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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012
Volume 11 Issue 111

Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

SAMOHI, XRDS WIN
SEE PAGE 3

THE BUGGING OUT ISSUE



SPRING IS IN THE AIR

Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

To honor the first day of spring, and to launch her Spring Kindness Campaign, Spring de Haviland (left) handed out flowers and 'good fortune' cookies on the Santa Monica Pier on Tuesday. The campaign was created to spread kindness to issues and causes that need a little boost.

Ed Foundation helps kids get ahead in summer

Reduced-price classes for students in need part of the plan

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMMUSD HDQTRS At 9 a.m. Monday the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation staff posted the registration form for its third annual Ed Ahead summer program, which gives students access to high school courses over the break between school years.

The form needs signatures from the student, parent, counselor and house principal, a hefty number of people to corral in one day.

Despite that, the foundation has already received two applications, and hundreds of phone calls and e-mails inquiring about the program since an announcement was sent out last Thursday, said Rachel Faulkner, program director at the Ed Foundation.

"I was surprised to have any [finished applications]," she said.

The program opens up eight classes at $595 a piece that last 27 days during the students' summer break. Options include courses offered in previous years like U.S. and world history and, for the first time at Santa Monica High School, science and math.

Chemistry was offered at Malibu High School in 2011.

The classes give students the opportunity to get a jump on coursework that they would otherwise have to take during the school year, which can free up periods in the year, allow them to progress faster through their educational path and get into higher-level courses more quickly than they otherwise would.

Those options used to be available through local community colleges, but space has gotten more scarce as budget cuts slice away at state funding for traditional summer programs at both ends of the academic spectrum.

In 2010, the Ed Foundation stepped in

SEE CLASSES PAGE 11

Main Street businesses beg for signs

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL Since June 2011, Frank Strauss, proprietor of Fedora Primo, has been able to breathe easy.

Not once in the last nine months have city officials stopped by his door to remind him that the sign and hat stand outside of his business on the 200 block of Pier Street are illegal.

Gone are the days of written warnings and threats of monetary damages concerning the sign sticking out from the side of his building … or at least they're on pause.

Businesses in the Main Street Business Improvement District have had a nine-month reprieve on City Hall rules banning removable signs on private property, a pilot project that is set to expire on March 31.

The City Council will have the opportunity to extend the relaxation of the rules into the summer at its March 27 council meeting, something Strauss, for one, hopes they will take full advantage of.

Although the rules were loosely enforced for over a year before the council's May vote, the study that caused the détente was only supposed to last four months.

The official pause on enforcement has been helpful because the sign and hat rack help attract passersby to his store, which is a little ways off Main Street's "beaten track."

"I had a sign on the corner that I keep hearing isn't allowed … It just says 'Hats' and points down the block," Strauss said. "It's invaluable."

People come into the store on a whim, or because of a party they're going to in a few weeks or what have you, Strauss said.

"Racks and signage are really important in front of my store," he said.

The signs and merchandise have long run afoul of code enforcement officials because they're technically not allowed on either public or private property under the municipal code.

The City Council voted to temporarily

SEE SIGNS PAGE 10


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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Wednesday, March 21

Healing power
Senior Center
1450 Ocean Ave.,
12:30 p.m. — 1:30 p.m.
Acupuncturist and Chinese herbalist Maria Locsin will teach Senior Center members how to heal themselves through food. Also learn how to ease pain and discomfort by pressing on certain points in the body. Membership is free and open to all ages 50-plus. For more information, call (310) 458--8644.

How beautiful
Fairview Branch
2101 Ocean Park Blvd.,
1 p.m. — 3 p.m.
Watch and discuss films that create and critique the American dream. The next installment in the film series is "American Beauty," which won five Academy Awards, including Best Picture. For more information call (310) 458-8681.

Well-laid plans
City Hall, City Council Chambers
1685 Main St., 7 p.m.
The Planning Commission will discuss development agreements for three large apartment buildings in or around Downtown. The developer is asking for more commercial floor space and room to build additional apartments. Copies of agendas and staff reports can be found by going to City Hall's website, www.santa-monica.org.

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Attracting art lovers
SMC Emeritus College Art Gallery
1227 Second St.,
5 p.m. — 6:30 p.m.
Attend the opening night of the 2012 Student Juried Photography Exhibition at the Emeritus College. Comprised of color, black-and-white and digitally manipulated photographs, the exhibit was juried by Emeritus College instructors Ken Buckner and Jerry Schneir. For information, call (310) 434-4306 or visit www.smc.edu/emeritus.

Private eye
Main Library, MLK Auditorium
601 Santa Monica Blvd.,
6:30 p.m. — 8:15 p.m.
Actor Robert Montgomery made his directorial debut with this unique film adaptation of "Lady in the Lake," this year's Citywide Reads selection that features hard-as-nails detective Philip Marlowe. Seating is limited.

Green backing
VLounge
2020 Wilshire Blvd.,
7 p.m. — 10 p.m.
A benefit concert for the Green Party of California. Tickets are $10 per person. But donations over $10 are encouraged. Check out John Rzeznik, lead singer of the Goo Goo Dolls, as well as keyboardist Nick Luca and The Pleasure Field. To buy tickets in advance go to https://cagreens.nationbuilder.com/green_party_music_benefit or call Marcy Winograd at (310) 795-2322.

Spin a yarn
Vidiots Annex
302 Pico Blvd.,
7:30 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.
If you like to tell some doozies then head over to your favorite video rental spot and tell a tale. For $10, share your stories with others who want to make you laugh, cry and get inspired. Seating is limited to 35. Bring a beverage of your choice and some appetizers and make it a party. For more information, call Patty Polinger, (310) 392-8508

To create your own listing, log on to smdp.com/submitevent

For help, contact Daniel Archuleta at 310-458-7737 or submit to editor@smdp.com

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com/communitylistings



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

JAMS

Music teacher honored

Angela Woo, the director of instrumental music at John Adams Middle School, was acknowledged by Norm Dea, president of the California Association of Music Education, at the 2012 California All-State Music Education Conference in Fresno, Calif. for her recent nomination and induction into the prestigious John Philip Sousa Foundation "Legion of Honor."

The award recognizes outstanding band directors from the United States and Canada with a long history of dedicated service to bands that have maintained school concert band programs of excellent musical quality for a period of at least 20 years, and who have held important positions of leadership in their professional organizations.

Legion of Honor laureates for this year will be inducted in December 2012 at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago.

In addition to this induction, Woo was nominated and elected to be the conductor of the 2014 CBDA California All-State Junior High Honor Band.

Conducting an honor band is one of the highest honors a music educator can receive. For years, Woo has conducted all-state honor bands all around the country, and now she has been invited to conduct in California.

"Angela is a highly respected music educator and conductor in California music education," said Tom Whaley, SMMUSD's visual and performing arts coordinator. "Her election [to the all-state honor band] shows the deep respect and admiration she has from her colleagues statewide. We are so very proud to have Angela Woo working with our students every day in the Santa Monica-Malibu USD."

The John Philip Sousa Foundation is a non-profit foundation dedicated to the promotion of international understanding through the medium of band music.

KEVIN HERRERA

Feds: No wave-catching for energy company

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN ONOFRE, Calif. A plan to harness wave power alongside the nuclear power produced at San Onofre State Beach is all but dead in the water.

The Los Angeles Times said Tuesday that federal regulators have pulled the plug on the licensing process for the operation proposed in 2010 by Fountain Valley energy company JD Products.

The company's general manager Chong Kim had hoped to put thousands of ocean wave power generators a mile offshore of the famous San Diego County surfing beach, with hopes of harnessing more than 3,000 megawatts of electricity.

But the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission says without federal grant money or a business partner, Kim could not conduct the studies necessary to build the generators.

The plan had already brought stiff opposition from surfers, fishermen and environmental groups.



WINNING RUN

Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

Crossroads junior Brandon Scott crosses the plate after scoring the winning run during the bottom of the 10th inning to beat cross-town New Roads, New Roads scored during the top of the inning, but Crossroads rallied back with two runs for the victory.

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

Suzuki, Padilla pace Samohi past South

BY DANIEL ARCHULETA
Managing Editor

SAMOHI Samohi's victory over South Torrance featured a touch of the familiar and a good helping of new.

The familiar was senior Adam Padilla, who threw a complete game, allowing just a lone run during Tuesday's 3-1 win over South. The new came in the form of transfer Nobu Suzuki, who was 3-for-3 with a triple for Santa Monica High School's baseball team.

"He's a godsend," Head Coach Sheldon Philip-Guide said of Suzuki. "The kid can hit."

The only issue arises when the team tries to communicate with the junior, who just this year moved from Japan to the states with his family. Philip-Guide has instructed his ball players to learn a few words in Japanese each to help reach out to Suzuki, who doesn't speak much English.

Language barrier aside, Padilla has nothing but respect for Suzuki's game.

"He's a hitting machine," he said.

The win improves Samohi's record to 3-7. Padilla's mastery of South on the mound helped him win his second game against one loss.

The game was a bit of a pitcher's dual for most of the afternoon with South's Matt Bunch holding his own against Samohi's lineup.

Both hurlers breezed through the first couple of innings, but it was Samohi who would strike first.

Suzuki led the charge, leading off the bottom of the third inning with a single to left field, his second hit of the game. The next batter, junior catcher Lino Lares, slapped a double to left, advancing Suzuki to third.

A couple of batters later, Padilla walked to load the bases for Jonathan Rakuljic, who hit a sacrifice to third base that brought Suzuki home with the game's first run.

A pair of innings later, and it was Suzuki again setting the stage for Samohi with a triple to the fence. Lares followed by sending a deep fly to left that South's Nick Cohan couldn't handle, sending Suzuki home on the error and Lares to second on the play.

Padilla would later knock Lares in with a sacrifice to center field.

It was all the scoring Samohi would need.

Padilla would continue to shut down South until the top of the seventh when Dylan Tobin crossed the plate on Hayden Finley's RBI-single later in the frame.

"[Padilla] pitched a good game," South head coach Grady Sain said. "We just couldn't make adjustments against him."

Next for Samohi is a home game against Palos Verdes Peninsula on Thursday. The game begins at 3:15 p.m. Peninsula enters the game 3-5 overall.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Missing Mel

Editor:

Mel Bloch was a rare individual ("Living life to the fullest," Your Column Here, March 16). A brilliant mind, he could quote Twain or Verlaine, sing the lyrics of Gilbert & Sullivan or Roy Orbison, recount tales of Charlemagne or Alexander the Great. He once told me that, as a boy, he had read the entire Encyclopedia Britannica – for fun!

Mel went through five passports in his lifetime and had a vast knowledge of people and their cultures. He could engage any person on any subject.

At Jadis, the store founded by my late partner, Parke Meek, and me in 1976, Mel was the impresario. He dazzled the crowd with his knowledge and wit, and brought the quirky collection to life. Visitors departed with a sense of wonder and were elevated by the experience.

His presence in our small corner of the universe was a gift. We are much richer and much poorer with his passing.

