

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

2 10 15 27 41
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Jackpot: \$23 million

FANTASY 5

7 12 27 28 36

DAILY 3

Daytime: 6 7 1
Evening: 7 3 5

DAILY DERBY

1st: 05 California Classic
2nd: 11 Money Bags
3rd: 04 Big Ben

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

Seventh-grader Jasmine Roberts became a celebrity of sorts in February when her hometown Tampa Tribune published results of her winning science-fair entry, which concluded that the drinking-water ice of several local fast food restaurants contains more bacteria (including some E. coli) than the same restaurants' toilet water. She used a laboratory at the University of South Florida's Moffitt Cancer Center, where she is a volunteer assistant for a professor.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 76th day of 2006.
There are 289 days left in the year.
This is St. Patrick's Day.

In A.D. 461, according to tradition, St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, died in Saul.

In 1776, British forces evacuated Boston during the Revolutionary War.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Television is a device that permits people who haven't anything to do to watch people who can't do anything."

FRED ALLEN
AMERICAN COMEDIAN

INDEX

Horoscopes

Dance an Irish Jig, Aries 2

Snow & Surf Report

Water temperature: 53° 3

Opinion

Pardon, Mr. President 4

Local

Not-so smooth criminals 5

National

The heat is on the Southwest 8

Entertainment

Stout ... Brilliant! 10

International

Air assault in Iraq 13

Comics

Laugh it up 16

Classifieds

Have some class 17-19

City can't curb feedings frenzy

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE — While lawyers wait for a panel of judges to decide the constitutionality of feeding the hungry in public parks, a law passed more than two years ago designed to curb public food lines has shown little effect.

The law, passed by the Santa Monica City Council in 2002, requires groups of more than 150 people who gather in public places to obtain an event permit from City Hall and, if food is served, a health permit from Los Angeles County.

A handful of Civil Rights activists sued City Hall in January of 2003, claiming the law treads on the First Amendment in a number of ways, and therefore, was unenforceable. The following year, a Los Angeles Superior Court Judge ruled in City Hall's favor and threw the case out of court.

But Civil Rights activists from the National Lawyers Guild and the ACLU, including former Santa Monica City Attorney Robert Myers, appealed the decision. Arguments were made in early 2005 in front of three United States Court of Appeals judges, with both sides awaiting a ruling.

Meanwhile, several groups from outside of Santa Monica continue their feeding programs for the homeless without city or health permits. That's because City Hall only requires that a special event permit be acquired if the group

See PARK FEEDINGS, page 6



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

The homeless and hungry congregate in Palisades Park, waiting for food provided by Paul Grymkowski and his organization HOPE, which organizes food lines twice a week along the expanse for dozens of people.

Cash-strapped and walking the line

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

PALISADES PARK — On a crisp, unforgiving day last week, Santa Monica's desperate lined up nearly 150 deep, each in search of a hot meal. I was no different.

On Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, the down and out

know where to go — Palisades Park, along the Pacific Ocean bluffs, where a prepared meal awaits them free of charge.

Many lined up early, at least an hour before the food was served, wanting to be near the front while the helpings were still hot. Most were middle-aged men, but there was a fair share of married couples too, women in their early

20s, even seniors.

And then there was me — huddled between them — cold, hungry and curious to know what it's like to have to swallow your pride along with a meal, standing in lines and being glared at by passersby, just so you can calm the hunger pains for a few more hours.

See WALKING THE LINE, page 7

Australian firm proposes LNG terminal off Malibu

BY TIM MOLLOY

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — In the latest proposal to import liquefied natural gas to California, an Australian company has unveiled plans to place a terminal about 22 miles off the coast of Malibu.

The plan announced Wednesday by Woodside Energy attempts to sidestep fears from environmentalists and some residents that importing natural gas is too dangerous because it is volatile and

potentially explosive in its gaseous state.

Woodside wants to ship super-cooled LNG from Australian fields to the California coast in specially designed tankers.

But unlike other proposed terminals off the West Coast, the plan doesn't require any large, permanent structures.

Instead of feeding vaporized natural gas into a pipeline at a terminal, the delivery tanker would take in an underwater buoy attached to a flexible pipe leading

to a larger pipe along the ocean floor.

The larger pipe would come ashore in an industrial area near Los Angeles International Airport, said Jane Cutter, president of Woodside Natural Gas, a subsidiary of Woodside Energy.

The location of the buoy would not interfere with coastal views, shipping lines, or natural habitat, Cutter said.

Another company using different technology has developed a similar delivery method in the

Gulf of Mexico, according to Woodside.

Woodside hopes to begin shipping between 2010 and 2014 and to meet up to 15 percent of the state's natural gas needs.

Environmentalists who have challenged other proposed LNG terminals said Woodside's proposal sounds safer than the others. But they stressed that the state may not need to import LNG at all.

Linda Krop, an attorney repre-

See NATURAL GAS, page 7

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HOROSCOPES

Dance an Irish Jig, Aries

Santa Monica Daily Press



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

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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ The fact that today is Friday and St. Patty's Day forms a foundation in making your plans. Though you might want to have a devil-may-care attitude, others' intensity and news prevent you from completely letting go. Tonight: Dance an Irish Jig.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Don't lose sight of your main objectives concerning responsibilities and what needs handling. You could be overwhelmed by what is going on around you. Others react intensely to nearly anything. Tonight: Become Irish.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Your creativity surges when dealing with others. If you can, take a personal day or start your weekend early. Much happens quickly and might surprised you. Someone is initially difficult but gets off his or her high horse later in the day. Tonight: Call a spade a spade.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ In some sense you are on hold until the day gets older. Only then will you get into the swing of things. Though you might not be Irish, you will start acting like you are. You could kick up quite a storm. Tonight: Paint the town green.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Be willing to express your thoughts even if someone might become challenging or difficult. You do need to honor who you are first. Later in the day, he or she will calm down. Curb risk-taking. Tonight: The action surrounds your pad.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Investigate new ways of handling an old problem. You might need to let go of previous ideas and premises. Reinvent your mind-set, and you will be a lot better off. As a result, you discover alternatives that you hadn't even conceived of previously. Tonight: Out on the town.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You are in tiptop shape, though you might need to deal with some people who are not. Understand that there are some situations you cannot change. Through this acceptance, you'll move past the problem. Flex. Tonight: Plan on treating a family member or roommate.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★ You might be out of sorts and testy about a conversation or even what you need to do. Realize we all have to say no sometimes. You find that by late afternoon, you look at life in a totally different way. Tonight: Be yourself.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Your high energy could easily be displaced, causing you to be upset and to try to convince someone you are right. You might want to rethink a situation. Opt to back off rather than incur a confrontation. Tonight: By yourself.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ You might feel under the gun. Too much could easily be happening way too fast. Slow down and use your intuition to help rather than be immobilized. Find your friends, and you'll have a great time. Tonight: Where the party is.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Sometimes you cannot make strong choices, no matter how you seek to detach and get information. Others simply might be too reactive to make sense of what you are saying. Take charge. Accept responsibility. Tonight: Be Irish.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ A strong stand could only backfire right now. Think positively and head in the direction you need to. Sometimes you cannot see the whole picture. The more you detach, the bigger the picture becomes. Think positively. Tonight: Take in the big picture.



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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

'Crash' director emerges for the Arts

By Daily Press staff



PAUL HAGGIS

Producer/Writer/Director Paul Haggis, who took home the Best Picture award at the 2005 Academy Awards last week for his critically acclaimed film "Crash," will be appearing on behalf of For The Arts at the 57th Annual "Stairway of the Stars" at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium today at 7:30 p.m. Haggis will address a sold-out audience on the importance of arts education in public schools.

"It is an honor to appear at Stairway this year" Haggis said. "I believe in the power of music and arts education for all students. I am committed to the work that For The Arts does to ensure that this vital aspect of a child's education remains a part of our community public schools forever."

Haggis is a founding member of the For The Arts steering committee and remains a stalwart advocate and spokesperson on behalf of For The Arts. Past guests at Stairway have included musical giant Jackson Browne (2005) and The Doors' drummer, John Densmore (2003).

"Stairway of the Stars" is the musical centerpiece of the award-winning Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's Music Program. The evening features more than 1,000 musicians and represents the best of what the school district has to offer in music education.

The "Stairway" event also will feature guest conductor Eric Whitacre. An accomplished composer, conductor and lecturer, Whitacre has quickly become one of the most popular and performed composers of his generation. The Los Angeles Times has praised his compositions as "works of unearthly beauty and imagination, (with) electric, chilling harmonies," while The Philadelphia Inquirer has called him "the hottest thing in choral music."

For The Arts, the Campaign for the Education Foundation of Santa Monica-Malibu, is a community-wide effort to raise \$15 million to ensure that every student in the Santa Monica-Malibu public schools, beginning in the earliest grades, receives a broad introduction to the arts: music, visual arts, dance and drama. For The Arts was founded by a group of local passionate and concerned parents and has become a community-wide effort to raise awareness about the crisis that faces the nation's public school children. For The Arts is a national model for arts education.

Death penalty to be debated

By Daily Press staff

An undoubtedly emotional debate over the church's position on the death penalty will take place at St. Monica Church this weekend.

The speakers include Mike Farrell, Tom Goldstein and Father David Guffey.

Farrell is an actor, producer, writer, director, political and social activist. He also is co-chair emeritus of Human Rights Watch in California, president of Death Penalty Focus and is a member of the advisory board of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.

Goldstein was formerly incarcerated. Wrongfully convicted of murder in 1980, Goldstein served 24 years in prison before having his conviction overturned. Had he received the death penalty at his trial, he very easily could have been executed.

Guffey is in residence at St. Monica Church and will discuss the history of the Catholic Church's teaching on the death penalty.

There will be light refreshments and there is no fee for the presentation, which begins at 7 p.m. in the St. Monica Parish Trepp Center. For more information, contact Delis Alejandro, pastoral associate at delis@stmonica.net, or (310) 393-9287, ext. 331.

CORRECTION — In the March 17 edition, a community brief on page 3 regarding "Equus," a play at Santa Monica College, indicated the event was free. It costs \$11, \$8 for students.

CLARIFICATION — In the Tuesday, March 14 issue of the Santa Monica Daily Press, "Honda fraud hearing sputters out of gates" it was to be reported that Gary Lincenberg, attorney for Hamid Reza Khaki, indicated he would prefer charges against his client be dropped to a misdemeanor at the very most.

SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 36" - 72"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 27	LIFTS OPEN 12/12
CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed				

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 72" - 120"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 50	LIFTS OPEN 6/6
CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed, Variable				

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 156" - 188"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 150	LIFTS OPEN 25/28
CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed				

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12" - 48"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 10:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 41	LIFTS OPEN 10/16
CONDITIONS: Machine Groomed, Wet				

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 24" - 35"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 4:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 20	LIFTS OPEN 4/4
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed				

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 36" - 72"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 26	LIFTS OPEN 14/14
CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed				

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 30" - 54"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 22	LIFTS OPEN 4/11
CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed				

CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 53°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (1-2 FT)

Today the NW'er in our water now will be fading, dropping size to chest high or so. Friday also has some rain in the forecast that could reach most areas by the afternoon. AM sessions may be spared from precipitation, but southerly winds from the approaching storm will likely pick up early.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

Storm driven NW bearing down on coast...

