneven to provide a level surface.



Average Price of Properties Listed for Sale As of Early March 2008

		Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
Santa Monica Canyon	=	$ 2,341,750	$ 1,300,000
North of Montana	=	$ 3,796,333	$ 2,162,714
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	$ 3,675,625	$ 1,039,613
South of Wilshire	=	$ 932,316	$ 762,197
Sunset Park	=	$ 1,473,059	$ 676,281
Ocean Park	=	$ 1,919,800	$ 1,031,234

Statistics updated every Friday

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