Susan Lieberman
Santa Monica

Not pleased with permits

Editor:

So the Board of Education has opened the floodgates to get every available dollar from the state ("School board accepts new permit policy," March 17-18). Are they permitting another 100 kids, or is it 170 kids, or is there no limit to the amount of permits that will be issued? This decision benefits only the administrators, not the kids. The extra state revenue will be used to pay for the underfunded and ridiculously high pension plans that SMMUSD refuses to review or reduce. SMMUSD is also looking to preemptively replace funding that will be lost when Malibu jumps ship.

District officials cite that enrollment has been "slowly slipping downwards." Duh! Enrollment is down because any parent with resources has pulled their kid out of SMMUSD rather than sending them to Samohi, which has become an overcrowded, gang infested, dangerous place.

SMMUSD can't make ends meet because the district is drowning in overpaid administrators and under performing teachers, hence the lackluster graduation rate that speaks for itself.

The plan is to add four new teacher positions for 170 imported kids, positions that start at $80,000 each. Are they serious? Since when does landing a teaching job in Santa Monica equate to a lottery win? And the pittance amount of $50 per kid for supplies is a joke. How about we pay the four new teachers $40,000 each and use the $160,000 that's left on the kids. For 170 kids, that's $941 each for supplies. iPads for everyone. Aren't the kids supposed to be the winners here and not the underfunded CalPERS retirement accounts?

And the ignorant statement from Ben Allen, the president of the school board. This guy got elected on a platform of going after everyone and every option to get revenue: parcel taxes, sales taxes and now he's got his eye on the grandparents of Santa Monica? This guy's got to go when his term is up. I can assure Mr. Allen that when and if I become a grandparent the chances of my voting for additional taxes are slim and none.

There is also no guarantee that the state will pay the $876,213 this year, next year or any year. The state is broke and they will continue to cut funding, and when they cut it again, SMMUSD will put a shine on and dress up a new parcel tax plan, telling us that a parcel tax will be the only way to save "our" children. Hogwash.

Lori Emerson
Santa Monica

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Meredith Pro Tem

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

When good kids have bad mothers

"I'M GOING TO GET MARRIED TO MY friend Sadie and my sister," my 3-year-old daughter Petunia announced not long ago.

"Terrific!" I exclaimed. "Can I come to the wedding?"

"No," she replied flatly. "I'm going to California, and you're going to miss me very much."

If I wasn't sure before then that I'm a bad mom, that seemed to be as good a sign as any.

Oh, sure, lots of moms will tell you dramatically or gleefully about just how miserably they're failing at motherhood. There are TV shows, films and websites, not to mention entire sections in Barnes & Noble of how-to kits dedicated to teaching, unlearning and spotting bad moms. For instance: A good mother doesn't ask her older daughter if she minds skipping the vegetables she specifically requested at dinner because she doesn't feel like washing the carrot peeler.

Usually the moms in question are bad in a tongue-in-cheek kind of way, and their badness almost always ends with the kids loving their moms anyway, you know, because moms are, well, moms, for better or worse.

But when I say I'm a bad mom, you can rest assured it's the truth: I am a horrible mother. Besides my older daughter leaving me off the guest list for her wedding, I know for certain that I am flunking due to the astonishing quantity of dried pea vomit in my 6-month-old daughter Peony's eyebrows late on Saturday night.

My husband and I left a new baby sitter at home with both girls, who were both asleep before we went out. We had just tucked into the first course at the restaurant where we were happily dining with friends when my cellphone rang.

"I think Peony threw up," the baby sitter said.

"Threw up?" I asked. "Or spit up?"

When you're a baby sitter, it's probably not a big difference. To a mom on a rare and highly coveted childless evening, on the other hand, the distinction is like the one between Obama and Osama — they're only separated by one letter, but you are keenly aware it's a pretty significant letter.

"I don't know, exactly, I guess. It's green, and it kind of seems like there's a lot of it."

"Well," I said, dreading the thought of leaving my alcoholic beverage, hot food cooked by someone not me and Dora-less conversation to go home and mop up baby puke. "She had peas for dinner, so that explains the green. Is she asleep or awake now?"

"Asleep."

I brightened considerably.

"Great! Then just throw a burp cloth over the spit-up, and it'll be fine."

When we got home a few hours later, it was fine. Except that Peony was coated in dried pea puke. It was e-v-e-r-y-w-h-e-r-e. And by everywhere, I mean cleaning it was a two-person job that involved new sheets, a sponge bath, a nose suctioning and an air freshening. At some point I wondered if it might just be easier to move houses, skip the state or get a new baby.

"But she's still breathing," our friends from dinner texted me after I lamented to them in a text how awful I felt for not getting home sooner. "So that's all good 'n stuff . . . "

It's always nice to feel supported by other parents, although that particular pat on the back did happen to come from a set of adults who boast that it's as if their youngest child is being raised by a pack of wolves.

I might have redeemed the situation — and just barely — by bathing Peony on Sunday morning. But on Sunday morning I finally reasoned that she was, in fact, still breathing. And I had just bathed her on Saturday afternoon. Was a second bath in less than 24 hours really necessary since I still hadn't received a wedding invitation from my older daughter? I mean, the damage was already done. Some warm water and Mustela Bebe Foam Shampoo wasn't about to undo what I didn't do the night before.

Besides trying to literally break dried vomit from what little hair rests on the head of my infant daughter, I know I've been an especially bad mom when I'm not the go-to parent following an injury.

Like the time a few weeks ago when I picked up Petunia from preschool and figured out right away that she wasn't in the mood to play nice. Which rendered me not in the mood, either. Fast forward a few hours when my husband came home, at which time Petunia stubbed her toe.

"Ow!" she cried. "I got an owie!"

If there's one thing that'll melt my hard candy shell immediately, it's a legitimate injury. So I rushed over to scoop her up.

"Nooooo!" she screamed, turning away from me as if I had conspired with the coffee table to reach out and bump her foot. "I want Daddy to kiss my owie."

Even Debra Winger allowed Shirley MacLaine at her bedside when she was at her sickest in "Terms of Endearment." Clearly I've got some work to do.

"You know, if I'm not invited then I'm not going to pay for it," I informed Petunia a few days ago while she was discussing her packing list for her California destination wedding.

She thought for a moment.

"OK, you can come," she said begrudgingly.

I might be a bad mom, but at least I'm a crafty one.

More at www.meredithcarroll.com.





PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Kevin Herrera
editor@smdp.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Daniel Archuleta
daniela@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER
Ashley Archibald
ashley@smdp.com

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER
Brandon Wise
brandonw@smdp.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Morgan Genser
news@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Bill Bauer, David Pisarra, Meredith Carroll, Jack Neworth, Lloyd Garver, Ron Hooks, Taylor Van Arsdale, Merv Hecht, Cynthia Citron, Tom Viscount, Michael Ryan, JoAnne Barge, Katrina Davy

NEWS INTERN
Colin Newton
news@smdp.com

PHOTOGRAPHY INTERN
Ray Solano
news@smdp.com

VICE PRESIDENT–BUSINESS OPERATIONS
Rob Schwenker
schwenker@smdp.com

JUNIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Chelsea Fujitaki
chelsea@smdp.com
Justin Harris
justin@smdp.com

ADVERTISING TRAFFIC COORDINATOR
Rebecca Martinez
admin@smdp.com

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR
Michele Emch
michele.e@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Darren Ouellette
production@smdp.com

PRODUCTION DESIGNER
Alejandro Cantarero
production@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Keith Wyatt
Osvaldo Paganini
circulation@smdp.com

Santa Monica Daily Press
We have you covered

1640 5th Street, Suite 218
Santa Monica, CA 90401
OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913

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Your column here

Lee H. Hamilton

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

The most important skill in politics

WATCHING CAPITOL HILL THESE DAYS, I'm often struck by how issues that were present at the dawn of our Republic continue to reverberate. In the very first session of Congress, when members had to grapple with how to make the new government work, they also had to come to grips with how they themselves could work together. This wasn't easy.

They came from different regions, with different concerns and sensibilities. They had their own, deeply rooted personal beliefs. And even at such an early moment in our history, they were divided by their political agendas. Yet, wrote historian Robert Remini a few years ago, "The members disagreed at times, and even quarreled, but never to the point of creating irreconcilable factions within the House. This cooperation and harmony … was essential in the beginning. The members knew it, and therefore worked together to provide a proper start to this 'new experiment in freedom.'" Politicians who knew how to compromise, in other words, were vital to the survival of our young democracy.

They're no less important today, though you wouldn't guess this if you've been paying attention to this year's campaigns. Politicians running for office don't talk about compromise much — except to sneer at it. They know that voters like decisive statements about principle. And, ever the optimists, they spend their time on the stump hoping that the election will bring an overwhelming victory to their point of view, so that compromise won't be necessary once they're in office.

You already know where this is headed. That doesn't happen much; decisive elections are rare. It's much more common to find houses divided or — especially in the Senate — majorities that aren't nearly big enough to avoid the need for one side to deal with the other. Indeed, even should one side get a comfortable majority, our complex system of checks and balances, the Constitution's dispersal of power, and procedural obstacles to protect the minority would come into play, making it difficult in most cases to avoid the necessity of compromise.

Even more important, there is a vast difference between campaigning and actually governing. While they're campaigning, politicians tend to concentrate on those who agree with them ideologically — they want to "fire up the base" and present as stark a difference as possible with their opponents. But this requires a different mindset from the one required once you're in office: when you're campaigning, you have no interest in compromise; when you have to legislate, scorched-earth tactics just alienate the people you have to work with. Yet it's often hard for politicians to change mindsets.

This is not to say that standing on principle is wrong. Sometimes it is the appropriate and proper stance for a politician to take. But let's be clear: taking that position has consequences. We've seen what happens when the two parties in Congress back themselves into their respective corners and refuse to allow their members to find common ground: governing well and effectively becomes next to impossible. Our problems don't get resolved. If all politicians were to take the position that they're going to stick to their views no matter what and not compromise, it would create gridlock. The status quo would never change.

Congress' historically low standing in the polls these days stems from the widespread perception that it's unable to act, even in the face of immense challenges at home and abroad. That is why the most important political skill in the country today is the ability to seek and find a consensus about ways to remedy the problems facing us — and to convince both one's political opponents and one's allies that it's the proper way to move forward. This is a skill that's in short supply today, yet we cannot govern this country unless politicians compromise.

There's one other group of people who also need convincing: ordinary citizens. Our country seems to be growing ever more divided at a time when, more than anything else, we need to give our politicians room to be politicians, not standard-bearers. The men and women we elect to office need to be able to govern without worrying that if they make concessions or even enter into negotiations with the other side, they'll be voted out of office in their party's primary.

This requires a more sophisticated understanding of the role of compromise than the partisan commentators and activists who help shape our political debate would like to see. But without it, our government won't work. It's as simple as that.