Next NW'er due Wednesday the 22nd...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

	2:13AM	1.3FT	2:47PM	0.2FT
MONDAY LOW TIDE	2:13AM	1.3FT	2:47PM	0.2FT
HIGH TIDE	8:12AM	5.2FT	9:03PM	4.4FT
TUESDAY LOW TIDE	2:43AM	0.9FT	3:06PM	0.0FT
HIGH TIDE	8:52AM	5.1FT	9:20PM	4.6FT
WEDNESDAY LOW TIDE	3:13AM	0.7FT	3:30PM	0.3FT
HIGH TIDE	9:13AM	5.0FT	9:38PM	4.8FT
THURSDAY LOW TIDE	3:46AM	0.6FT	3:49PM	0.6FT
HIGH TIDE	9:47AM	4.5FT	9:57PM	4.9FT
FRIDAY LOW TIDE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
HIGH TIDE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

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The Q Line

Sponsored by...

The City Council has put the brakes on a plan to expand parking in Santa Monica by 1,712 spaces. Some councilmembers are calling for the plan to shift to providing only 712 additional spaces instead. They cite community sentiments that call for limited development downtown and say that if development is limited, the extra 1,000 parking spaces will not be necessary. Under the plan for less spaces, existing parking structures would be enhanced rather than building new ones.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know: **"Do you support the building of new parking garages in Santa Monica? Why or why not?"**

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

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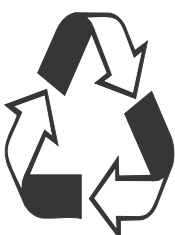


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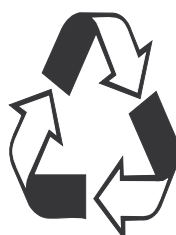
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The Perfect Day-Off begins with breakfast



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Better to house our kids than our cars

Editor:

Your recent editorial of March 10 about the downtown parking plan blasted Kevin McKeown for favoring the environmentally superior Alternative 3B, which proposes 712 new parking spaces instead of 1,712.

I am very happy he had the courage to stand up and say “no” to a plan which greases the road for more cars downtown and more commercial development.

One of Santa Monica’s biggest environmental and quality-of-life problems is the many employees who drive into the city every day to access the 75,000 jobs in Santa Monica. Downtown Bayside District employees using heavily discounted monthly permits occupy approximately 50 percent — about 1,700 — of parking spaces in the downtown parking structures. By building 1,000 parking spaces in two tall new structures for these employee parkers in another district, the downtown parking plan aims at creating more parking for customers.

Shoppers should have first priority when it comes to downtown parking, so that the merchants can do well, which benefits us all. Santa Monica residents, when they drive to the Third Street Promenade, often complain about the inconvenience of trying to find available parking. This is not because of a lack of parking but because it’s badly managed and you can’t easily tell where it is. There’s no coordinated system keeping careful track of and clearly communicating the vacancies, as they have at the Grove. Only on Saturday evenings is there a real parking crunch.

I choose not to participate in the congestion and search for a parking place when I go to the Promenade for a movie or to dine and shop. My friend and I opt to get some exercise and ride our bikes and park them in the only secure parking place for bikes downtown: inside the parking structure on the corner of Fourth and Broadway, at the racks right across from the parking attendants. It’s our secret spot. All the structures should have such good bike parking where you can safely leave a bike for hours.

Increasing the supply of parking is not the only solution to a perceived lack of parking. Better management of what we have and reducing the numbers of employees who drive in would solve numerous problems.

Reducing demand is also more cost-effective than increasing supply. Projected construction costs are already out of date. At prevailing costs, the city needs to budget at least \$45,000 for each new parking space, or \$45,000,000 for 1,000 new spaces. Projected numbers only budget \$22,000 to \$25,000 per space which ignores the skyrocketing cost of land downtown and increased cost of construction materials. The city may be able to purchase the land but not have enough money to build the parking. This could result in precious downtown land lying fallow for years as surface parking lots.

Redevelopment funds are a valuable resource for our community. They should not be used in the downtown to acquire property, possibly through eminent domain. These parking structures would be plunked down a few blocks from the Promenade to facilitate future commercial development which may never materialize or be acceptable to the greater Santa Monica community.

\$45,000,000 is a lot of public money for housing cars. The best use of that money and scarce land downtown may be for workforce housing, which could provide more built-in customers for downtown businesses and the future Exposition Light Rail line station at Fourth and Colorado. Residents could walk to access the business district and not require parking facilities.

Downtown merchants should live within their boundaries and means, and carefully budget their available parking between customers and employees. Alternative 3B would add 712 new parking spaces. That should suffice until we get our own light rail on the old Exposition Corridor. Should merchants need more parking for customers, they can give employees more incentives to commute by other means.

Subsidized parking for employees is not appropriate in an urban area such as our downtown with excellent transit service.

These measures can be integrated into a parking plan to reduce employee demand:

1. On Saturday evenings, do not allow discounts for employees since parking is constrained, except for employees who are handicapped or in registered car pools.
2. Adopt an “Eco Pass” — free-to-the-user — transit pass program for downtown employees, similar to UCLA’s BruinGo program, instead of offering subsidized monthly parking permits, except for registered carpools and handicapped persons.
3. Encourage commuting by bicycle by building a network of bike lanes in the downtown such as those on Main Street and Montana Avenue.
4. Provide secure parking for human-scaled vehicles such as bikes and scooters in each parking structure, within view of parking attendants, or in a fenced area, with shower facilities and lockers for commuter bicyclists.
5. Educate customers and residents with a “transit and bicycle first” policy to further lower demand for new parking.
6. Track and communicate existing parking supply downtown to drivers by computer signage and radio broadcasts to manage it more effectively.
7. The Bayside District could help build work-force housing downtown.
8. Implement a program to help employers hire locally, such as exists in West Hollywood, so that employees are more likely to live in the area.
9. Offer a counseling program to advise those employees who want to switch over to sustainable travel modes.

Do we care more about our kids or our cars?

If we give in to the insatiable demand for car parking and invite ever more autos into our downtown, what kind of planet will we leave our children? Do we want to spend limited resources to house our cars or our kids?

For Earth Day, celebrated on the Third Street Promenade on Saturday, April 15, the Westside Greens, the Sustainable Transport Club, the Green Depot and the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition will have a booth with various greener vehicles. Come see what the future looks

Barbara Filet
Santa Monica

GUEST COMMENTARY BY JOHN MARCIANO

U.S. needs to abide by laws it enforces

Powerful arguments have been made for George W. Bush’s impeachment. But they do not go far enough. Bush and his major advisers must not only be impeached, but also prosecuted for planning and conducting a war of aggression — in violation of the U.S. Constitution, U.N. Charter and the Nuremberg Principles established after World War II.

This is not a partisan Bush attack. Bill Clinton deserved impeachment and prosecution for going to war in clear violation of the Constitution and international law — in Haiti, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan and the former Yugoslavia. Since World War II, our lawless presidents have also included Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon in Vietnam; Reagan in Central America and Grenada; Bush I in Iraq and Panama; and even Jimmy Carter, the “patron saint” of human rights, in Indonesia, Iran and Nicaragua.

Presidential disregard for the Constitution and international law surged with Truman’s presidency after WW II. In 1950, he ordered U.S. forces to Korea without a congressional declaration of war and “violated the ... UN Charter ... by taking a unilateral military action even before the Security Council had called on members for their assistance.”

Not one president since FDR has asked for a declaration of war even though the U.S. has been in dozens of armed conflicts since 1945. Congress has “tagged along, offering blank-check authorizations or after-the-fact approvals of unilateral executive-branch war making.” (Peter Irons, “War Powers: How the Imperial Presidency Hijacked the Constitution”).

International legal scholars Richard Falk and Howard Friel write that Bush and his advisers created a climate of fear in order to gain support for the Iraq war, aided by major media outlets such as “The New York Times” (“The Record of the Paper”): “Iraq already possesses biological and chemical weapons ...” (Aug. 11, 2002); “No one who knows his history (Hussein) can doubt that he is secretly trying to develop weapons of mass destruction” (Jan. 26, 2003).

These and similar statements were all proven to be lies. Iraq could not attack the U.S. with WMD because it had none. It had no missiles that could deliver them and it was not developing its nuclear weapons program.

This was known in 1995 when the CIA informed President Clinton that Iraq had destroyed its WMD in the early 1990s. Hussein Kamal, Saddam Hussein’s son-in-law who had been in charge of Iraq’s WMD programs for 10 years, “told CIA and British intelligence officers and U.N. inspectors ... that after the Gulf War, Iraq destroyed all its

chemical and biological weapons stocks and the missiles to deliver them” (“Newsweek,” March 7, 2003).

According to Falk and Friel, Clinton withheld this CIA information and continued to support economic sanctions against Iraq “for its alleged failure to comply with UN disarmament resolutions.” The genocidal human cost of these sanctions for Iraqis has been documented in a number of reports: In 2000, a UN official estimated that about 500,000 children “under the age of 5 have died in Iraq since the imposition of UN sanctions 10 years ago” (“Reuters,” July 21, 2000); perhaps 400,000 of these died during Clinton’s eight-year presidency. There was no outcry in Congress or attacks on Clinton for supporting these sanctions — as opposed to the histrionics over his personal misbehavior in office and lying about sex.

Bush’s presidential wars do not place him above the law: a fundamental Nuremberg principle states that committing “an act which constitutes a crime under international law ... as head of state or responsible government official does not relieve (one) from responsibility ...” Falk and Friel conclude that the Bush administration committed “the supreme international crime.” Its planned invasion of Iraq was “a conspiracy to commit aggression” and its actual invasion “committed the crime of aggression.”

At Nuremberg after WWII, Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, who signed the Tribunal agreement for the U.S., stated that the Allies should make “clear to the Germans that the wrong for which their fallen leaders are on trial is not that they lost the war, but ... started it.” He condemned aggressive war as “the greatest menace of our times.”

By ordering the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, Bush has continued a long and sordid pattern of presidential criminality, violating the Constitution, UN Charter and the Nuremberg Principles. Those who support him, therefore, essentially defend the opportunistic principle that the U.S. actions are above the law: Our violence is a good thing as long as it works and U.S. presidents have the God-given right to kill and maim whomever they please.

Readers wishing to defend Bush, Clinton, and other presidents who engage in aggression around the world should spare us their hypocritical moral lessons and condemnation of others’ violence. There will be many 911s until the U.S. upholds the international covenants and principles of law and order that it demands of others.

(John Marciano lives in Santa Monica.)

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LOCAL



CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

Masseuse rubs detectives the wrong way

By Daily Press Staff

On Thursday, March 9, at 7:15 p.m., undercover detectives with the Santa Monica Police Department conducted an investigation into allegations of prostitution at a message parlor on Pico Boulevard, near Ninth Street. Complaints were made to the police department about prostitution at the business, prompting the investigation. An undercover officer entered the parlor and requested a massage and paid. While receiving the message, the officer was asked if he wanted to have sex for a fee, at which time a predetermined signal was made and officers entered the business and the suspect, a masseuse, was arrested and booked for prostitution. The suspect was identified as Su Cha Duskin, 43, of Redondo Beach. Her bail was set at \$2,000.

On Monday, March 6, at 8:15 a.m., Santa Monica Police responded to the 2200 block of Montana Avenue after receiving a call about a burglary in the area. When officers arrived, they spoke with a witness who said they saw a suspect enter a locked garage and drink from a refrigerator inside. The suspect then ran off. Officers located the suspect in the 2200 block of Montana, and after witness verification, he was arrested and booked for burglary and a probation violation. The suspect was identified as Donald Jake Sellers, 32, a transient. No bail was set.

On Tuesday, March 7, at 11:37 p.m., an officer was patrolling in the 1800 block of Delaware Avenue when he saw a green Honda Accord matching the description of a car involved in a traffic accident at Fourth Street and Pico Boulevard earlier that evening. When officers approached the vehicle, they saw an Asian man sitting on the sidewalk, looking disoriented. Smelling what they believed to be alcohol on his breath, officers conducted a field sobriety test and formed the opinion that the subject was under the influence. He was placed under arrest, transported to a local hospital for a blood test, and then booked for felony DUI and felony hit-and-run because the driver in the vehicle he allegedly struck suffered injuries. The man was identified as Minh Trinh, 21 of Ontario. His bail was set at \$100,000.

On Saturday, March 11, at 1:34 a.m., Santa Monica Police responded to the 400 block of Raymond Avenue after receiving a call about a brawl involving several people. When officers arrived, they contacted witnesses, who pointed out a suspect whom they said had cut two others with a knife during the fight. Officers arrested the man and searched the area for victims. Officers followed a trail of blood, but could not find anyone injured. Local hospitals were notified, but no one with wounds matching a knife attack were reported. The suspect with the knife, identified as Niculin Roman Gross, 21, of Los Angeles, was transported to jail and booked for assault with a deadly weapon. His bail was set at \$30,000.

On Tuesday, March 7, at 12:22 p.m., Santa Monica Police responded to the corner of Lincoln Boulevard and Strand Street after receiving a call about an assault. Upon arriving, they found three individuals who said that while they were walking, a Latino man drove by and shouted racial slurs targeting African Americans and challenged the three to a fight. The men, who are African American, said they continued to walk, but were confronted by the driver, who had gotten out of his car and began to fight with two of the men. During the fight, the three black men said the suspect produced a knife and tried to stab one of them, then fled. The man who was hit suffered a five-inch abrasion on his forehead. Police were able to locate the alleged attacker, identified as Roberto Omar Gonzalez, 22, of Santa Monica. He was charged with assault with a deadly weapon, with bail set at \$30,000.

On Wednesday, March 8, at 7:25 p.m., a Santa Monica Police officer in the 2200 block of Santa Monica Boulevard saw a man riding his bike on the sidewalk, a violation of the municipal code. During the investigation, the officer recovered a pipe used to smoke narcotics, as well as a small baggy containing a white, crystallized substance, later determined to be methamphetamines. The subject was arrested and taken to jail, where he was booked for possession of a controlled substance. The suspect, identified as John Andrew Cox, 31, a transient, was also held on an outstanding warrant and a probation violation. No bail was set.

On Sunday, March 12, at 11:55 a.m., Santa Monica Police officers responded to the 100 block of Broadway regarding a theft investigation. When officers arrived, they interviewed an employee who said the suspect entered the shoe store and grabbed two boxes of shoes and walked out without paying for the items. The suspect was arrested outside the store and the shoes, valued at \$180, were recovered. He was booked for petty theft with a prior as well as violation of his parole. He was identified as Erin David Pearson, 39, a transient. No bail was set.

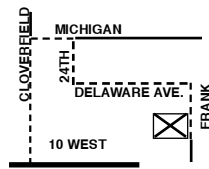
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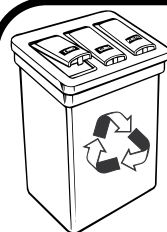
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Critics contend feedings ain't no picnic

PARK FEEDINGS, from page 1

will exceed 150 people, a number most providers stay below. And because of staffing shortages, county health inspectors have not routinely been checking for permits or monitoring food safety, officials said.

"I don't think any of our clients have permits," said Carol Sobel, a lawyer who represents the plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

The goal of the Santa Monica law was to reduce any health issues that may be occurring as a result of the lack of food inspection and to encourage food providers to bring their programs indoors at one of the city-funded social service providers.

But so far, only two groups have taken their food programs indoors, with another planning to serve food at a social services facility, city officials said. The remaining groups, which city officials estimate to be about a half dozen, continue to feed the homeless in Palisades, Memorial and Reed parks, as well as in front of City Hall. They remain largely unchecked by city or county officials.

"It didn't have the dramatic impact I had wanted," said City Councilman Richard Bloom, who voted in favor of the law in the fall of 2002. "I certainly think providing food to people in need is a calling, but we want them to do it with services attached."

Paul Grymkowski, whose organization Helping Other People Eat (HOPE), serves about 100 to 150 people each Wednesday

and Thursday at Palisades Park, said he doesn't have a permit with either the city or the county. In the five years he's been serving food in Santa Monica, Grymkowski has been approached by a county health inspector once, who opted not to check the food because it appeared to be in compliance.

Santa Monica Police park rangers and officers on bicycles regularly check the food lines to make sure the providers are complying with the 150-person portion of the law.

"If there is a long line of people, they will do a count," said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega. "There have been no violations in the last three months."

Police also patrol the area to spot people with outstanding warrants or those who might be breaking local laws, like smoking in the park.

"The park rangers are great," Grymkowski said. "They keep the peace."

For Grymkowski, he assigns numbers to plates so he knows how many people he is serving. Having the recipients know what number they are in line also helps keep order so they aren't jockeying to get food before someone else.

"I consider (the plate) an invitation to my picnic," he said. "If someone is drunk or smoking a joint, they aren't invited and I tell them to leave."

Grymkowski said the number of people who come to the park to eat his food isn't an issue.

"If we have 152 people, then we have 152 people, but if we have a long line,



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Paul Grymkowski (far right) hands a plate of food to a man at Palisades Park. City Hall is embroiled in a lawsuit with Civil Rights activists over a local law that aims to regulate food lines in public places.

we will break the line into two," he said. "It's not an issue of having 150 people, it's an issue of getting people out of there quickly ... we are there at 2:30 p.m. setting up and done serving and cleaned up by 4 p.m."

"That's probably why they are not enforcing it, we are not disrupting anything ... there are no traffic or cleanliness issues."

While the law might not have had the effects some officials were hoping for, the number of food providers has indeed dwindled in the past two years. There used to be a list of at least 20 different charitable groups who would randomly show up in parks to hand out food to the hungry. At present, that number is at about seven, with a few handing out food at Ocean Park Community Center, a social service provider funded by City Hall, city officials said.

The law has been effective in some regards. A report from the city's staff to the City Council in 2002, before the law was passed, made the city's intentions clear.

"Presumably, enforcement will diminish the number of projects and the number

of distributions by each project because, among other things, project participants will be unwilling or unable to comply with the state and county requirements," the report says.

Attorneys at City Hall have argued that officials deserve to know about large gatherings ahead of time so they could, among other things, prepare for changes in traffic and take safety precautions. Therefore, a city permit, which ranges in cost from \$50 to \$200, is necessary so city officials can prepare for a large group of people forming in a certain area.

Sobel has argued that the law unfairly forces large groups to release City Hall from any liability and it impedes the constitutional right to quickly organize protests. She also has argued that the law targets a certain group of people because it doesn't differentiate between someone who wants to share food with their family and friends in a public space and food providers like Grymkowski, who does it regularly and in an organized fashion.

"I make it a private picnic and I invite people to come to my picnic," he said. "I don't think there is anything wrong with having a picnic."



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Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Food provider Paul Grymkowski places a sign in Palisades Park every Wednesday and Thursday indicating he is having a picnic for "family and friends," most of whom are homeless.

A slice of humble pie gets dished out in park

WALKING THE LINE, from page 1

It was embarrassing, but only for a moment, for I knew I had a home to go back to.

For most of the others, this was it. They had no other options.

"This is all I'm going to eat today, the only cooked meal you can get all week, really," one 40-something man told me as he clutched his white paper plate, soon to be stacked with rubbery penne pasta, bland vegetarian chili, cheese sandwiches (if you were lucky), donuts and tangerines.

The number "22" was scrawled in black on the back of the plate to mark his place in line and ensure that the volunteers running the event — Helping Other People Eat (HOPE) — didn't violate city law by hosting a "picnic" for more than 150 people.

In 2002, City Hall passed an ordinance intended to regulate outdoor feedings of the homeless, requiring people like HOPE's Paul Grymkowski, who organizes the feedings, to obtain an event permit for groups of more than 150 people in public places. If food is served, a health permit from Los Angeles County is also required.

Officials said the intent was to protect public health while encouraging the hosts of these picnics to join with established service providers who have the proper facilities to ensure food quality.

However, there are those who have the sneaking suspicion that the law was truly designed to squash what has become an eyecore at one of the city's premier attractions.

The ACLU and National Lawyers Guild filed a lawsuit preventing the implementation of the law, saying it violates the First Amendment. The issue is now before a three-member panel of appellate court judges.

With the possibility that the picnics could be so regulated that volunteers might pack up and go home, I decided to experience a food line for myself and try to catch a glimpse of what it is like to be homeless, and truth be told, to critique the food.

While waiting in line, I was fearful that people around me would discover that I had some cash on hand and would run me out, beating me over the head with their backpacks. But it didn't take long to let

my guard down. Those around me were so eager to lend a helping hand. Some even offered to give me some of their food when I asked how I could get a plate. Imagine, these folks hadn't had a decent meal in weeks, maybe months or even years, and here they were offering me something to eat.

Now, there were some whom I'd prefer not to cross paths with, including the guy off to the right of me who kept twitching. Then there was the Lothario behind me, trying to entice a fetching young female who would have none of it, turning her back and, ultimately, walking away.

But for the most part, people were pleasant and seemed to be having a great time socializing with their friends. While the food was about as appetizing, and had the same consistency, as my great Aunt June's mucus-like "(expletive)" on a Shingle," the conversation was full of flavor, with strangers sharing jokes while others sang songs or exchanged information about where to get food or how to avoid the police.

The atmosphere felt very much like a picnic, albeit a shady one, where loved ones gather and share in the joy of the moment. I couldn't help thinking that for many, this is one of the few moments they can feel somewhat normal again. Looking around, my view of the down and out began to change, so much so that if someone does ask if I can help them get something to eat, I will, primarily because I never want them to have to eat that food again.

I tried to finish my plate, but I couldn't. I guess I wasn't hungry enough to scarf the quickly cooling dish down. I did eat my doughnuts though, and left my tangerines for those around me to finish. I guess the food wasn't too terrible — the nacho-flavored tortilla chip added a nice twist to the chili. Still, I don't have to eat it every day.

"What did they serve?" asked one homeless man of another, as the two strolled down the Third Street Promenade shortly after the feeding.

"Same old sh--, pasta and beans."

"I'm sick of that crap. I won't even eat it."

I thought to myself, how ungrateful. Perhaps, beggars can be choosers.

Environmentalists pushing for review of LNG projects

NATURAL GAS, from page 1

sending the Santa Barbara-based California Coastal Protection Network, said the state could gain more energy through conservation, improved efficiency, and focusing on renewable resources like wind, solar, and geothermal energy.

"We can achieve at least three times as much energy through a cleaner, safer approach," said Krop, who is representing the group as chief counsel of the Environmental Defense Center in Santa Barbara.

Environmentalists are pushing for state legislation that would require a review of proposed LNG projects.

Energy companies say shipping LNG from other countries could keep U.S. natural gas prices low as domestic supplies dwindle.

U.S. regulators have approved several coastal LNG terminals in Texas, Louisiana and Massachusetts, but companies have had trouble finding a home on the U.S. Pacific coast.

Mexico has approved two LNG terminals on its Pacific coast, one under construction by Semptra Energy and another by Chevron Corp., though Chevron hasn't begun construction.

Other proposed terminals in California include BHP Billiton's Cabrillo Port project off Malibu; Crystal Energy's proposal off Oxnard; and a Long Beach plan by Mitsubishi Corp. and ConocoPhillips.

In Oregon, there are proposals by Calpine at the Port of Astoria, Northern Star Natural Gas at Bradwood Landing, the Jordan Cove Energy Project at Coos Bay, and Port Westward LNG at Clatskanie.

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State panel: There's plenty of fish in sea

BY TERENCE CHEA

Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — A plan to protect biologically rich ecosystems along the California coast moved ahead Wednesday, with a state panel advancing proposals to establish a chain of marine protected areas where fishing will be banned or strictly limited.

The blue-ribbon task force selected three plans to set aside about two dozen areas off the central California coast as marine reserves, parks and conservation areas.