LEE HAMILTON is director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

The Q Line

Paying up

The Planning Commission voted last week to create a new fee on developments that would fund transit projects. The money raised would go to bike infrastructure improvements and other transportation-related projects. If the City Council approves the fee, it would be among the highest in the state.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:
Where do you stand on this fee? Is it fair to ask developers to pay it, or do you think it has the potential to deter future construction?

Contact **qline@smdp.com** before **Friday at 5 p.m.** and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. You can also call **(310) 458-7737 ext. 102**.



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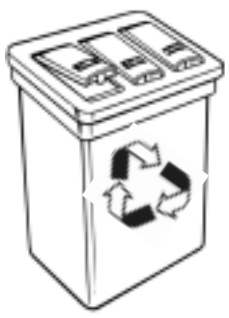
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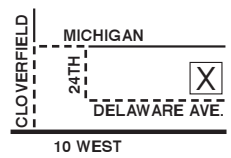
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Cal State trustees OK pay hikes for pair of presidents

CHRISTINA HOAG
Associated Press

LONG BEACH, Calif. The California State University approved 10 percent pay hikes for two campus presidents Tuesday, despite objections from critics who say CSU administrators are overpaid.

Its trustees board gave final and binding approval for the compensation packages for the new presidents of the Fullerton and East Bay campuses at its bimonthly meeting in Long Beach. CSU East Bay President Leroy Morishita will receive a base salary of $303,660, while CSU Fullerton President Mildred will receive a base salary of $324,500.

Those salaries are 10 percent more than their current pay and 10 percent more than that of their immediate predecessors. The presidents also get a $12,000 car allowance and a $60,000 housing allowance.

Ten percent is the maximum raise allowed under a new executive compensation policy approved by the board in January.

State Sen. Leland Yee, D-San Francisco, called the pay raises "shocking" when CSU trustees have approved a series of large tuition hikes. He is advocating legislation that would bar pay raises for top administrators during bad budget years or within two years of a student fee increase.

CSU officials say competitive compensation packages are necessary to attract and retain the leaders of major universities.

At the meeting, the board also criticized plans to cope with state funding cuts by reducing enrollment next year. CSU Vice Chancellor Robert Turnage said Monday that the 23-campus system plans to close spring admissions at most campuses next year in response to a $750 million cut in state funding.

Only eight of Cal State's 23 campuses will admit students for the spring 2013 term, with enrollment limited to several hundred community college transfer students. CSU admitted about 16,000 students last spring, officials said.

If voters reject Gov. Jerry Brown's tax measure in November, the CSU would lose another $200 million next year and the system would reduce enrollment by as many as 25,000 students, or roughly 6 percent, during the 2013-2014 academic year, he said. The system currently has 417,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

Trustee Roberta Achtenberg said reducing enrollment by 20,000 to 25,000 students betrays students who receive the message that they should go to college. She said many will simply never go to college if denied access to the CSU system.

BRIEFS

LOS ANGELES

LAX sees no flight delays to Acapulco after quake

Los Angeles International Airport officials say the three airlines serving Acapulco from LAX do not report any delays following the magnitude-7.6 earthquake centered 120 miles to the east of the Mexican resort city.

Airport spokeswoman Nancy Castles says three airlines have five daily connecting flights from LAX to Acapulco with a change of aircraft in Mexico City.

Castles says four of the flights had departed Los Angeles before Tuesday's quake and the remaining afternoon flight is still scheduled to depart.

Castles says passengers scheduled to depart to Acapulco should nonetheless check the flight status with their airline before coming to the airport.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES

Online date sites agree to screen for predators

Three leading online dating sites have agreed to screen for sex offenders and take other measures to protect their members after a Southern California woman was assaulted on a date.

California's attorney general on Tuesday announced the agreement with Match.com, eHarmony and Spark Networks.

She says the companies signed a joint statement of principles that include checking subscribers against national sex offender registries, providing a rapid way to report abuses and providing members with safety tips.

The statement is non-binding but the companies say they hope it will set an example for other dating sites.

Attorney general's spokeswoman Lynda Gledhill says the agreement was inspired by the case of a woman who was assaulted in 2010 by a man she met through Match.com. Alan Wurtzel had previous sexual battery convictions.

AP

ALHAMBRA

Police arrest two in school bomb threats

Police say two people have been arrested in connection with bomb threats against Alhambra High School.

A police department statement says one current Alhambra High School student and one former student were arrested on Friday. Their names were not revealed.

Sgt. Garrett Kennedy says detectives are preparing a case to present to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. The Alhambra Unified School District says it will proceed with appropriate disciplinary action.

AP

LOS ANGELES

Brothers of official guilty of conspiracy

Two brothers of a former Los Angeles housing official have pleaded guilty to conspiracy charges stemming from a scheme to give contracts to family-owned companies.

The U.S. attorney's office says Bennett Taracena and Diego Taracena changed their pleas to guilty on Monday, and face up to five years in prison along with fines and restitution when they are sentenced June 4.

AP

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Inmates petition UN to monitor prisons

GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES An attorney for hundreds of California inmates held in solitary confinement in the nation's largest prison system because of their gang ties said Tuesday that he will petition the United Nations to intervene to stop the practice and launch an investigation into their living conditions and mental and physical health.

The petition, which asks the international body to allow an independent party to interview prisoners and review their medical files, comes after about 6,000 inmates at 13 prisons statewide went on a hunger strike last summer. They have since staged smaller and more intermittent strikes to protest what they call inhumane and torturous conditions in the so-called segregation housing units, or SHUs.

The petition announced Tuesday was drawn up on behalf of 400 inmates who wrote letters seeking help after being assigned to the isolation cells for years because of their gang ties, said Peter Schey, executive director of the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law. A half-dozen family members of inmates currently living in solitary confinement joined Schey at a news conference and shared stories of brothers, husbands and sons who have spent decades in the segregated cells.

"It's one thing to place a person into solitary segregation because they've assaulted another prisoner or threatened another person with violence. We're not arguing with that," Schey said. "What we're arguing is the vast majority of people ... are being put in solitary and the key thrown away merely because they're alleged to be a gang member or maybe even just an associate of a gang member. The punishment is barbaric compared to the allegations."

About 4,200 inmates are assigned to segregated housing units statewide and of those, nearly 2,300 are kept in isolation because they are gang members or gang associates, according to data from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The units also house non-gang inmates who kill other inmates, attack employees or participate in riots.

The petition is unnecessary because prison officials have already crafted a proposal that would make it easier and quicker for inmates with gang ties to earn their way out of isolation, said Jeffrey Callison, a department spokesman.

The changes could go into effect by the year's end after a review process that will include public input, he said.

Under the new policy, gang members would no longer have to renounce their gang membership to get out of solitary confinement.

Instead, they could earn more privileges and get out of the isolation units in four years instead of six if they stop engaging in gang activities and participate in anger management and drug rehabilitation programs.

Many gang associates could also be housed in the general prison population instead of in insolation under the proposal.

A sharp reduction in prison crowding has allowed officials to reconsider how to best suppress gangs.

The state is diverting thousands of lower-level criminals from state prisons to local jails under a law that took effect in October.

The shift was driven by federal judges who ruled state prisons were so jammed that officials could not provide proper care to mentally and physically ill inmates. The U.S. Supreme Court last year upheld the authority of the judges to order the state to reduce crowding.

Gov. Brown defends tax proposal

JUDY LIN
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. The governor on Tuesday countered new ads airing in Los Angeles and San Francisco for a tax proposal that competes with one he is proposing for the November ballot, saying his measure is superior because it would help fund schools and address California's $9.2 billion budget deficit.

Gov. Jerry Brown made the case for just one tax initiative, suggesting the competing proposal by wealthy Los Angeles attorney Molly Munger lacked broad support among voters.

"The taxes I'm proposing — the sales and the very high income people — goes to the schools," Brown told reporters before speaking to a group of optometrists in Sacramento.

He said the new tax revenue would help the state meet its funding requirements for public schools, which would then free up discretionary money for social services and public safety programs.

Supporters of Munger's initiative say her initiative bypasses Sacramento and sends money directly to schools. The new ad campaign by "Our Children, Our Future" appeals to voters by saying California is ranked 47th in the nation in per student funding. The campaign declined to say how much it spent on the ads.

Just a fraction of Munger's initiative would help the state deficit. It allocates about $3 billion a year for the first four years to pay off school bond debt, which frees up general fund money for other programs such as health care.

"We realize that the budget is more than education, but we also realize we have a generation of kids who have taken the brunt of cuts and they can't wait any longer," said Patty Scripter, legislative director for the California State Parent Teacher Association.

Republicans have said higher taxes would hurt the state's economic recovery and hit families when they can't afford to pay more.

Kevin Gordon, a budget adviser to school districts, said the two proposals have different goals. Brown is trying to maintain the current level of school funding while closing the budget gap while Munger's initiative is only addressing public education cuts.

Brown's proposal would temporarily raise the state's sales and income tax on people who make $250,000 or more. Munger's proposed initiative would raise income taxes on a sliding scale for nearly all wage-earners to help fund schools.

The governor said his proposal was crafted by budget experts as well as local governments, teachers and others that have a stake in state spending. He said Munger's initiative would lock the state into new spending while his would provide more funding for public safety.

"I think on balance, ours is far superior, it's fair and a lot more people are open to it," he said.

Brown is projecting his tax initiative would raise as much as $9 billion but a review released Friday by the nonpartisan analyst's office estimates revenue of $6.8 billion in fiscal year 2012-13. The governor said Tuesday that he's comfortable with whatever amount the taxes will bring in.

Munger's initiative would raise $10 billion to $12 billion annually for 12 years.



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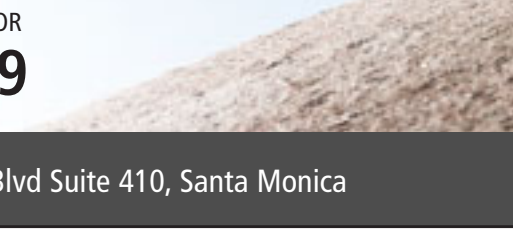
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Worry about Chinese demand drives U.S. stocks a bit lower

DANIEL WAGNER
AP Business Writer

Stocks closed lower Tuesday for only the second time in two weeks after two reports suggested an economic slowdown in China, where blistering growth over the past three years has helped sustain the global economic recovery.

Home prices dropped in 45 Chinese cities last month, a result of government policies designed to reduce property speculation. And BHP Billiton, a mining company, predicted that China will not use much more iron ore in 2020 than it does today.

In the United States, stocks recovered some of their early loss but still closed lower. The Dow Jones industrial average declined 68.94 points to 13,170.19. It had been down as much as 116 points.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index closed down 4.23 points at 1,405.52. The Nasdaq composite index dropped 4.17 points to 3,074.15.

Brian Gendreau, a market strategist at the brokerage Cetera Financial Group, said traders were concerned about slower growth in India and Brazil as well. That could rein in a rally that has driven the S&P up almost 12 percent this year.

"If there were skeptics out there that the market might have gotten a little ahead of itself, this was all the news they needed," Gendreau said.