"This will give the state of the best tools it's ever had to protect marine life off the coast," said Bill Romanelli, a spokesman for the state Department of Fish and Game.

The six-member task force met in

Seaside, near Monterey, on Tuesday and Wednesday to evaluate six proposals developed by interested groups including fishermen, environmentalists, coastal residents and scientists.

The task force chose one proposal developed by commercial and recreational fishermen, and a second by environmental groups. As its preferred alternative, it chose a proposal that combines the first two with a plan offered by the panel's own staff.

The three proposals will be sent to the Department of Fish and Game, which could make changes before passing them along to the Fish and Game Commission.

The commission is expected to vote on a final plan late this year or early next year, with the time of its implementation depending on the state budget.

"The money is going to dictate the

timeline," Romanelli said.

Over the next five years, the same process will be used to develop plans for marine protected areas on other regions of California's 1,100-mile coast.

California has created various marine reserves over the years, but their boundaries and restrictions often conflict. The latest effort seeks a systematic, statewide approach to protecting coastal habitat. Florida and Hawaii have established similar marine protected areas.

The three plans for central California would establish reserves from San Mateo to Santa Barbara counties and include areas such as Point Lobos, Point Sur and Ano Nuevo. They call for putting fishing restrictions on up to 20 percent of state waters, which extend three miles from shore.

Marine reserves, mandated by the

Marine Life Protection Act of 1999, are aimed at restoring populations of fish, crustaceans, squid and other marine life depleted by overfishing, pollution and other human activities. They're intended to protect key ecosystems such as kelp forests and rocky reefs, rather than specific species.

"Marine reserves protect the whole web of life," said Kaitilin Gaffney, Central Coast program manager for the Ocean Conservancy.

But fishermen don't believe it's necessary to establish marine protected areas, given the plans' possible impact on their livelihoods.

"No matter which package gets picked, there will be some pain," said Howard Egan of the Recreational Fishing Alliance. "There will be severe pain for some fishermen."

Hot temperatures, drought concerning weather officials

BY AMANDA LEE MYERS

Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX — The Southwest, much of the Great Plains, and parts of the South will be at a greater risk this spring for wildfires like those that have already ravaged the southern Plains, officials said Thursday.

Severe drought and above-normal temperatures that have characterized the winter in the central and southern Plains and Southwest are predicted to persist, causing an increased potential for wildfires, according to the annual spring weather outlook from the National Weather Service.

The Northwest, northern Plains and northern Rocky Mountains are expected to be the only regions in the country with below-average temperatures, while a region from North Dakota east through

the Great Lakes is the only part of the country predicted to see above-average rain and snow.

Wildfires are predicted to be most severe in the Southwest and Alaska, and likely will continue to devastate states in the southern Plains, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. David L. Johnson, director of the National Weather Service.

"We have a potential for serious wildfire expansion," he said.

Florida, Louisiana and Nebraska and parts of California, South Dakota, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, and Mississippi also show an above-average potential for wildfires.

The Northeast, from Maine to Ohio, shows a below-normal potential for wildfires while the Northwest, northern Plains and most of the South show an average potential.

Run of the millisecond: Feature du jour finds its way into stores

BY MAY WONG

AP Technology Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Unless you're an Olympic athlete, milliseconds should hardly make a difference in your life.

Why then, are LCD computer monitors and LCD televisions boasting a millisecond-response feature in their sometimes confusing-enough laundry list of specifications?

"It's the spec du jour," said Chris Connery, a vice president at DisplaySearch, a unit of market research firm NPD Group.

At a Best Buy store in Palo Alto, every LCD computer display listed millisecond response times at the top of its product placard, above other key features such as contrast ratio, resolution and brightness.

Technically, the fraction-of-a-second description refers to the length of time it takes for the pixels within the liquid crystal display to turn on or off to display an image. For consumers, it all boils down to how much blurring might occur when viewing fast-motion video, such as in sports, movies, or video games.

The faster the response, the sharper the picture. Yet technological improvements in recent years have reduced response times to the point at which performance gaps between products would be hard to notice, experts say.

The industry norm dropped from 25 milliseconds three years ago to about 8 milliseconds for LCD computer monitors and 16 milliseconds for LCD TVs by the end of 2005.

This year, some desktop monitors have reached as low as 2 milliseconds. For LCD TVs, 8 milliseconds is emerging as the new norm.

"Most consumers wouldn't be able to tell whether the display is 12 milliseconds or 1 millisecond," Connery said.

Samsung Electronics Co. and ViewSonic Corp., two companies leading the way on response times, even acknowledge that new breakthroughs would likely be undetectable to the eye.

In fact, a 16-millisecond response time translates roughly to 60 frames per second — the rate of fluid, full-motion video — and thus theoretically eliminates obvious blurring.

But some manufacturers and experts contend a difference, and slight blurring, can still be perceived between 8 milliseconds and 16 milliseconds.

"You're definitely getting a better image on the screen, less lag time and just a better experience, especially for fast-action movies or sports," said Ali Atash, a senior product manager at Samsung.

Below 8 milliseconds, any difference in quality would be more difficult to see, with the exception of video gamers dealing with intense motion, said Erik Willey, a senior product manager at ViewSonic.

Still, electronics companies are competing as if a gold medal were at stake. It's partly for bragging rights, and partly a piece of the larger marketing battle against plasma TVs and to win over holdouts of cathode-ray tube monitors.

"We consider response time as the last frontier in terms of screen performance," Willey said. ViewSonic was the first to debut a 2-millisecond desktop and has promised to soon unveil a 1-millisecond model.

Blurring from motion in video is an inherent drawback of LCD displays — an effect that doesn't exist for plasma panels or traditional CRTs. LCDs use a liquid crystal solution sandwiched between glass to display images. Each crystal controls a pixel in the panel and acts like a shutter, twisting on or off to allow light to pass through or to block the light. To produce color shadings, a pixel is only partially turned on to a so-called gray state.

Streaking or blurring in the image occurs as the crystals twist.

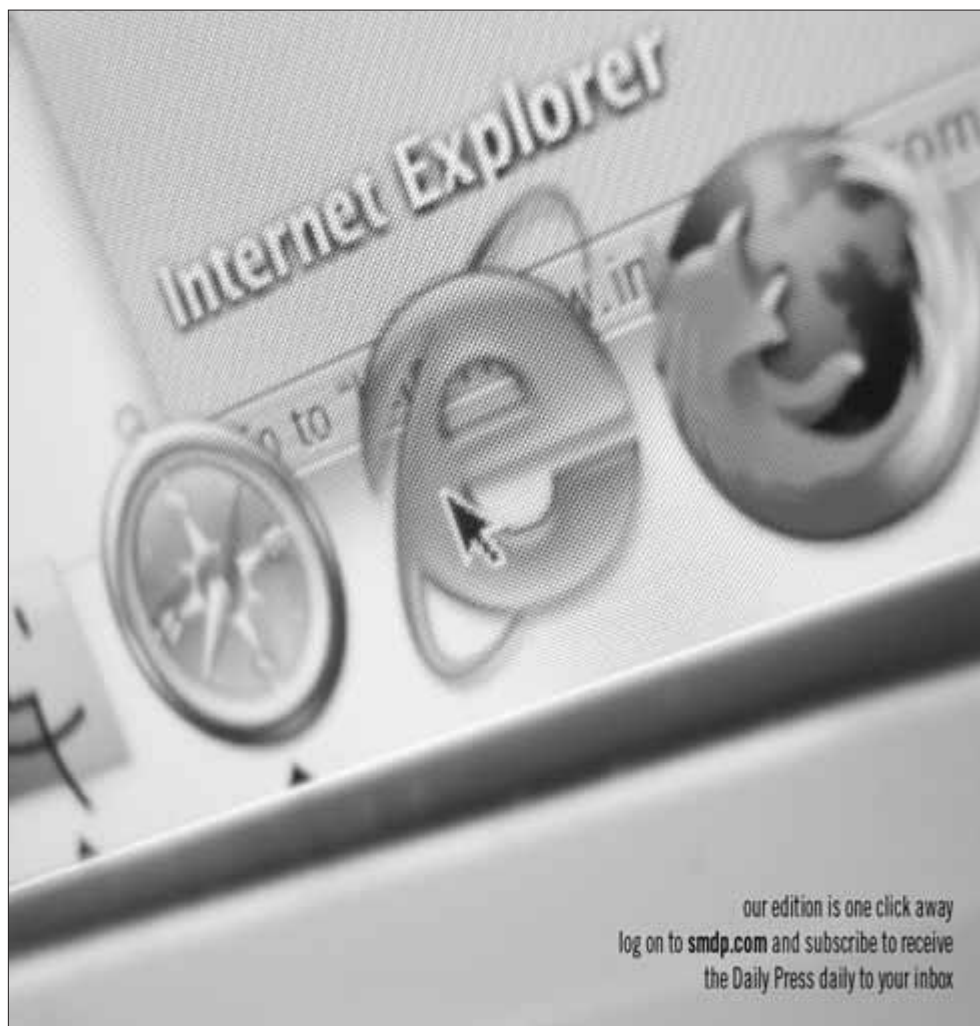
Plasma displays, on the other hand, use layers of gas between glass. Similar to CRTs, images are produced when the phosphors in pixels across the screen are lit to different intensities to display different colors.

LCD response times have historically measured the time it takes for the crystals to go from full black to full white. But knowing that movies or video games mostly involve switches between gray states, Connery said many manufacturers have started to instead tout gray-to-gray response times, which can sometimes be faster than black-to-white response times.

But consumers aren't necessarily being misled, Connery said, since gray-to-gray states are more representative of what people are truly watching anyway.

The expert recommendation?

Note that other key features — contrast ratio, resolution, brightness, and cable inputs — are today generally more important to the quality and price of an LCD display than millisecond response times.



NATIONAL



Frist: Immigration bill will find way onto floor

BY JIM ABRAMS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist says an immigration reform bill will be on the Senate floor later this month, forcing debate on the issue of a guest worker program that has divided Republicans and put President Bush at odds with some congressional colleagues.

Frist's intent to move forward on the powerful election-year issue came despite lack of progress in the committee writing the bill. The Judiciary Committee hasn't decided how to create a temporary worker program that does not open the door to amnesty for the nation's 11 million illegal immigrants.

Senators from both parties in the committee objected to voting on a bill before the panel reaches a consensus on guest workers. Several Republicans suggested that the Senate first deal with enforcement, and take up the guest worker issue later in the year.

"This is a very complicated bill," said Judiciary Committee Chairman Arlen Specter, R-Pa. "And I think we have to get it done right."

Bush, in a State of the Union address two years ago, urged Congress to create a worker program under which participants could gain legal status for a specific time and then be required to return home. It would not provide an automatic path to citizenship.

The House at the end of last year passed a bill that increases penalties for illegal immigration activities and requires employers to verify the legal status of their employees. But it did not address the guest worker issue, and critics argued that it was futile to try to close the border when demand for low-wage workers in this country remains so strong.

"We have a broken system," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said Wednesday. "It needs to be fixed and it needs to be addressed in a comprehensive way."

The Judiciary Committee, now in its third week on the legislation, is still undecided on guest workers and the other main contentious issue — a nationwide system by which employers would have to verify that workers are in the country legally.

Three senior Democrats on the panel, Patrick Leahy of Vermont, Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Dianne Feinstein of California, on Wednesday wrote Frist expressing concern that he would bring up the bill before the commit-

tee finishes its work. "Arbitrary deadlines and half-finished proposals serve neither the Senate nor the country well."

Frist, however, said he had told the committee eight weeks ago to "hold your hearings when you need to or want to but these two weeks we are going to go to border security." He plans to bring up a bill when Congress returns from its weeklong recess on March 27.

Frank Sharry, executive director of the National Immigration Forum, said Frist was pushing for action to differentiate himself from Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., like Frist, a presidential hopeful.

"He thinks there are primary voters in need of an immigration hawk," said Sharry, whose group supports an immigration proposal offered by McCain and Kennedy.

Frist denied any political motivation. His political action committee's Web page does have a link to a survey asking readers about border security and the president's guest worker plan.

The McCain-Kennedy bill, which also has the backing of major business groups, would allow illegal immigrants to work for six years and then apply for permanent residency without having to leave the U.S.

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., said Congress must act deliberately to make sure that a new guest worker program, like programs in the past, doesn't end up attracting more undocumented workers. "It would be March madness to rush this," said Brownback, a co-sponsor of the McCain-Kennedy bill.

The committee on Wednesday dealt with some border security issues but met resistance from Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, on proposals to use the IRS and the Social Security Administration to verify the legal status of workers.

Grassley, who chairs the Finance Committee, said that requiring the Internal Revenue Service to share information on workers "basically guts many of our efforts to protect taxpayer information."

There are two main competitors to the McCain-Kennedy bill. One, offered by Sens. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., would give illegal immigrants up to five years to leave the country. These immigrants could apply from their home country to return, either as temporary workers or for permanent residency.

Another, by Specter, would allow illegal immigrants with jobs to get worker permits and get in line for legal residency. Specter said his committee would keep working on the bill. "We're going to continue to plow."



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

LIFE'S A BEACH AND THEN YOU DINE

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BIG DEAN'S CAFE-Where the 'locals' meet and the 'fun-loving' tourists always return! Come enjoy our highly acclaimed beach fare, beer, and wine at the best people watching place on the beach. Music, satellite sports, 2 outdoor patios, and smoking allowed. This nostalgic eatery has been here since 1902! The prices are reasonable and children are welcome. Now serving breakfast. Also serving lunch and dinner. 1615 Ocean Front, Santa Monica. (310) 393-2666.

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BUCCA di BEPPO-gets to the heart of Southern Italian cooking with authentic, family-style recipes like Chicken Parmigiana, Shrimp Scampi, and Tortelloni. Dishes are available in Buca Small portions for 2 or more people, and Buca Large for 4 or more. The full menu is available for curb-side take out; we'll deliver your order right to your car! Located one block off the Promenade at 1422 2nd St, Santa Monica. Call 310-587-EATS for reservations and take out.

CASA ESCOBAR-This family owned institution in Santa Monica has been serving excellent food since 1965. A friendly bar and dinner house frequented by the "locals" and tourists alike. We feature the best Mexican dishes in town. Among the favorites are the crispy beef tacos, spinach enchiladas and our house-cut NY Strip steaks on the grill. Our full bar is home of the famous Casa Escobar Margarita-a winner! While at the bar, enjoy our classic piano bar along with cable TV. Valet Parking available. All major credit cards. Open lunch and dinner. 2500 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. (310) 828-1315.

OVERUNDER SPORTS GRILL-Located on the corner of 14th Street and Santa Monica Blvd., OVERUNDER features 12 draft beers and a fine selection of wine making it a great place to watch any and all of your favorite teams. The house specialty is the Philadelphia cheese steak. OVERUNDER also offers great burgers, salads, Mexican food and more. OVERUNDER is the viewing home for the Cleveland Browns and strongly supports the Lakers, Clippers, Dodgers, and Kings. Frequent food and beer specials are also offered at OVERUNDER Sports Grill. All football, baseball, and basketball games are televised via satellite for every team. 1348 14th Street, Santa Monica. (310) 576-9913.

THE OMELETTE PARLOR-For 28 years The Omelette Parlor has been offering the finest in breakfast fare. With high fluffy omelettes, super sandwiches, and the freshest of salads, it's more than breakfast. Enjoy your day on our garden patio and experience the friendliness of service. Quality and value prevail forever at The Omelette Parlor. We open everyday at 6am. Come early! Hours: 6am-2:30pm Monday-Friday, 6am-4pm Saturday and Sunday. 2732 Main Street, Santa Monica. (310) 399-7892.

THE SLICE-A true neighborhood pizzeria serving authentic New York pizza & buffalo wings. We also offer a selection of hot & cold subs, pastas and salads. You can also create your own calzone. Eat in, take out, or delivery. Catering is available. Hours: open daily 11am-9pm. Visit one of our three locations: 915 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica (310) 451-7542, 1622 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica (310) 399-4060, 13151 Fountain Park Drive, Playa Vista (310) 437-7499.

VIOLET-At Violet restaurant the atmosphere is casual, comfortable, and, like its cuisine, is uncluttered. Chef Jared Simons' flavorful small plate fare has something to suit everyone, from light eaters to those with a taste for a more robust fare. The Braised Short Ribs with Shallot Potatoes (\$14.50) melt apart while the Multi-Colored Beet Salad with Eel delights with Kumquat and Ginger Vinaigrette (\$9) and the favorite among the regulars is the Baked Macaroni and Gruyere Cheese with Serrano Ham (\$7.50). Unique selection of new and old world wines by the bottle, glass or flight as well as an impressive list of domestic & imported artisan beers. Hours: Lunch: Tuesday-Friday, 11:30am-2pm. Dinner: Tuesday-Friday, 6pm-10pm & Saturday and Sunday, 5:30pm-10pm. 3221 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. www.violetrestaurant.com (310) 453-9113.

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Entertainment

‘Guilty’ is a pleasure, despite its girth

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press



THE MOVIE: Find Me Guilty
THE DIRECTOR: Sidney Lumet
THE STARS: Vin Diesel, Peter Dinklage, Ron Silver, Annabella Sciorra, Alex Rocco

Historically, audiences have embraced films that lionize mobsters while muting the unpleasant realities of the violent and corrupt lives they lead. This curious thug-simpatico is not lost on 81-year-old director Sidney Lumet (“Network,” “12 Angry Men”), who, in his latest courtroom drama “Find Me Guilty,” blithely presents real-life Jersey Mafioso and career convict Giacomo “Jackie Dee” DiNorscio (Vin Diesel) as nothing more than a cuddly crack-up who suffered not for his own misdeeds, but simply because he never got a fair shake from The Man. Never mind that Jackie was a convicted coke dealer, avowed user, and card-carrying member of the murderous Lucchese crime family — the guy was cute and playful and impossibly loyal ... like an overgrown misogynistic, underhanded puppy. Not surprisingly, it works.

Set mostly in a courtroom in late 1980’s New York, “Find Me Guilty” is based on the true story of how Jackie DiNorscio — in the midst of serving a 30-year sentence for drug trafficking — spurned an offer from federal prosecutors for reduced prison time in exchange for testimony against the Luccheses, then did the unthinkable by acting as his own counsel in what became the longest criminal trial in U.S. history.

In style and pitch, this film shares a kinship with Lumet’s 1970s hits “Dog Day Afternoon” and “Serpico,” though “Guilty” is conspicuously absent the complexity and suspense that made those movies so compelling. Lumet’s sunny depiction of the proceedings would have benefited greatly from a few clouds, and the film could have done without much of the fat in its bloated mid-section, which finds a prosthetic-wearing Diesel channeling Shecky Green. Over the top, sure, but it’s a likable performance nonetheless, one in which Diesel hearkens back to his pre-action-hero days (“Saving Private Ryan,” “Boiler Room”), when he was being hailed as one of the most promising actors of his generation. Lumet, known as the consummate actor’s director, gets strong supporting turns from Ron Silver (the judge), Peter Dinklage (a savvy mob lawyer) and, especially, Annabella Sciorra as Jackie’s sour ex-wife.

(Rated R. Running time: 124 minutes)

‘Smoking’ comes highly recommended

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press



THE MOVIE: Thank You for Smoking
THE DIRECTOR: Jason Reitman
THE STARS: Aaron Eckhart, Maria Bello, Cameron Bright, William H. Macy, Katie Holmes, Rob Lowe, Robert Duvall

First-time feature director Jason “Son of Ivan” Reitman’s surname is misspelled on the cover of the press notes for his hilarious satire, “Thank You for Smoking.” It’s a safe bet that won’t happen again — and if it does, the offending publicist will get smoked — because young Retiman ... er, Reitman, is poised to become a big-time filmmaker. Based on Christopher Buckley’s 1994 novel, “Smoking” the movie gleefully fires away at the modern “culture of spin” capable of producing the likes of Nick Naylor (Aaron Eckhardt in his best role to date), the smooth-talking, lady-killing, conscience-wanting face of Big Tobacco.

Naylor’s job is to increase cigarette sales while thwarting anti-smoking efforts such as the one mounted by opportunistic Vermont senator Ortolan Finistirre (William H. Macy) to have a “skull and crossbone” warning label affixed to every pack of smokes. Naylor’s attempts to make smoking “sexy” again brings him to Los Angeles, where he and a Hollywood super-agent played by Rob Lowe hatch a plan to have Big Tobacco finance a futuristic film starring Brad Pitt and Catherine Zeta-Jones as space-bound smokers. His mission is com-



Aaron Eckhart (right) stars as a lady-killing lobbyist for big tobacco in the new feature ‘Thank You for Smoking.’

promised by his relationship with his impressionable 12-year-old son (Cameron Bright), an affair with a conniving investigative reporter (Katie Holmes), a death threat issued by a militant anti-smoking group, and a run-in with the cancer-stricken original Marlboro Man (Sam Elliott). Conventional morality is inverted with gut-busting effectiveness, as the usual suspects become the heroes. Some of the film’s most wickedly funny moments occur during Naylor’s regular get-togethers with Polly (Maria Bello) and Bobby Jay (“Anchorman” alum David Koechner), lobbyists for alcohol and gun manufacturers, respectively, who collectively refer to themselves as the “MOD Squad” (Merchants of Death).

As Naylor tells us at film’s end, “Michael Jordan plays basketball, Charles Manson kills people, I talk ... everyone has a talent.” He may as well have added, “Jason Reitman makes damn funny movies.”

(Rated R. Running time: 92 minutes)



THE IMBIBER

BY DAN DUNN

A time-honored stout ... brilliant!

Q: Why did God invent Guinness?
A: So that the Irish would never rule the world!

Being an Irishman m’self, your Imbiber is surely glad Guinness came to be, though God had no hand in the actual development of the stout — ’twas an enterprising lad named Arthur Guinness who, in 1759, negotiated a 9,000-year lease (at \$70 a year) on the St. James Gate Brewery in Dublin. Guess ol’ Arthur had a hunch his brew would be around for a while.

These days, the responsibility for carrying on Arthur’s legacy lies with Fergal Murray, who’s been head brewmaster at Guinness since 1995. Fergal’s plenty popular this time of year, but we managed to get him on the line for a spell to chat about the world’s most famous stout.

IMBIBER: There’s a perception in America that Guinness is fattening, when in fact it has less calories (about 125) than most domestic and imported light beers.

FERGAL MURRAY: We’ve always had the beer this way. Other folks have adapted their beers to appeal to light beer drinkers in the United States, but our beer has always been that way.

IMBIBER: Does the Guinness available in the States have less alcohol than in Ireland?

FERGAL MURRAY: It’s 4.2 percent alcohol in the States. Exactly the same as we drink in Dublin and the rest of Western Europe.

IMBIBER: What type of food goes well with Guinness?

FERGAL MURRAY: My favorite is seafood with pints of stout. Then again, there’s nothing better than a cottage pie or an Irish stew with Guinness. Also, fusion foods – Asian fusion, especially. And it goes great with salads with bacon on top, too.

IMBIBER: So, basically, Guinness pairs well with everything but nachos?

FERGAL MURRAY: It goes great with nachos!

IMBIBER: We’re all obsessed with celebrities. Do famous people drink Guinness?