Mining companies, which rely on rising demand from the developing world, plunged. Peabody Energy fell 5.4 percent, Cliffs Natural Resources 2.4 percent and U.S. Steel 0.9 percent. Energy stocks were the worst-performing group in the S&P 500.

Caterpillar, the maker of heavy equipment, led the Dow lower and slid 2.6 percent after it said global sales are growing more slowly. Bank of America, by far the most active stock in the Dow, led the average with a 2.9 percent gain.

Besides the report on home prices and the prediction of weaker demand for iron ore, which is used to make steel, China raised the price of gasoline for the second time in two months. That could hurt demand for fuel.

China's economy grew at an annual rate of 8.9 percent in the last three months of 2011, but the government, which is worried that the economy will overheat, has set a growth target of 7.5 percent this year.

Commodity prices fell broadly, also because of concerns about Chinese demand. Copper fell almost 2 percent. Platinum and palladium also fell. Gold fell more than $20 an ounce to $1,647 and is down 8 percent this month.

The price of oil dropped $2.48 to $105.61 in New York trading. In addition to the worry about China, oil fell because Saudi Arabia promised to fulfill any shortfalls in global supply because of the standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

Yields for U.S. government debt fell slightly after rising for nine consecutive days. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note dropped to 2.33 percent, from 2.36 late Monday, but had recovered to 2.36 percent later Tuesday.

The dollar rose against the euro. Traders tend to buy what they consider safer currencies, such as the dollar, when they are worried about the global economy. The euro fell to $1.322 from $1.324 late Monday.

The U.S. Commerce Department released a mixed report on the housing market. Builders broke ground on fewer homes in February, though they obtained more permits to build homes later in the year.

Gendreau said the report's impact on trading was mild because most housing data in recent months have signaled a modest revival for the industry.

European indexes fell. Germany's DAX lost 1.4 percent, France's CAC-40 1.3 percent and Britain's FTSE 100 1.2 percent.

Among the companies making big moves in the U.S. on Tuesday:

• Tiffany & Co., the jeweler, jumped 6.7 percent after it said it expects higher profits and revenue this year.

• Adobe Systems Inc., a maker of graphic design software, fell 3.9 percent after its quarterly profit fell sharply because of higher operating costs.

• Lions Gate Entertainment Corp., a movie studio based in Santa Monica, rose 7.2 percent and hit a one-year high. "The Hunger Games," a science-fiction action movie opening Friday, could be a hit.

NASA considering space station for Mars dry run

MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. The International Space Station may provide the setting for a 500-day pretend trip to Mars in another few years.

NASA said Tuesday that consideration is under way to use the space station as a dry run for a simulated trip to and from Mars.

It would be patterned after Russia's mock flight to Mars that lasted 520 days at a Moscow research center. Six men were involved in that study, which ended late last year. They were locked in a steel capsule.

NASA's space station program manager Mike Suffredini said before astronauts can fly beyond low-Earth orbit, they'll have to spend more than six months aloft at a time. That's the typical stint for space station crews. Five hundred days is more than 16 months.

The human endurance record of 14 months was set by a Russian cosmonaut aboard the Mir space station in the mid-1990s. Only two others — both Russians — have spent as long as a full year in space.

No NASA astronaut has spent more than seven months in space on a single mission.

Suffredini doesn't expect any such Mars simulation aboard the space station to occur any sooner than two to three years. Physical as well as psychological questions will have to be addressed before anything of that sort is attempted, he said.

Steps are under way, however, for such an effort, and scientists and flight surgeons already are working on it. The goal would be to have all the data in hand so the space station can be used as a Mars test bed before its projected demise in 2020 or thereafter.

Suffredini said he expects the consensus ultimately will be to simulate "at least the first leg of a trip to a distant planet."

NASA's future for manned exploration is up in the air as the debate drags on as to where astronauts should head in the decades ahead: the moon, asteroids and/or Mars. The cost promises to be a major factor, along with the development of rocketships big enough to travel so far.

Lawyer: Slain teen's friend heard altercation

CURT ANDERSON & MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

SANFORD, Fla. The attorney for the family of a black teenager fatally shot by a neighborhood watch captain said Tuesday that the boy was talking to his girlfriend on his cell phone when the confrontation began. She heard an exchange of words, what sounded like a scuffle but not the shooting.

The phone call was discussed at a news conference that followed announcements that the U.S. Justice department would probe the death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin and that a local grand jury will also consider evidence in the case.

George Zimmerman, 28, claims he shot Martin in self-defense during the confrontation last month in a gated community in Sanford, Fla. Zimmerman spotted Martin as he was patrolling his neighborhood on a rainy evening and called 911 to report a suspicious person. Against the advice of the 911 dispatcher, Zimmerman then followed Martin, who was walking home from a convenience store with a bag of Skittles in his pocket.

Police have described Zimmerman as white; his family says he is Hispanic and not racist.

Attorney Benjamin Crump, who represents Martin's parents, said the teenager was on the phone with his girlfriend back home in Miami after he left the store. Martin told the girl he'd taken shelter from the rain briefly at an apartment building in the gated community before continuing his walk to where he was staying with his father nearby.

It was then that Martin told the girl he was being followed, according to Crump. She said Martin told her someone was following him and that he was going to try to lose him. He thought he had lost Zimmerman but hadn't.

"He says, 'Oh he's right behind me, he's right behind me again,'" Crump says the girl told him. "She says: 'Run.' He says, 'I'm not going to run I'm just going to walk fast.' She hears Trayvon say, 'Why are you following me?' Other voice says, 'What are you doing around here?'"

She told Crump they both repeated themselves and then she thinks she heard Zimmerman push Martin "because his voice changes like something interrupted his speech." She heard an altercation and then the phone call was cut off.

Within moments, according to Crump's timeline, Martin was shot. She didn't hear the gunfire.

Crump is not releasing the girl's name to protect her privacy.

Crump said he plans to turn over information about the call to federal investigators who are looking into the case. The Justice Department announced their involvement late Monday.

"The department will conduct a thorough and independent review of all the evidence and take appropriate action at the conclusion of the investigation," the agency said in an emailed statement.

The federal agency said it is sending its community relations service this week to Sanford to meet with authorities, community officials and civil rights leaders "to address tension in the community."

On Tuesday, a central Florida prosecutor also said that a grand jury will meet April 10 to consider evidence in the case. Seminole County State Attorney Norm Wolfinger urged the public to be patient as the investigation unfolds.

An online petition urging local authorities to prosecute Zimmerman has drawn more than 500,000 signatures at website Change.org

Later Tuesday, civil rights activist Al Sharpton is expected to join Sanford city leaders in an evening town hall meeting to discuss with residents how the investigation is being handled. On Monday, students held rallies on the campus of Florida A&M University in Tallahassee and outside the Seminole County Criminal Justice Center, where prosecutors are reviewing the case to determine if charges should be filed.

Authorities may be hamstrung by a state law that allows people to defend themselves with deadly force.

The law was changed in 2005. Before, people could use deadly force in self-defense only if they had tried to run away or otherwise avoid the danger.

Under the new law, there is no duty to retreat and it gives a Floridian the right "to stand his or her ground and meet force with force, including deadly force," if he feels threatened.

On Monday, about 70 protesters at the rally in Sanford called for Zimmerman's arrest. They chanted "What if it was your son?" and held posters saying, "This is not a race issue."

"I don't think a man who exited his vehicle after the 911 dispatcher told him to stay inside the car can claim self-defense," Carl McPhail, a 28-year-old Barry University law school student, said at the Sanford rally.

U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown, D-Fla., along with members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, had asked the U.S. Department of Justice to review the case. Late Monday, Florida Gov. Rick Scott also directed the state Department of Law Enforcement to help local authorities in their investigation.

Prosecutors can have a hard time making a case if there is no one else around to contradict a person who claims self-defense, said David Hill, a criminal defense attorney in Orlando. So far, Sanford police have said there is no evidence to contradict Zimmerman's claims.

Gun control advocates said the case is emblematic of permissive gun laws in Florida, which was among the first states to allow residents to carry concealed weapons. Florida was the first state to pass a "Stand Your Ground" law, which has been dubbed a "Shoot First" law by gun control advocates.

Currently, about half of all U.S. states have similar laws, said Brian Malte, legislative director of the Brady Campaign, which describes itself as the nation's largest organization dedicated to the prevention of gun violence.

"It's coming to dangerous fruition," Malte said. "There are more states like Florida."

The "Stand Your Ground" law's legislative sponsor, Florida Rep. Dennis Baxley, said it wasn't written to give people the power to pursue and confront others.

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VROOMMM

Fabian Lewkowicz *FabianLewkowicz.com*

Santa Monica Police officer Shaun Dove follows training officer Rob Dawson through a cone pattern course at Santa Monica Beach on Tuesday. Dove is practicing for motorcycle training school.

SIGNS

FROM PAGE 1

allow signage on private property, including signs attached to buildings that project out into the street or box signs attached to the side of a building, best used to display restaurant menus.

Even under the relaxed rules, they aren't allowed on public land because, according to past staff reports, popular portable signs — also called A-frame or sandwich signs — take up too much space on sidewalks and get in the way.

In addition, permitting signs in the public right of way opens the door to signs for a wide range of purposes that have nothing to do with business because of free speech protections on public property.

If businesses have signs, so can food trucks, religious groups and political groups.

Still, the ability to put out signs has been extremely helpful to businesses who are still hurting from the long recession and tepid recovery, and the discovery that they may have to give up the signs at the end of March came a bit out of the blue.

"Tell them to stay lightened up on the issue, because we really need it," Strauss said.

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CLASSES
FROM PAGE 1

to assist with what Sally Chou, the district's chief academic officer, termed a pilot program to provide classes.

Course offerings are based on student and parent demand, and all classes are built with the school district team. New courses, like biology, chemistry and geometry, were specifically requested by the school district, Faulkner said.

"They deemed it important to offer these classes so that students could fulfill requirements if they wanted to take honors and (Advanced Placement) classes," Faulkner said.

The Board of Education signed off on the program last Thursday, with only mild concern both for the program's accessibility to low-income students and its ability to convey a year's worth of math and science in a 27-day program.

Students enrolled in the district's free and reduced-price lunch program pay only $100 and $250 respectively for the program, Linda Gross, executive director of the Ed Foundation, told board members Thursday.

In 2011, 20 percent of the students enrolled in the summer classes were on scholarships totaling $14,000, she said.

According to a study released by the RAND Corp. in 2011, access to summer classes is a critical tool to combat the achievement gap between low-income and wealthier students that's often a source of debate within the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

While all students forget information learned in the previous school year over their summer break, research shows, low-income students lose substantially more ground in reading than their wealthier counterparts and the impact is cumulative over the course of their education.

That means that learning loss during the summer "substantially" increases the achievement gap in reading, the report says.

Along those lines, evidence presented in the report suggests that all types of summer learning programs can help.

"It may be that efforts to close the achievement gap during the school year alone will be unsuccessful," the report says.

At Thursday's meeting, board member Oscar de la Torre pushed for the Education Foundation to open the door to more low-income students, increasing the number of scholarships to 30 percent of the total population of summer students.

"Twenty percent is acceptable, but 30 percent sounds a little better," de la Torre said.

A second concern was whether or not students would be able to fit an entire year's worth of math or science instruction into a five-week program, even with four-and-a-half hours of class-time each day.

That's still approximately two-thirds of the amount of time a student would normally spend in a class.

"It raises the question if it's a wise idea or not a wise idea," said board member Jose Escarce.

Laurel Fretz, Samohi's principal and a former science teacher, was confident that the formula was a good one.

Students who sign up will get the unusual chance to focus all of their time and attention on one class, rather than stretching their learning between six or seven as they would in the regular school year, Fretz said.

"Those students choosing to take it have the internal buy-in to be there and do that," she said. "It creates an urgency that should be there all year, but often is not, to fit it in, learn as much as you can and do the material."

The class time gives students a better chance to engage with the material and have an immersive lab experience in the case of the biology or chemistry classes.

Research suggests that cramming that much material into a summer course can work, but it takes the right kind of teaching.

Marcia Linn, director of the Technology Enhanced Learning in Science Community and a professor at the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education, studied the impact of inquiry-based instruction in comparison to general classroom education.

If the summer program mimicked what happened in the classroom during the normal school year, then it might be questionable if five more weeks of similar instruction would pack enough of a punch.

"If it's designed instead to have a unique or valuable experience, then it could be extremely beneficial," she said.

According to her work, science students that have access to technology that lets them manipulate models to test out their ideas and then reinforce their thoughts through writing assignments would absorb more because they were actively engaging with the material.

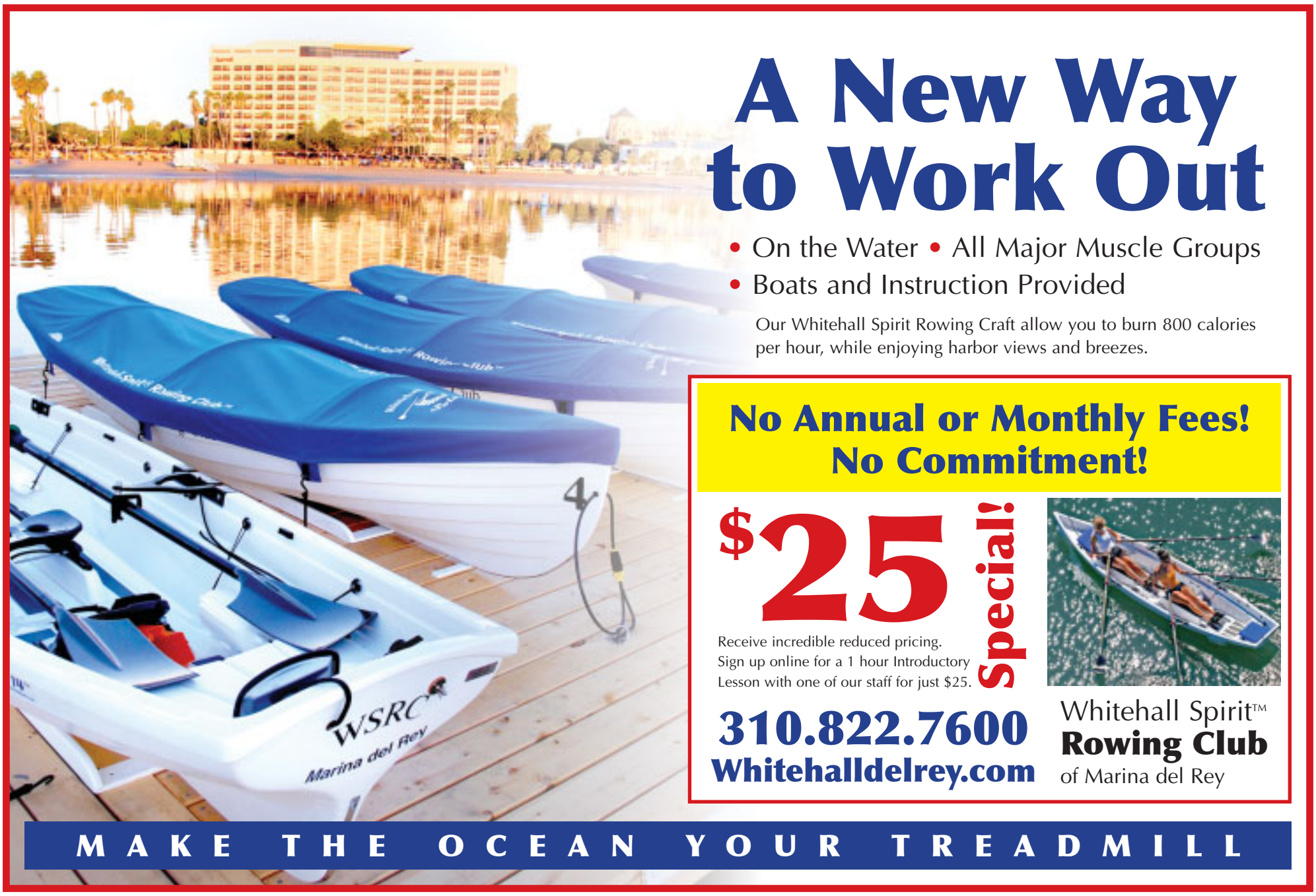
"It enables them to inspect their own ideas," she said. "They can test those ideas and refine them based on information they get from their personal experiments."

Having engaged students who really want to be there is, of course, helpful to the classroom equation, she said.

People who wish to sign up for summer classes can get the registration form at www.smmef.org.

ashley@smdp.com





Boy bands exploding back onto pop music scene

MESFIN FEKADU
Associated Press

NEW YORK It seems like we can never say goodbye, bye, bye to boy bands.

A decade after 'N Sync and the Backstreet Boys dominated the entertainment world, boy bands have returned and are making a comeback.

One Direction, the British quintet that placed third on the U.K.'s "X Factor" in 2010, will see its album "Up All Night" debut high on Billboard's Top 200 albums chart this week. The Wanted, another U.K.-based quintet, is spending its second week at No. 4 on Billboard's Hot 100 singles chart with the jam "Glad You Came."

Big Time Rush, a four-member boy band that also has a hit Nickelodeon show readying its third season, recently wrapped a sold-out tour at New York's Radio City Music Hall, and will embark on a larger U.S. and Canadian trek this summer. And Mindless Behavior, formed by the man who discovered Lady Gaga — record executive Vincent Herbert — debuted at No. 2 on the R&B charts in late 2010 with its album "(hash)1 Girl," and has toured with Janet Jackson and Justin Bieber, among others.

"It's just exploding," said Ernie D., the creative director and on-air personality for Radio Disney. "It's really amazing to see, especially on my end, hearing all the calls from the listeners. ... So that fever is definitely growing for sure."

It's reminiscent of a time when 'N Sync battled the Backstreet Boys as music's top act, selling millions of albums and concert tickets, thanks to the millions of girls who invested time, their parents' money and screamed pleas for their favorite boy band. 'N Sync and the Backstreet Boys, who rose to fame in the 1990s and carried that through the new millennium, were followed by others successful boy bands, such as 98 Degrees, O-Town and Dream Street.

Before that, it was New Edition who exploded on the scene in the 1980s, followed by the massive success of New Kids on the Block. And before that, there was the Jackson Five and the Osmonds, and so on.

The Jonas Brothers made it big in the mid-2000s with its hit Disney TV series, films and albums. They started to fade years later, though, as the oldest, Kevin, got married, and Joe and Nick launched solo careers.

But now, there are various boy bands releasing music simultaneously, helping drive each other to the top of the charts.

"It's giving us that little competition that makes us want to go further and excel further than we are right now," said 22-year-old Carlos Pena Jr. of Big Time Rush.

"It's cool to see more boy bands, but us, Mindless Behavior, we want to show the fans what we got," said Mindless Behavior's Prodigy, who is 15. Roc Royal and Princeton — both 14 — and Ray Ray, 15, round out the group.

Big Time Rush recently had its TV film, "Big Time Movie," reach over 13.1 million total viewers when it debuted on Nickelodeon two weeks ago. They also released an EP of the same name to accompany the film, which features cover versions of classic Beatles songs.

The group members said they weren't excited about being coined a "boy band" when they debuted in late 2009.

"We hated that term to start with," 21-year-old James Maslow said.

"Because the term hadn't come back yet," added Kendall Schmidt, 21. "We kind of feel like we paved the way for it to come back."

The foursome — which includes Logan Henderson — has released two albums. Their last tour featured One Direction as the opening act.

"We want to support other boy bands as well because we really want that whole genre to come back," Maslow said.

Other boy bands on the verge include Midnight Red, formed by RedOne, the producer behind Lady Gaga hits like "Just Dance," "Poker Face" and "Bad Romance." Midnight Run will release a single next month, and an album later this year. Beyonce, who recently launched her production company Parkwood Entertainment, said she plans on putting together her own boy band. And the British quartet JLS, the runners-up on the U.K.'s "X Factor" in 2008, has released three top-selling albums in Europe, collecting five No. 1s; they have plans to release music in America.

"There's always going to be a market out there for teenage girls and girls in their early twenties that have this desire (for boy bands) ... and eventually they grow with the bands," said Howie Dorough of the Backstreet Boys, who recently released his solo debut, "Back to Me."

The Wanted, whose members range in age from 18 to 23, has released two albums in the United Kingdom; its U.S. debut is out on April 24. At last month's Brit Awards, The Wanted's "All Time Low" lost best British single to One Direction's "What Makes You Beautiful," currently No. 28 on the Billboard chart. One Direction, whose youngest member is 18 and oldest is 20, have signed up to do a Nickelodeon show and will perform at next month's Kids Choice Awards; Big Time Rush is also slated to perform.

Radio Disney's Ernie D. says the new crop of boy bands are finding success much faster than groups in the past.

"The way it's happening now, it's a little more sudden than last time. Because back then you had to build your fan base, get a following. Now with all social media, you have a fan base immediately ... (and) as soon as you nail that fan base, you're on the rise for sure," he said.

"Bands like One Direction and The Wanted, they're just coming out of nowhere and it's kind of taking everybody by surprise."





7.4 quake shakes Mexico, 100s of homes damaged

KATHERINE CORCORAN
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY A strong 7.4-magnitude earthquake hit southern Mexico on Tuesday, damaging some 800 homes near the epicenter and swaying tall buildings and spreading fear and panic hundreds of miles away in the capital of Mexico City.

One of the strongest to shake Mexico since the deadly 1985 temblor that killed thousands in Mexico City, Tuesday's earthquake hit hardest in border area of southern Oaxaca and Guerrero states. In Guerrero, officials confirmed that some 800 homes had been damaged, with another 60 having collapsed.

Hours after the shaking at noon local time (18:02 GMT), there were still no reports of death or serious injury, even after a less powerful, magnitude-5.1 aftershock was felt in the capital and several other aftershocks near the epicenter in a mountainous rural region.