FERGAL MURRAY: Any of the leading actors of the world, when they come to Dublin, they enjoy a pint. The Rolling Stones are big fans. U2, of course. I’ve seen George Clooney having a pint, and Pierce Brosnan, too. But a lot of the girls drink it — Angelina Jolie is a big fan.

IMBIBER: And I’m a big fan of Angelina ... you, too?

FERGAL MURRAY: Oh, yes.

(The Imbiber welcomes your questions, comments and suggestions at dan.dunn@metro.us)

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SANTA MONICA ART PALETTE

MAKING ARTS AND CULTURE COME ALIVE IN SANTA MONICA

Welcome to the Santa Monica Art Palette for the weekend of March 10. The goal of the Art Palette, created by City Hall's cultural affairs division, is to showcase the many eclectic arts and cultural opportunities available in Santa Monica every week, highlighting one or more of the many happenings within our borders

Perhaps best known for her performances on Broadway as Deena in "Dreamgirls" and Muzzie in "Thoroughly Modern Millie," Sheryl Lee Ralph brings her one-woman show to Highways this weekend. Inspired by real-life stories of women infected and affected with AIDS, Ralph's performance is chillingly truthful. Highways continues to set the standard when it comes to examining social and political issues through the arts with this challenging and moving performance.

This Week at Highways

8:30 p.m.
Thursday through Saturday
March 16-19
Sunday, March 19
2 p.m.
\$20.00
Highways Performance Space and
Gallery at the 18th Street Arts Center
1651 18th St.
(310) 315-1459
<http://www.highwaysperformance.org/>



Santa Monica Playhouse

Saint Monica's younger, and much rowdier brother, Saint Patrick celebrates his birthday on Friday, March 17. Make plans now to stop by the Santa Monica Playhouse and give a salute to Mother Ireland between your shantytown corned beef and cabbage dinner and that late night Irish coffee. Chris Sullivan returns to the Santa Monica Playhouse for his seventh annual St. Patrick's Day festivities of song, poetry, limericks and stories from the Old Country on Friday night only.

A Bit of Irish!

Friday, Mar. 17 at 8 p.m.
Santa Monica Playhouse
1211 Fourth St.
\$15
(310) 394-9779 ext. 2
<http://www.santamonicaplayhouse.com/>



By Sunday you should have sufficiently recovered from Friday night's green beer to get out of the house and soak up some culture at one of the two classical music concerts taking place in town. Mozart, Mahler and Bach are all stopping by this weekend, so spruce yourself up and spend some time visiting these three old friends. The extraordinary vocalists of Cantori Domino will bring Bach's Mass in B Minor to life on Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church. With a baroque orchestra and many outstanding soloists, the Mass in B Minor includes some of Bach's most profound and beautiful music.



Mass in B Minor by J.S. Bach
Sunday, March 19, 4 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
1008 11th St.
\$20, general admission
\$15, seniors and students



On Sunday evening, the Santa Monica Symphony will mark the occasion of Mozart's 250th birthday with a free concert at the Santa Civic Auditorium, featuring soprano Jessica Rivera. With Mozart's Symphony No. 36, Linz, and Mahler's Symphony No. 4 on the bill, the audience is invited to take the opportunity to dress up and remember the era when the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium hosted the red carpet Academy Awards. Members of the audience also are welcome to come in their usual California casual.

Santa Monica Symphony Celebrating Mozart's 250th Birthday
Allen Robert Gross, music director and conductor
Jessica Rivera, soprano
Mozart: Symphony No. 36, "Linz"
Mahler: Symphony No. 4
Sunday, March 19, 7:30 p.m.
Pre-concert talk at 6:30 p.m. in the meeting room
Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
1855 Main St.
www.smsymphony.org
(310) 395-6330
Admission is free



Wrapping up this edition of the Palette is the Santa Monica College production of "Equus," Peter Schaffer's intensely dramatic foray into the mind of 17-year-old Alan who has blinded six horses. Presented at the Hangar Stage on SMC's Airport Campus at 2800 Airport Ave., the play opens on Friday March 17 and runs through March 26 with performances on Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. and matinees on Sunday at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$11 general admission and \$8 for students and senior citizens. For additional information, call (310) 434-3000 or go to <http://www.smc.edu/theatre>



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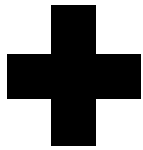
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NATIONAL

President Bush strikes back, reaffirms pre-emptive policy

BY DEB RIECHMANN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Undaunted by the difficult war in Iraq, President Bush reaffirmed his strike-first policy against terrorists and enemy nations on Thursday and said Iran may pose the biggest challenge for America.

In a 49-page national security report, the president said diplomacy is the U.S. preference in halting the spread of nuclear and other heinous weapons.

"If necessary, however, under long-standing principles of self defense, we do not rule out the use of force before attacks occur — even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack," Bush wrote.

Titled "National Security Strategy," the report summarizes Bush's plan for protecting America and directing U.S. relations with other nations. It is an updated version of a report Bush issued in 2002.

In the earlier report a year after the Sept. 11 attacks, Bush underscored his administration's adoption of a pre-emptive policy, marking the end of a deterrent military strategy that dominated the Cold War.

The latest report makes it clear Bush hasn't changed his mind, even though no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq.

"When the consequences of an attack with weapons of mass destruction are potentially so devastating, we cannot afford to stand idly by as grave dangers materialize. ... The place of pre-emption in our national security strategy remains the same," Bush wrote.

The report had harsh words for Iran. It accused the regime of supporting terrorists, threatening Israel and disrupting democratic reform in Iraq. Bush said diplomacy to halt Tehran's suspected nuclear weapons work must prevail to avert a conflict.

"This diplomatic effort must succeed if confrontation is to be avoided," Bush said.

He did not say what would happen if international negotiations with Iran failed. The Bush administration currently is working to persuade Russia and China to support a proposed U.N. Security Council resolution demanding that Iran end its uranium enrichment program.

A top Iranian official said Thursday that his country was ready to open direct talks with the United States over Iraq, marking a major shift in Tehran's foreign policy a day after an Iraqi leader called for such talks. Ali Larijani, Iran's top nuclear negotiator and secretary of the country's Supreme National Security Council, told reporters that any talks between the United States and Iran would deal only with Iraqi issues.

Any direct dialogue between Tehran and Washington also could be a beginning for negotiations between the two foes over Iran's suspect nuclear program.

White House press secretary Scott McClellan said the United States was ready to talk with Iran about Iraq. But he also said that any discussions must be restricted to that topic and not include other contentious subjects like Tehran's suspected nuclear weapons program.

Bush also had tough words for North Korea, which he said poses a serious nuclear proliferation challenge, counterfeits U.S. currency, traffics in narcotics, threatens its neighbors and starves its people.

"The North Korean regime needs to change these policies, open up its political system and afford freedom to its people," Bush said. "In the interim, we will continue to take all necessary measures to protect our national and economic security against the adverse effects of their bad conduct."

Bush issued rebukes to Russia and China and called Syria a tyranny that harbors terrorists and sponsors ter-

rorist activity.

On Russia, Bush said recent trends show a waning commitment to democratic freedoms and institutions. "Strengthening our relationship will depend on the policies, foreign and domestic, that Russia adopts," he said.

The United States also is nudging China down a road of reform and openness.

"China's leaders must realize, however, that they cannot stay on this peaceful path while holding on to old ways of thinking and acting that exacerbate concerns throughout the region and the world," Bush wrote.

He said these "old ways" include enlarging China's military in a non-transparent way, expanding trade, yet seeking to direct markets rather than opening them up, and supporting energy-rich nations without regard to their misrule or misbehavior at home or abroad.

In 2002, when he sent his first report to Congress, Bush was struggling to persuade U.S. allies to join an offensive to topple Saddam Hussein.

Since then, the oppressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan was replaced by a freely elected government. In Iraq, citizens voted in the nation's first free election, a

"China's leaders must realize, however, that they cannot stay on this peaceful path while holding on to old ways of thinking and acting that exacerbate concerns throughout the region and the world,"

GEORGE W. BUSH
U.S. President

constitution was passed by referendum and nearly 12 million Iraqis elected a permanent government.

Challenges remain in Iraq, where sectarian violence threatens the fragile government and the U.S. death toll has topped 2,300. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said Iraq's political transition will take a couple of years. Earlier this week, the Pentagon announced it was moving about 700 additional U.S. troops into Iraq from Kuwait because of the escalating killings there and fears that a Shiite holiday would spark even more violence.

"When the Iraqi government, supported by the coalition, defeats the terrorists, terrorism will be dealt a critical blow," Bush said, acknowledging that the fight against terrorism was far from over.

The report is laden with strategies for advancing democracy across the globe, a theme of Bush's second inaugural address.

The president said his administration was advancing this goal by holding high-level meetings at the White House with democratic reformers in repressive nations; using foreign aid to support fair elections, women's rights and religious freedom; and pushing to abolish human trafficking.

Countering suggestions that he favors a go-it-alone approach to foreign policy, Bush emphasized multilateral problem-solving.

"Many of the problems we face — from the threat of pandemic disease to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to terrorism, to human trafficking, to natural disasters — reach across borders," he said.

"Effective multinational efforts are essential to solve these problems. Yet history has shown that only when we do our part will others do theirs. America must continue to lead."

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Santa Monica Daily Press



INTERNATIONAL

U.S., Iraqi troops launch massive air assault

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — U.S. forces and Iraqi troops launched what the military described as the largest air assault since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion Thursday, targeting insurgent strongholds north of the capital.

The U.S. military said the raid, dubbed Operation Swarmer, was aimed at clearing “a suspected insurgent operating area” northeast of Samarra and was expected to last several days. The Pentagon said 41 people were arrested.

Residents in the targeted area said there was a heavy U.S. and Iraqi troop presence and large explosions could be heard in the distance. It was not known if the blasts were due to fighting; the U.S. military said there was no firing or bombing from the air.

It was not clear if there was any insurgent resistance.

“More than 1,500 Iraqi and coalition troops, over 200 tactical vehicles, and more than 50 aircraft participated in the operation,” the military statement said.

The U.S. command in Baghdad said it was the largest number of aircraft used to insert troops and the largest number of troops inserted by air, although larger numbers of troops overall have been involved in previous operations.

Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Barry Venable said no bombs, missiles or other ordnance were fired from the helicopters. He said more than 650 U.S. troops and more than 800 Iraqi soldiers took part in the operation.

Hoshiyar Zebari, the Iraqi interim foreign minister, said the attack had been necessary to prevent insurgents from forming a new stronghold such as they had established in Fallujah, west of Baghdad.

“After Fallujah and some of the operations carried out successfully in the Euphrates and Syrian border, many of the insurgents moved to areas nearer to Baghdad,” Zebari said on CNN. “They have to be pulled out by the roots.”

Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad, was the site of a massive bombing against a Shiite shrine on Feb. 22 that touched off sectarian bloodshed that has killed more than 500 and injured hundreds more, threatening to push Iraq into civil war.

It is a key city in Salahuddin province, a major part of the so-called Sunni triangle where insurgents have been active since shortly after the U.S.-led invasion three years ago. Saddam Hussein was captured in the province, not far from its capital and his hometown, Tikrit.

In recent months U.S. forces have routinely used helicopters to insert troops during operations against insurgent strongholds, especially in the Euphrates River valley between Baghdad and the Syrian border. U.S. warplanes are always in the air, ready to strike targets under direction from troops on the ground.

Thursday's assault was launched just hours before

Iraq's new parliament was sworn in Thursday, with parties still deadlocked over the next government, vehicles banned from Baghdad's streets to prevent car bombings and the country under the shadow of a feared civil war.

The long-expected first session, which took place within days of the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion, lasted just over 30 minutes and was adjourned indefinitely because the legislature still has no speaker.