"It was very strong, very substantial," said Campos Benitez, hospital director in Ometepec, about 15 miles (25 kilometers) from the epicenter.

Guerrero Gov. Angel Aguirre, who is from Ometepec, was headed there to survey the damage and ordered emergency crews and civil protection to the area to help with the damage. The state did not say how many were displaced.

In Mexico City, frightened workers and residents poured into the streets of the capital. Telephone service was down in the city and throughout the area where the quake was felt and some neighborhoods were without power, according to Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard, who set up a hotline for people to report damage.

A pedestrian bridge collapsed on an empty transit bus.

About 40 passengers were stranded for a short time on the Mexico City airport air train, but later released. The airport closed for a time but officials said there was no runway damage and they resumed operations.

Samantha Rodriguez, a 37-year old environmental consultant, was evacuated from the 11th floor on the Angel Tower office building.

"I thought it was going to pass rapidly but the walls began to thunder and we decided to get out," she said.

Mexico City, built on a lake bed, was badly damaged in 1985 when an 8.1 earthquake killed at least 10,000 people. In past years, Guerrero has suffered several severe earthquakes, including a 7.9 in 1957 which killed an estimated 68 people, and a 7.4 in 1995 which left three dead.

Tuesday's quake was the strongest shaking felt in the capital since a magnitude-6.5 earthquake struck also in Guerrero in December. Officials said at least three people died in Guerrero, but there were no reports of widespread damage.

A magnitude-8.0 quake near Manzanillo on Mexico's central Pacific coast killed 51 people in 1995 and a magintude-7.5 quake killed at least 20 people in the southern state of Oaxaca in 1999.

In Huajuapan, Guerrero, near the epicenter, hotel manager Marco Antonio Estrada also reported shaken-up guests but no major damage. He said it was longest and strongest he ever felt. People ran out of their homes and cars.

"It was very strong, but we didn't see anything fall," said Irma Ortiz, who runs a guesthouse in Oaxaca. She said their telephones are down, and that the quake shook them side-to-side.

U.S. President Barack Obama's oldest daughter, Malia, was reported and safe while on vacation with a school group in Oaxaca.

The U.S. Geological Survey set the preliminary magnitude of the first quake at 7.4 and said the epicenter was 11 miles underground. The survey set the aftershock at 5.1.

Seismologists and civil protection officials said there didn't appear to be heavy damage or casualties because of where and how the earthquake hit.

There were reports of damaged buildings but none collapsed on the Oaxaca side of the border, said civil protection spokeswoman Cynthia Tovar said. Authorities believed that the absence of tall buildings in the area is one reason.

Another factor may be the high frequency of earthquakes in the region, said USGS seismologist Susan Hoover.

There have been 15 earthquakes of magnitude 7 or stronger since 1973 within 310 miles (500 kilometers) of Tuesday's quake. Weaker buildings collapse with each quake, leaving a cadre of stronger ones that can withstand the shaking.

"Another factor to consider is how tested an area has been," Hoover said.

Also limiting damage was that much less energy was released in Tuesday's quake than in 1985.

Victor Hugo Espindola Castro, a seismologist with Mexico's national service, said the difference was of a three-to-one margin.

"Many of the buildings that were damaged in 1985 were poorly constructed and from that came the new building regulations, so that now buildings are stronger," he said.

Groups of women hugged and cried at Mexico City's Angel of Independence monument, where hundreds of people evacuated from office buildings said they never had felt such a strong earthquake. Others typed ferociously on their BlackBerrys.

Mexico City's airport was closed for a short time but there was no damage to runways and operations were returning to normal.

In Oaxaca, Sylvia Valencia was teaching Spanish to five adult students at the Vinigulaza language school when the earthquake hit.

"Some of us sat down, others ran out," she said. "It was hard, it was strong and it was long."

After the shaking stopped, however, she said they found no damage, not in their own classrooms, nor outside in the historical center of the city, so they went back to class.

Celia Galicia, who works at the U.S. consular office in Oaxaca, had just flown in from Mexico City when it hit.

She said there was panic in the airport, and a dash for the doors. But she said that she saw no damage at the airport and no one was hurt. She says one building in downtown Oaxaca appears to be damaged and has been evacuated.

She added that they've had two strong aftershocks, and that in downtown Oaxaca most people are out on the street at this point.

"It started shaking badly," she said.

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MLB

Pujols gives Angels reason to think big

GREG BEACHAM

AP Sports Writer

ANAHEIM, Calif. Albert Pujols is getting to work early and staying late at spring training. He's honing his famed swing and getting to know his new teammates, fastidiously preparing to give a full return on the biggest investment the Los Angeles Angels have ever made.

The Angels can't wait to reap the dividends during the most anticipated season in franchise history.

The three-time NL MVP doesn't appear to be missing a beat in his transition to the AL this spring, sliding into the heart of the Angels' order with the same work ethic and power that enticed Los Angeles owner Arte Moreno to commit $240 million to the Dominican slugger over the next 10 years.

"Everybody here knows what I can do and, if I'm healthy, I'm going to try to do that," Pujols said. "I don't know what kind of numbers I can put up this year because I don't get caught up in numbers, but I can tell you I'm going to give 110 percent for sure every day to help this organization to win. ... All I can do is go out there and get myself ready every day."

While he prepares in Arizona, Pujols is at the center of the Angels' marketing efforts all over Southern California, with eye-catching billboards only featuring the slugger's back in a No. 5 jersey and a few simple slogans, often "El Hombre."

Pujols didn't like that concept, saying it was too close to revered Cardinals slugger Stan "The Man" Musial. Still, it's tough to blame the Angels for crowing over their pickup — particularly in Hollywood or the San Fernando Valley, where baseball fans in the longtime Dodgers strongholds might be coaxed down the I-5 freeway to get a look at arguably the greatest slugger of his generation.

"He works hard at everything," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "I think a guy with his talent, they have the talent, but there's a reason they play to such a high level. It doesn't surprise us that he works this hard."

Pujols isn't the only new addition that's looking good for the Angels, who changed general managers and reloaded their roster after finishing 10 games behind Texas in the AL West standings last season and missing the playoffs in consecutive years for the first time in a decade. Even though the Angels had another winning season and even outdrew the Dodgers with more than 3 million fans at Angel Stadium, Moreno paid top dollar for even more elite talent.

Left-hander C.J. Wilson, who got $77.5 million in a five-year deal that became below-the-fold news when Pujols signed hours later at the winter meetings, has been sharp so far in his hometown club's deep rotation alongside Jered Weaver, Dan Haren and Ervin Santana.

Catcher Chris Iannetta appears ready to shore up the Angels' most deficient position last season, working with his new pitching staff and providing more offense than the players he replaced after arriving in a trade with Colorado.

And the Angels might even figure out a way to get more production at third base. Mark Trumbo, who led the Angels in homers and RBIs last season as a rookie first baseman, has looked fairly sharp across the diamond at third this spring, although he's still adjusting to the new position.

"You don't call it the hot corner for nothing," Trumbo said.

The Angels are even cautiously optimistic they'll add another talented bat to their lineup this year — one they haven't seen in nearly two years. Kendrys Morales, the Cuban slugger who broke his ankle jumping on home plate in early 2010, was expected to return to spring games this week.

If Morales' recovery goes well, the Angels would have three power-hitting first basemen on their roster, either giving them impressive depth or ample ingredients for a trade.

The Angels' rotation appears rock-solid, but the final spot is still open. Jerome Williams, the right-hander who revitalized his career with a late-season surge last fall, hasn't been able to pitch for two weeks after straining his hamstring, leaving Scioscia sorting among prospects Garrett Richards, Trevor Bell, Eric Hurley and Brad Mills for a fifth starter.

The bullpen, an Angels strength for most of the previous decade, was decidedly average last year. Los Angeles added LaTroy Hawkins for $3 million, while fellow veteran Jason Isringhausen is attempting to pitch his way onto the roster. Closer Jordan Walden earned an All-Star berth and 32 saves as a rookie last year, but also blew 10 saves.

But with a long season ahead, the Angels appear to have everything necessary to earn a postseason spot. Outfielder Torii Hunter, the Angels' emotional leader and unofficial team captain, can't remember being this excited for a season to begin since he was a youngster with the Minnesota Twins many years ago.

"It's starting to get more intense," Hunter said. "There's a lot of chemistry formed down here. Every player is trying to get in a rhythm, and we want to take that into the season."

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MLB

Dodgers near end of McCourt era

BETH HARRIS
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES The Dodgers head into a new season nearing the end of the Frank McCourt era, with a sale of the team scheduled to be finalized by the end of April.

It will be a welcome change for the front office, the team and its fans, who stayed away in droves in 2011 when off-the-field developments overshadowed anything Clayton Kershaw, Matt Kemp and the Dodgers did on it. As owner, McCourt fought with his former wife, Jamie; Commissioner Bud Selig; and his creditors, tying up the team's purse strings.

"It will be good to get another chapter going," general manager Ned Colletti said. "These have been a different couple of years, but change is coming."

McCourt gets to select the winner of the bankruptcy auction from among potential ownership groups cleared by Major League Baseball. The sale is due to be closed April 30, coinciding with the deadline for him to make a $131 million divorce settlement payment to Jamie.

The team's future finances will be determined by new ownership, while Colletti and second-year manager Don Mattingly, both hired by previous regimes, will find themselves at the whim of whomever takes control of a storied franchise fallen on hard times. The Dodgers finished third in the NL West with an 82-79 record last year and missed the postseason for the second straight year.

With nothing at stake in September, Mattingly rallied the Dodgers to play hard. They won nine of their final 12 games to finish above .500 and avoid the club's first back-to-back losing seasons since 1986-87.

"It's pretty easy for me to keep focused on where we're trying to go," Mattingly said about the ownership chaos. "My priority in the whole thing was to get our club to play the best baseball that we could. Obviously, it's a distraction but it's not something that you can control or worry about."

Colletti had a limited budget in the offseason, opposite of the situation down Interstate 5 in Anaheim. The Angels grabbed the headlines by signing coveted free agents Albert Pujols and C.J. Wilson, with owner Arte Moreno shelling out millions to lock up Pujols for 10 years and Wilson for five.

The Dodgers, meanwhile, used the money they saved by letting pitcher Hiroki Kuroda go to sign veteran pitchers Chris Capuano and Aaron Harang. They'll round out a rotation led by Kershaw, the NL Cy Young Award winner, along with Chad Billingsley and Ted Lilly.

Kershaw and Kemp provided the Dodgers' highlights last year, and they are the bedrock of a roster that new ownership can build around once there's money to chase big-name free agents in 2013.

"It's guys like Clayton who have to go out and show that they can do it again," Mattingly said.

Kershaw led the majors with a 2.28 ERA, tied for the NL lead with 21 wins and topped the league with 248 strikeouts. The 23-year-old left-hander is eager to move on to this season.