The military operation, residents said, appeared to be concentrated near four villages — Jillam, Mamlaha, Banat Hassan and Bukaddou — about 20 miles north of Samarra. The villages are near the highway leading from Samarra to the city of Adwar.

Waqas al-Juwanya, a spokesman for Iraq's joint coordination center in nearby Dower, said “unknown gunmen exist in this area, killing and kidnapping policemen, soldiers and civilians.”

Near the end of the first day of the operation, the military said a number of weapons caches have been captured, containing artillery shells, explosives, bomb-making materials and military uniforms.

It said the attack began with soldiers from the Iraqi army's 1st Brigade, 4th Division, the U.S. 101st Airborne Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team and the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade conducting a combined air and ground assault to isolate the objective area.

Air power backed the operation and delivered troops from the Iraq army's 4th Division, the Rakkasans from 1st and 3rd Battalions, 187th Infantry Regiment and the Hunters from 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment to multiple objectives.

The military said forces from the 2nd Commando Brigade then completed a ground infiltration to secure numerous structures in the area.

In its description of the operation, the 101st Airborne Division used the term “air assault,” which refers to the use of attack and transport helicopters to move infantry soldiers to a ground target or group of targets. It does not generally include fixed-wing warplanes like fighter jets or bombers, and there was no early indication that such planes played a predominant role in the assault.

The units of the 101st Airborne that are involved in this operation are equipped with Apache attack helicopters, Black Hawk transport helicopters and Chinook helicopters to are capable of lifting and moving vehicle like Humvees.

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operation are equipped with Apache attack helicopters, Black Hawk transport helicopters and Chinook helicopters to are capable of lifting and moving vehicle like Humvees.

Adnan Pachachi, the senior politician who administered the oath to Iraqi legislators in the absence of a speaker, spoke of a country in crisis.

“We have to prove to the world that a civil war is not and will not take place among our people,” Pachachi told lawmakers. “The danger is still looming and the enemies are ready for us because they do not like to see a united, strong, stable Iraq.”

As Pachachi spoke, he was interrupted from the floor by senior Shiite leader Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, who said the remarks were inappropriate because of their political nature.

Even the oath was a source of disagreement, with the head of the committee that drafted the country's new constitution, Humam Hammoudi, protesting that lawmakers had strayed from the text. After brief consultations, judicial officials agreed the wording was acceptable.

Meanwhile, a top Iranian official said his country was ready to open direct talks with the United States over Iraq, marking a major shift in foreign policy a day after al-Hakim called for such talks.

The White House said the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, is authorized to talk with Iran about Iraq, much as the United States has talked with Iran about issues relating to Afghanistan.

“But this is a very narrow mandate dealing specifically with issues relating to Iraq,” presidential press secretary Scott McClellan said.

Ali Larijani, Iran's top nuclear negotiator and secretary of the country's Supreme National Security Council, also told reporters that any talks between the United States and Iran would deal only with Iraqi issues.

“To resolve Iraqi issues and help establishment of an independent and free government in Iraq, we agree to (talks with the United States),” Larijani said after a closed meeting of the parliament Thursday.

Larijani said Khalilzad had invited Iran for talks on Iraq.

Washington repeatedly has accused Iran of meddling in Iraq's affairs and of sending weapons and men to help insurgents in Iraq, allegations the Iranians have denied.

A pianist played as representatives of Iraq's main ethnic and religious blocs — many in traditional Arab and Kurdish dress — filed into a convention center behind the concrete blast walls of the heavily fortified Green Zone for parliament's first meeting.

Hours after the session adjourned, two mortar shells were fired into the Green Zone, Interior Ministry official Lt. Col. Falah al-Mohammedawi said. No casualties were reported.

The inaugural session started the clock on a 60-day period in which parliament must elect a president and approve a prime minister and Cabinet.

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New parliament sworn in amid unrest

BY QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraq's new parliament was sworn in Thursday with parties still deadlocked over the next government, vehicles banned from Baghdad's streets to prevent car bombings and the country under the shadow of a feared civil war.

The long-expected first session, which took place within days of the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion, lasted just over 30 minutes and was adjourned indefinitely because the legislature still has no speaker.

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"To resolve Iraqi issues and help establishment of an independent and free government in Iraq, we agree to (talks with the United States)," Larijani said after a closed meeting of the parliament Thursday.

Larijani said the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, also had invited Iran for talks on Iraq.

Washington, which repeatedly has accused Iran of med-

dling in Iraq's affairs and of sending weapons and men to help insurgents in Iraq, had no immediate response.

The statement marked the first time since the 1979 Islamic Revolution that Iran had officially called for dialogue with the United States.

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The inaugural session started the clock on a 60-day period in which parliament must elect a president and approve a prime minister and Cabinet.

Acting Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari was optimistic. "If politicians work seriously, we can have a government within a month," he said.

Al-Jaafari's candidacy for a second term as prime minister is at the center of the political logjam that delayed parliament's first session for more than a month after the results of Dec. 15 elections were approved.

There was little sign of progress after a second full day of meetings Wednesday among leaders of the major political blocs. The U.S. ambassador brokered the sessions.

"I expect that there still will be difficulties over choosing the prime minister," said Mahmoud Othman, a Kurdish politician who attended Wednesday's session.

Under the constitution, the largest parliamentary bloc, controlled by Shiites, has the right to nominate the prime minister. Al-Jaafari won the Shiite nomination by a single vote last month.

Politicians involved in the negotiations have said part of the Shiite bloc, those aligned with al-Hakim, would like to see al-Jaafari ousted but fear the consequences, given his backing from radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and al-Sadr's thousands-strong Mahdi Army.

Sunni, Kurdish and some secular Shiites argue al-Jaafari is too divisive and accuse him of not doing enough to contain waves of revenge killing after bombers destroyed an important Shiite shrine on Feb. 22 and ripped apart teeming markets in an al-Sadr stronghold in

Baghdad on Sunday.

Police discovered 29 more bodies discarded in various parts of Baghdad late Wednesday and Thursday. The victims were all men, some with their hands bound, who had been shot execution-style and dumped in both Shiite and Sunni Muslim neighborhoods, Interior Ministry official Lt. Col. Falah al-Mohammedawi said.

North of the capital, a roadside bomb exploded near a girl's primary school near Baqouba, killing three students ages 12 to 13 and wounding two others, police said.

Another bomb missed a U.S. patrol in Mosul, killing one civilian and wounding three others, police said. Four more people were killed in a drive-by shooting in the northern city.

In Ramadi, residents picked through the rubble of a home they said was destroyed in a U.S. raid. Residents have reported repeated clashes in the city in an insurgent-plagued area west of Baghdad.

Recent AP Television News video showed a gunbattle in which a gasoline truck was set on fire, and at a separate location the killing of an unidentified man with heavy gunfire audible in the background. The U.S. military has not responded to repeated requests for information.

Parliament's first meeting coincided with the 18th anniversary of a poison gas attack by Saddam Hussein's army on the northern city of Halabja.

Nearly 2,000 Kurdish demonstrators, angry over what they see as the regional government's failure to rebuild the area, went on a rampage Thursday and badly damaged a monument to the 5,000 residents killed. Police fired live ammunition into the air, killing one person and wounding at least eight.

Saddam ordered the poison gas attack as part of a scorched-earth campaign to crush a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq.

President Jalal Talabani, a former Kurdish guerrilla leader, said Thursday, "the Halabja anniversary inspires us to continue our struggle against dictatorship."

Looking ahead to concerns about violence ahead of a major Shiite holiday Monday, authorities in Karbala imposed a six-day driving ban starting Thursday in a bid to protect pilgrims this year.

Monday also marks the third anniversary since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq on March 20, 2003.



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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

A formidable French kiss for Lewis

By The Associated Press

PARIS — France formalized its fascination with Jerry Lewis with a uniquely Gallic gift for his 80th birthday: a medal and induction into the Legion of Honor.

Lewis received the honorary title of “Legion Commander” in a raucous ceremony in Paris on Thursday — hamming it up for the cameras, winking, sticking out his tongue and making his trademark funny faces.

True to form, the comedian turned what is generally a sober event — set in a gilded hall of the Ministry of Culture — into a virtual slapstick routine.

Lewis, who bucked formality by wearing slippers to the ceremony, clowning around with Culture Minister Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres — yawning, checking his watch and even pretending to fall asleep during Donnedieu’s 20-minute-long speech in French.

The crowd roared at Lewis’ antics, their laughter often drowning out Donnedieu’s lofty words.

At one point, Lewis tried to snatch the prepared speech from the podium, but an affable Donnedieu persevered. “The longer my remarks last the better,” he told the audience, “so you can keep on enjoying Jerry Lewis’ comic talents.”

When he finally took the microphone, Lewis apologized for not speaking French, but said that “even if the French people cannot hear my language, they have always heard my heart.”

He applauded the country’s sense of humor, saying he believed it “took France through all those difficult years, and will take it through difficult times now because the French are not afraid to laugh.”

Ministry officials wheeled in a massive cake, and the audience sang “Happy Birthday,” delivered with a heavy French accent.

Lewis said he was flattered by his induction into the Legion of Honor, and said he had been “gloriously elevated” by the award. He was one of 37 foreigners to have received the title over the past three years.

“The French people are the best in the world,” Lewis said.

GRETNA, La. — A \$500,000 bond has been set for the rap artist formerly known as C-Murder while he waits for a second trial on a second-degree murder charge stemming from a club shooting four years ago.

Under an order issued Wednesday by State

District Judge Martha Sassone, Corey Miller, 35, could be released into home incarceration within a few days. Members of Miller’s family said they would cover his property bond.

Miller is charged with the fatal shooting of Steve Thomas, 16, on Jan. 12, 2002, during a fight at a now-closed nightclub in Harvey.

A jury convicted Miller, who faced a mandatory life prison sentence without parole, but Sassone tossed the conviction after ruling that prosecutors hid the criminal backgrounds of some state witnesses from the defense.

However, posting bond in Jefferson Parish would not necessarily mean a release for Miller. He is charged in Baton Rouge with two counts of attempted second-degree murder and faces trial there on May 30. Defense lawyers are expected to ask a judge to set bond on those charges later this week.

Authorities in Baton Rouge allege that Miller tried to shoot a nightclub owner and a security guard on Aug. 14, 2001, after he was told he would have to be searched before entering the club.

Miller has changed his stage name to C-Miller.

ASPEN, Colo. — Grammy winner “El Idolo” Luis Miguel has been ordered to pay a \$200 fine after a bar fight that his lawyer described as a case of self-defense.

The city attorney’s office agreed to delay prosecution for a year and drop the case if the popular Latin singer had no criminal violations in that time.

Miguel, 35, faced a misdemeanor assault charge after St. Regis Resort Aspen bartender Jason Moan told police Miguel punched him in the face Jan. 3.

Police said the trouble started when another bar patron, William Hardy, 49, approached Miguel’s table and insulted him. Police said Miguel’s bodyguard put Hardy in a chokehold.

Moan told police he was intervening when Miguel walked up, said, “Don’t you know who I am,” and punched him. Police interviewed witnesses but arrested only Miguel.

Miguel’s lawyer, Lawson Wills, argued that Moan initiated the fight by pushing Miguel.

Miguel didn’t attend the court hearing Wednesday, but Wills released a statement on his behalf.

“It is Mr. Miguel’s position that he has a right to defend himself from intoxicated and aggressive individuals who may accost him

without invitation or provocation.

“Mr. Miguel similarly has a right to protect himself from a bar manager that started a physical altercation by forcefully pushing Mr. Miguel.”

HANOI, Vietnam — Gary Glitter has decided to appeal his three-year sentence for child molestation, his lawyer said.