"All that stuff's over with," he said. "I'm getting to the point where I'm more and more comfortable. I'm still the young guy on the staff. We still have four veteran guys in there. Experience-wise I'm still not anywhere close to those guys."

Kemp hit .324, led the NL with 39 home runs and had a major league-leading 126 RBIs, losing the NL MVP award to Milwaukee's Ryan Braun. Along the way, he earned a Gold Glove award, stole 40 bases and matured into a complete player.

Can Kemp equal or his surpass those numbers this season?

"Anything's possible, man, that's just the way I look at it," he said.

Two veterans who will be expected to deliver are right fielder Andre Ethier and first baseman James Loney.

Ethier started last year promisingly enough with a 30-game hitting streak over April and May. But he dealt with an injured right knee in the second half, when his numbers tailed off, and surgery cut his season short. The two-time All-Star has fully recovered, but whether he regains his power has yet to be seen. Ethier had 23 homers each of the last two seasons.

Loney took a long time to get going, eventually, hitting .388 with seven homers in his last 35 games and will retain his starting job. He was arrested in the offseason on suspicion of driving under the influence, but charges were not filed.

Ethier and Loney need big seasons to help both the Dodgers and themselves. Both are eligible for free agency after the season.

The bullpen remains an issue, with Javy Guerra and Kenley Jansen sharing the closers role last season. Guerra had 21 saves in 23 chances as a rookie, while Jansen struck out 96 batters in 52 2-3 innings.

The Dodgers added Mark Ellis, Jerry Hairston Jr. and Adam Kennedy to their infield in the offseason, with Ellis likely the starter at second base. Shortstop Dee Gordon showed promise as a rookie, stealing 24 bases. Juan Uribe will likely start at third, trying to put behind a disappointing 2011 in which he was bothered by a hip flexor and missed the final month of the season.

"The guys that we have coming back from last year either do what they did last year or just stay healthy and we'll be great," Kershaw predicted. "The guys that we added can only help us, so I think we've got a good shot. Especially if we can build off the last month and a half, two months of the season and remember what that felt like."

The Dodgers open the season April 4 at San Diego. Their home opener is April 10 against Pittsburgh.

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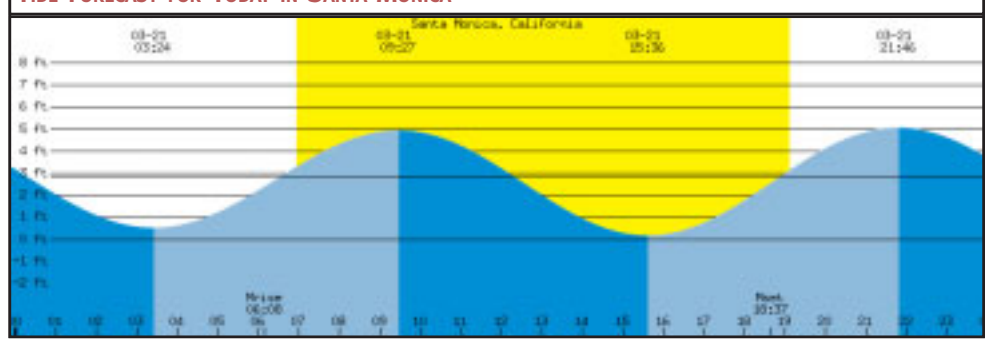
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QUICK STATS (for the last 30 days)
Number of sewage spills -- 1
Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
Number of wet days -- 8
Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 28 / 16
Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 0 / 10

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

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth.	A	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth.	A	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Los Alisos creeks.	ns	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach.	A+	ns
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth.	A+	ns
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth.	A	ns
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private).	A+	ns
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	ns
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach.	A+	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth.	F	ns
Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach.	A+	ns
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth.	A+	ns
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 21672 Malibu Rd.	A	ns
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence.	A	ns
Surfrider Beach (breach location) - daily.	F	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east.	A	ns
Corbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon.	A+	ns
Los Flores State Beach at Los Flores Creek (point zero).	A+	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs.	B	ns
Pena Creek at Los Tunas County Beach.	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon.	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth.	D	ns
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17208 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain).	A+	ns

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

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

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

Heal the Bay

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

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

MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(310) 260-1528

Germaine (NR) 1hr 50min
7:30pm
Belgian beer reception to follow the screening.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade
(888) 262-4386

Hugo 3D (PG) 2hrs 07min
1:45pm, 4:50pm

Wanderlust (R) 1hr 38min
7:45pm, 10:15pm

Seeking Justice (R) 1hr 45min
1:40pm, 4:40pm, 7:30pm, 10:10pm

Being Flynn (R) 1hr 42min
1:30pm, 4:20pm, 7:15pm, 9:45pm

Silent House (R) 1hr 28min
1:55pm, 4:30pm, 7:00pm, 9:30pm

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 451-9440

Thousand Words (PG-13) 1hr 31min
11:55am, 2:30pm, 5:00pm, 7:35pm, 10:10pm

John Carter in Disney Digital 3D (PG-13) 2hrs 19min
12:15pm, 3:30pm, 7:00pm, 10:15pm

21 Jump Street (R) 1hr 49min
11:45am, 1:45pm, 2:45pm, 4:40pm, 5:40pm, 7:30pm, 8:30pm, 10:30pm

Safe House (R) 1hr 57min
11:20am, 2:00pm, 4:50pm, 7:45pm, 10:30pm

Project X (R) 1hr 28min
11:30am, 2:05pm, 4:40pm, 7:15pm, 9:50pm

Dr. Seuss' The Lorax 3D (PG) 1hr 35min
11:15am, 1:30pm, 4:05pm, 6:40pm, 9:15pm

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 478-3836

Boy (NR) 1hr 27min
4:10pm, 10:15pm

Salt of Life (Gianni e le donne) (NR) 1hr 30min
3:35pm, 5:45pm, 8:00pm

Artist (PG-13) 1hr 40min
1:00pm, 10:10pm

Separation (Jodaeiye Nader az Simin) (PG-13) 2hrs 03min
1:20pm, 7:10pm

Decoy Bride (NR) 1hr 29min
1:10pm, 3:15pm, 5:25pm, 7:40pm, 9:55pm

AMC Criterion 6
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

Dr. Seuss' The Lorax (PG) 1hr 35min
11:50am, 2:20pm, 4:45pm, 7:20pm, 9:55pm

John Carter (PG-13) 2hrs 19min
11:30am, 2:30pm, 6:00pm, 9:15pm

Jeff, Who Lives at Home (R) 1hr 23min
11:55am, 2:30pm, 4:50pm, 7:15pm, 9:45pm

Friends With Kids (R) 1hr 40min
11:30am, 2:15pm, 5:00pm, 7:45pm, 10:20pm

Salmon Fishing in the Yemen (PG-13) 1hr 52min
11:30am, 1:55pm, 4:40pm, 7:30pm, 10:10pm

Casa de mi Padre (R) 1hr 24min
11:45am, 2:10pm, 4:30pm, 7:00pm, 9:30pm

For more information, e-mail news@smdp.com

Get some extra R&R, Sag

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★ Keep your own counsel, as you have much to think about. You could cause more change by doing nothing at this point. The situation in question could transform radically. Get into an intense conversation and exchange ideas. Tonight: Make it early.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Others will respond well to your calls and inquiries. Loved ones and friends actively seek you out because they know how much you have to offer. Keep some opinions to yourself. Should you decide to share, choose a trusted partner. Tonight: Where you want to be.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You have excellent ideas and a lot to offer. Others appreciate your sharing nature, but be prepared to take the lead. Use care with new acquaintances. You will have a tendency to attract people who are emotionally unavailable. Tonight: To the wee hours.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Keep reaching out for someone who has more expertise. Feedback can only help you make better decisions. You also might want to do more research and speak to more people. Tonight: Feed your mind and hop on the Internet.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Somehow, you have a way with a key person in your life that adds to the positive vibes. Count on this person's support, and acknowledge his or her level of caring. Communication sizzles. You will want more information once you hear some news. Tonight: Be with a favorite person.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ If you let others take the lead, you will free up a lot of time and enjoy yourself so much more. You have an opportunity or open window. You can only gain from the experience; it could be a real eye-opener. Tonight: Out.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Your ability to defer to others and see situations differently from the majority could become a problem. In an open discussion with a partner, loved one or close friend, share some of your reticence and thoughts. Tonight: Sort through offers.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Keeping your feet on the ground could take a lot of work. Your present inclination will be to float from this thought to that topic. If you can, go off and follow your imagination. Tonight: Make plans with a loved one.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ You could be tenser than you would like. Someone you care about might be draining you without intending to. Be caring, but establish boundaries. Check on a matter involving your home. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Your creativity and caring only add to your interactions. A loved one, child or potential flirtation responds well to a conversation. Focus some of this dynamic energy on a project -- it could be golf; it could be work. Tonight: Go with the moment.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★ Remain sensitive to your budget. Before you make a purchase for your home, do some intense price comparison. You might see an alternative or decide to wait. Trust your decision-making ability. Tonight: Spend time with a family member.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ No more excuses. Move on a key matter. You might be delighted by what you hear and by someone's enthusiasm. Express your appreciation in a manner that can be heard. Understanding evolves between the two of you. Tonight: Celebrate the moment.

Happy birthday

This year your wit, mental agility and resourcefulness come together in an unprecedented manner. Whatever you touch seems to work, yet there is a current of the unexpected that runs through your life. People recognize your abilities and enjoy tossing ideas at you. If you are single, romance could be very exciting but unstable. Change is a constant in life that often creates excitement. If you are attached, the two of you seem to grow closer together. This is a year that will be instrumental to your relationship. You might be strengthening the foundations. ARIES is always ready for a challenge.

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



MYSTERY PHOTO

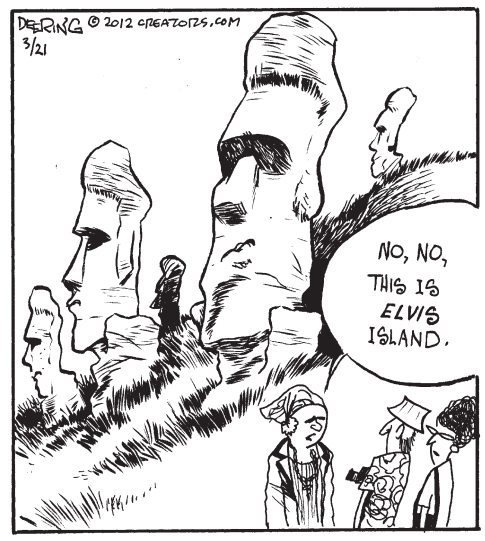
Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to *editor@smdp.com*. Send your mystery photos to *editor@smdp.com* to be used in future issues.