Glitter, 61, whose real name is Paul Francis Gadd, was found guilty of committing obscene acts with a 10-year-old girl and an 11-year-old girl at his rented seaside villa in southern Vung Tau last year. He was convicted and sentenced March 3 at a court in Vung Tau province.

“He told me he was innocent so he has to appeal to clear this matter,” lawyer Le Thanh Kinh said Thursday.

Kinh said he met with the former glam rocker at Phuoc Co prison Wednesday and that Glitter signed the appeal petition, which will be forwarded to the appeals court in Ho Chi Minh City.

Glitter, a 1970s pop icon in Britain famed for his sequined jumpsuits, platform heels and bouffant wigs, sported a more conservative look for his trial: black clothes and a red bandanna on his head that he removed inside the court.

SOUTH RUSSELL, Ohio — A ceramic bowl painted by Richard Pryor is being auctioned on the Internet for an animal welfare organization.

Pryor sent the bowl to the Geauga Humane Society weeks before his death on Dec. 10. The actor-comedian, who was 65, died of a heart attack. He had been ill for years with multiple sclerosis.

His profanely personal insights into race relations made him one of Hollywood’s biggest stars.

He painted a self-portrait inside the bowl with the words, “Little Black Man in Big White World.” The side of the bowl has Pryor’s signature and drawings of a martini glass, lips and a cigarette.

The humane society offered to return the bowl to his wife, Jennifer, but she told the group to use it to raise as much money as possible and endorsed the sale on the eBay auction Web site.

“She said that’s what Richard would have wanted,” said Sharon Harvey, executive director of the agency.

With two days left in the auction Thursday, the bowl had received a top bid of \$3,511.

South Russell is about 20 miles east of Cleveland.

MOVIEGUIDE

SHOWTIMES FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

Broadway Loews Cineplex
1441 3rd Street
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Capote
1:45pm 4:30pm 7:15pm 10pm
The Hills Have Eyes
2:15pm 5:15pm 8pm 10:30pm
Curious George
1pm 3:30pm 5:45pm
Night Watch (Nochnoi Dozor)
7:45pm 10:15pm
Transamerica
1:30pm 4:15pm 7pm 9:45pm

Mann’s Criterion Theatre
1313 3rd Street
(310) 395-1599

Aquamarine
11:40am 2:10pm 4:40pm 7:10pm
9:40pm
Ultraviolet
12:30pm 2:50pm 5:10pm 7:30pm
9:50pm
Firewall
4:50pm 10:10pm
Munich
11:30am 3pm 6:30pm 10pm
The Pink Panther
11:50am 2pm 4:30pm 7pm 9:20pm
The Libertine
2:20pm 5pm 7:40pm 10:20pm
Syriana
1:50pm 7:20pm
V for Vendetta
10pm

AMC7 Santa Monica
1310 3rd Street
(310) 289-4262

Eight Below
1:30pm 4:20pm 7:10pm 9:50pm
16 Blocks
2:15pm 4:50pm 7:25pm 10:05pm
Date Movie
2:45pm 5:05pm 7:20pm 9:40pm
Dave Chappelle’s Block Party
1:50pm 4:40pm 7:35pm 10:15pm
Failure to Launch
2:25pm 4:55pm 7:30pm 10pm
The Shaggy Dog
2pm 2:40pm 4:30pm 5:10pm 7pm
7:40pm 9:30pm 10:10pm

Nuwilshire Theatre
1314 Wilshire Blvd
(310) 281-8228

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

Laemmle 4-Plex Theatre
1332 2nd Street
(310) 394-9741

Mrs. Henderson Presents
1:50pm 4:25pm 7pm 9:35pm
The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada
4pm 9:45pm
Ask the Dust
1:20pm 4:10pm 7:10pm 9:55pm
Good Night, and Good Luck
1:35pm 7:20pm
Duck Season
12:45pm 3:05pm 5:25pm 7:45pm 10pm

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Avenue
(323) 466-FILM

See No Evil
Wednesday, March 15
7:30 PM
Narrow Margin & Violent
Thursday, March 16
7:30 PM
Brick
Friday, March 17
7:30 PM
Boston Strangler & 10 Rillington Place
Saturday, March 18
7:30 PM
20,000 Leagues Under/Sea
Sunday, March 19
3:00 PM
Fantastic Voyage & Soylent Green
Sunday, March 19
6:30 PM

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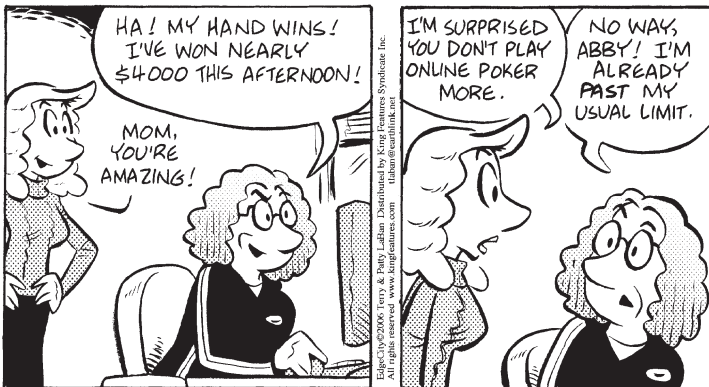


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- 1 Treated roughly
- 6 Loser to Truman
- 11 Acid type
- 12 Like lambs
- 13 Mando-lins' cousins
- 14 Aquarium fish
- 15 Cigar bit
- 16 Cunning
- 18 Suffers from
- 19 Corp. VIP
- 20 Fellow
- 21 Be decisive
- 22 Draws out
- 24 Obligation
- 25 Drunk
- 27 Decree
- 29 Fake
- 32 Strange
- 33 Neighbor of Ga.
- 34 Overly
- 35 Olds's auto
- 36 Every-body
- 37 Cam-paigned
- 38 Razz
- 40 Hopping mad

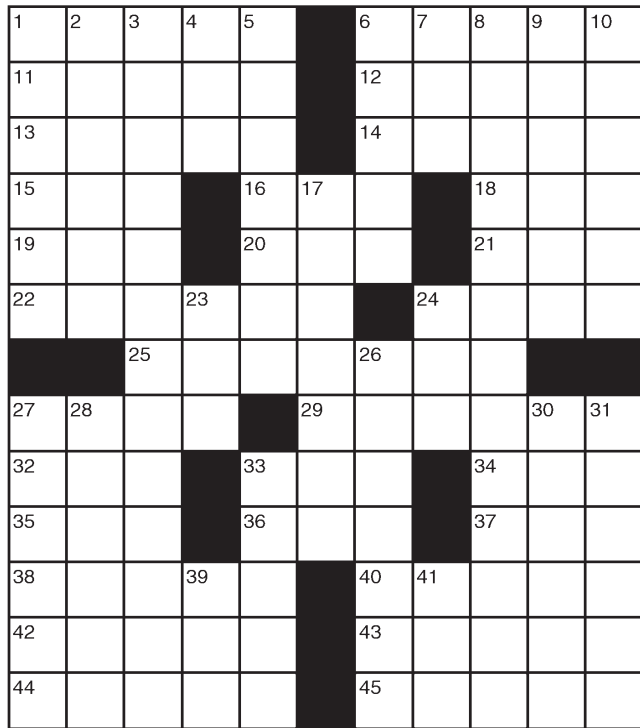
- 42 Ready to hit
- 43 More polite
- 44 Save for future use
- 45 Olympic weapons

DOWN

- 1 Regal home
- 2 Tickled
- 3 For sure
- 4 Hydro-carbon suffix
- 5 Rx amounts
- 6 Eccentric
- 7 Apple sampler

- 8 Way to disappear
- 9 Mesmer-ized
- 10 Like some breads
- 17 Basket-ball's Bill
- 23 Barracks bed
- 24 Uno doubled
- 26 New Orleans treat
- 27 Jurist Abe
- 28 Think
- 30 Perfectly
- 31 City planners
- 33 Like some tissue
- 39 Collar
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SANTA MONICA \$995.00. Single, Utilities Paid, Parking, NO Pets, 2535 Kansas Ave., #108-B, Open Daily for Viewing 9am-7pm, Mgr: #101

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Notices

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
Date of Filing Application: MARCH 2, 2006
To Whom it may concern:
The Name(s) of the Applicant(s) is/are: ANASTASIA GROUP SANTA MONICA L-PSHIF THE.
The applicants listed above are applying to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 1541 OCEAN AVE., STE 150, SANTA MONICA, CA 90401.
Type of License(s) Applied for: 47 - ON-SALE GENERAL EATING PLACE.
Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control INGLEWOOD.
LA116297 SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS 3/17, 24, 3/31, 2006

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF ALICE M. RYDGREN aka ALICE MARIE RYDGREN
Case No. BP097121

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of ALICE M. RYDGREN aka ALICE MARIE RYDGREN

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Karl B. Rydgren in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Karl B. Rydgren be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the peti-

Notices

tion and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held on April 10, 2006 at 8:30 AM in Dept. No. 11 located at 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

IF YOU OBJECT to the grant-ing of the petition, you should ap-pear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a per-son interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and ap-praisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for petitioner:
MARC A BRONSTEIN ESQ
SBN 75933
MARC A BRONSTEIN
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION
3205 OCEAN PARK BLVD STE 200
SANTA MONICA CA 90405
Santa Monica Daily Press
CN747858 RYDGREN Mar 10,11,17, 2006

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF GARY KOHKE
Case No. BP097144

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of GARY KOHKE

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Cathy Thomer in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Cathy Thomer be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on April 5, 2006 at 8:30 AM in Dept. No. 5 located at 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

IF YOU OBJECT to the grant-ing of the petition, you should ap-pear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a per-son interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and ap-praisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for petitioner:
DANIEL B HERBERT ESQ
SBN 149301
MANNING & MARDER, KASS ELLROD RAMIREZ LLP
660 S FIGUEROA ST 23RD FLR
LOS ANGELES CA 90017
Santa Monica Daily Press
CN747863 KOHKE Mar 10,11,17, 2006

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Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF FLO-RICE WILSON TALLEY
Case No. BP097233

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of FLO-RICE WILSON TALLEY

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Frumeh Labow in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Frumeh Labow be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on April 10, 2006 at 8:30 AM in Dept. No. 5 located at 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

IF YOU OBJECT to the grant-ing of the petition, you should ap-pear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a per-son interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and ap-praisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for petitioner:
PAUL F COHEN ESQ
SBN 046612
4929 WILSHIRE BLVD
STE 410
LOS ANGELES CA 90010
Santa Monica Daily Press
CN748009 TALLEY Mar 16,17,23, 2006

YOUR AD HERE
310.458.7737

DBAS

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 06 0403091 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as M J Mortgage, 634 W. 22nd St. San Pedro, CA 90731. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Melvina J Brogan, 634 W. 22nd St. San Pedro, CA 90731 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name or names listed herein. /s/: Melvina J Brogan
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 2/23/06. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 2/24/2006, 3/3/2006, 3/10/2006, 3/17/2006

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City Manager Welcome

Tuesday, March 21, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Fairmont Miramar Hotel



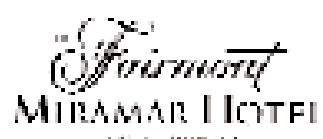
E. Lamont Ewell
Santa Monica City Manager

The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce will host a reception for our new City Manager Lamont Ewell, welcoming him to Santa Monica from the business community. We are excited to be able to host this event and to show our City Manager the strength and diversity of the business community in Santa Monica and we hope you will join us for this event.

Kathy Dodson, President/CEO



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We invite the entire business community of Santa Monica to join us at this event. Tickets are \$10 per person, and **reservations are required** no later than Noon, Monday March 20.

To register please visit www.smchamber.com or call 310.393.9825 x10

Keep up with the latest Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce events and activities by signing up for our Weekly Update email, available at www.smchamber.com



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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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