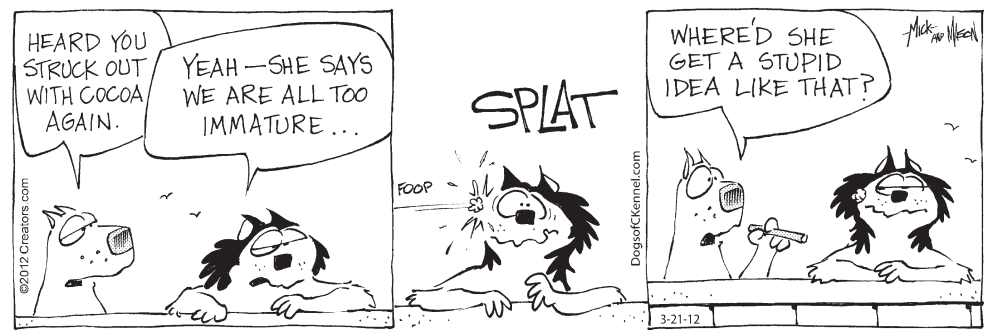
Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



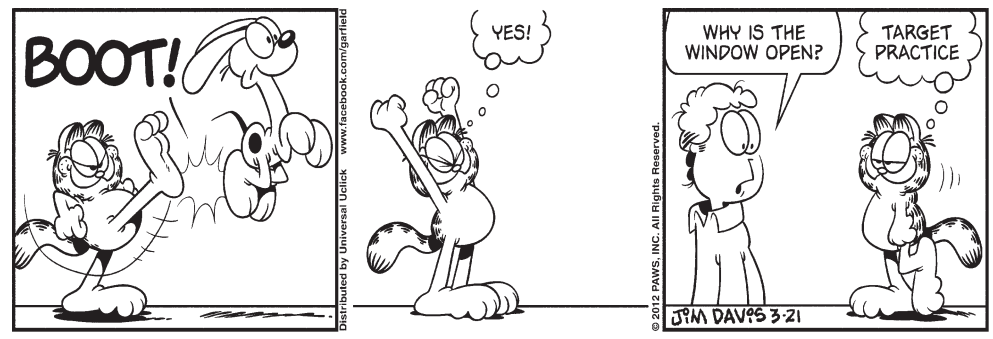
Strange Brew
By John Deering



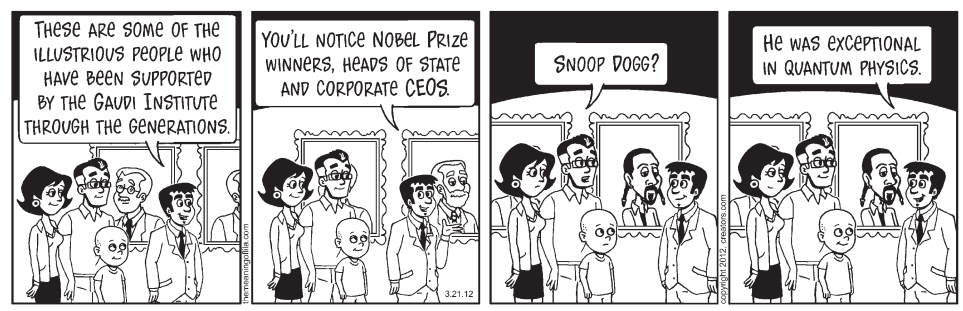
Dogs of C-Kennel
By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



Garfield
By Jim Davis



The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



Sudoku

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 First person
5 Valley
9 Paraphrase
11 Flatten
12 Cow of commercials
13 "The Vampire Diaries" heroine
14 Maiden name label
15 Originally
17 As soon as seen
19 Golf support
20 Lauder of cosmetics
21 Cart puller
22 Blunder
24 Sandwich choice
26 "— Pretty"
29 Buddy
30 Culpable
32 Now and then
34 "Norma —"
35 Augusta's state
36 Short jackets
38 "Reversal of Fortune" star
39 Go — (decay)
40 Start of a German count
41 Clutter

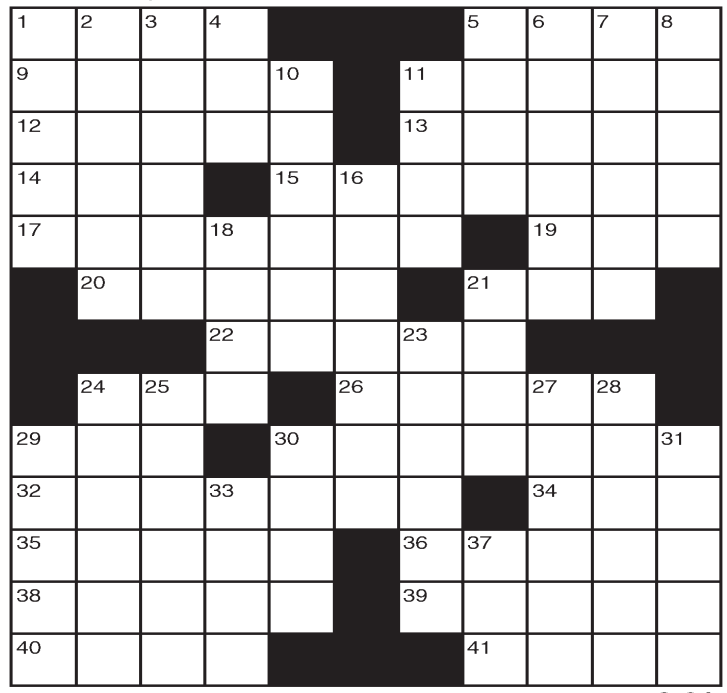
DOWN

1 Fight site
2 Strike out
3 Rate
4 Month after avril
5 Sandwich shop
6 Wards off
7 Eye parts
8 Gladden
10 Test pilot Chuck
11 Departed
16 2011 Anthony Hopkins movie
18 Gossip bit
21 Bailiwick
23 Printing method
24 1962 John Wayne film
25 Director's cry
27 Atlas section
28 Bolivian plains
29 Dwight's wife
30 Iowa city
31 Lab work
33 Travel stops
37 Male turkey

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

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



3-21

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• Insert the given numbers in the empty squares so when they are calculated in threes from left to right and top to bottom they satisfy the demands in the shaded boxes both horizontally and vertically.

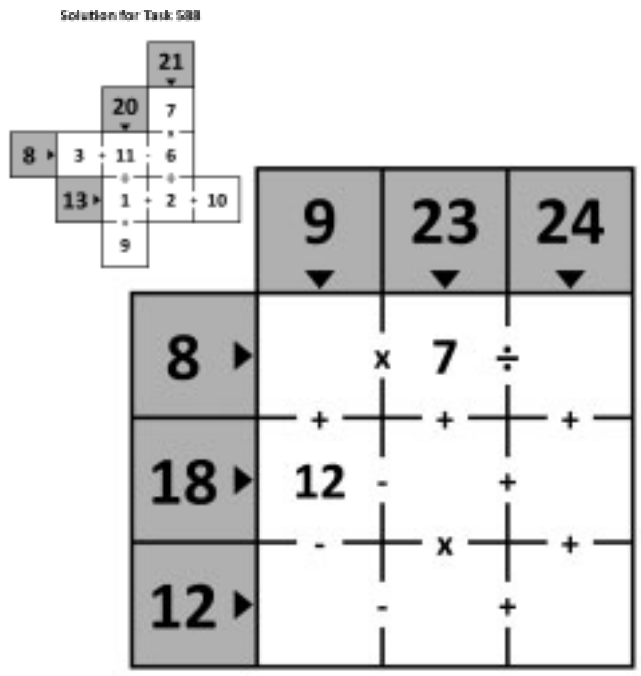
• Each empty square dictates the math operation that must be performed to meet the demands.

• Remember to multiply or divide before you add or subtract.

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Fill in the empty fields with the given numbers so when calculated together they satisfy all Equas in the gray boxes:

2, 7, 8, 8, 8, 9, 11



DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date:
Meganumber:
Jackpot:

SUPER LOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 3/17
2 13 20 25 37
Meganumber: 15
Jackpot: $13M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 3/20
6 12 14 30 33

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 3/20
MIDDAY: 2 0 9
EVENING: 7 0 7

SANTA ANITA PARK
Draw Date: 3/20
1st: 09 Winning Spirit
2nd: 06 Whirl Win
3rd: 08 Gorgeous George
RACE TIME: 1:41.99

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ An annual spring fertility festival in Vietnam's Phu Tho province is capped by a symbolic X-rated ceremony rendered G-rated by wooden stand-ins. At midnight on the 12th day of the lunar new year, a man holding a wooden phallus-like object stands in total darkness alongside a woman holding a wooden plank with a hole in it, and the act is attempted. As the tradition goes, if the man is successful at penetration, then there will be good crops. Following the ceremony, villagers are ordered to "go and be free," which, according to a February report by Thanh Nien News Service, means uninhibited friskiness during the lights-out period. [Thanh Nien News (Ho Chi Minh City), 2-9-2012]

■ In a tradition believed to have originated in the eighth century, the village of San Bartolome de Pinares, Spain, marks each Jan. 16 with the festival of Saint Anthony, commenced in style by villagers riding their horses through large fires in the streets ("Las Luminarias"). As horses jump the flames, according to belief, they become purified, demons are destroyed, and fertility and good health result. (Apparently, no horses are harmed, and an on-the-scene priest blesses each for its courage.) [ABC News, 1-17-2012]

TODAY IN HISTORY

1919 - The Hungarian Soviet Republic is established becoming the first Communist government to be formed in Europe after the October Revolution in Russia.

1921 - The New Economic Policy is implemented by the Bolshevik Party in response to the economic failure as a result of War Communism.

1925 - Syngman Rhee is removed from office after being impeached as the President of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea.

WORD UP!

vernal
\ VUR-nl \ , adjective;
1. Appearing or occurring in spring. 2. Of or pertaining to spring.

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NUMBER: 2012025398 ORIGINAL FILING This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES on 02/13/2012 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as SOUTH BAY FINANCIAL SERVICES, SOUTH BAY INSURANCE SERVICES, SOUTH BAY PROFESSIONAL CENTER, SOUTH BAY SEMINARS, SOUTH BAY TAX ASSOCIATES. The full name of registrant(s) is/are: Charles Frederick Hawekotte 1050 Panorama Dr. Arcadia, CA 91007. This Business is being conducted by: an Individual. The registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above. /s/:Charles Frederick Hawekotte. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 02/13/2012. 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 03/14/2012, 03/21/2012, 03/28/2012, 04/04/2012.

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SANTA MONICA - two room office suite in garden bldg. Approx. 350 square feet. 30th near Ocean Park Boulevard. $1050.00/month. Includes utilities and parking. (310) 456-7031 X175.

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FACT:
911 Assist, a new feature, uses the driver's phone to call 9-1-1 if a crash occurs and an airbag deploys. Unlike competitors, Ford does not charge for this service and the call goes directly to a 9-1-1 operator, rather than a third party. Ford partnered with the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) to improve the delivery of this critically important emergency service.

FACT:
Also new, the Vehicle Health Report. Because SYNC is voice-activated, the driver can simply ask for a report to get diagnostics and schedule maintenance reminders delivered online. Current owners can also upgrade their system to add these new features.



Ron Davis
Owner
General Manager

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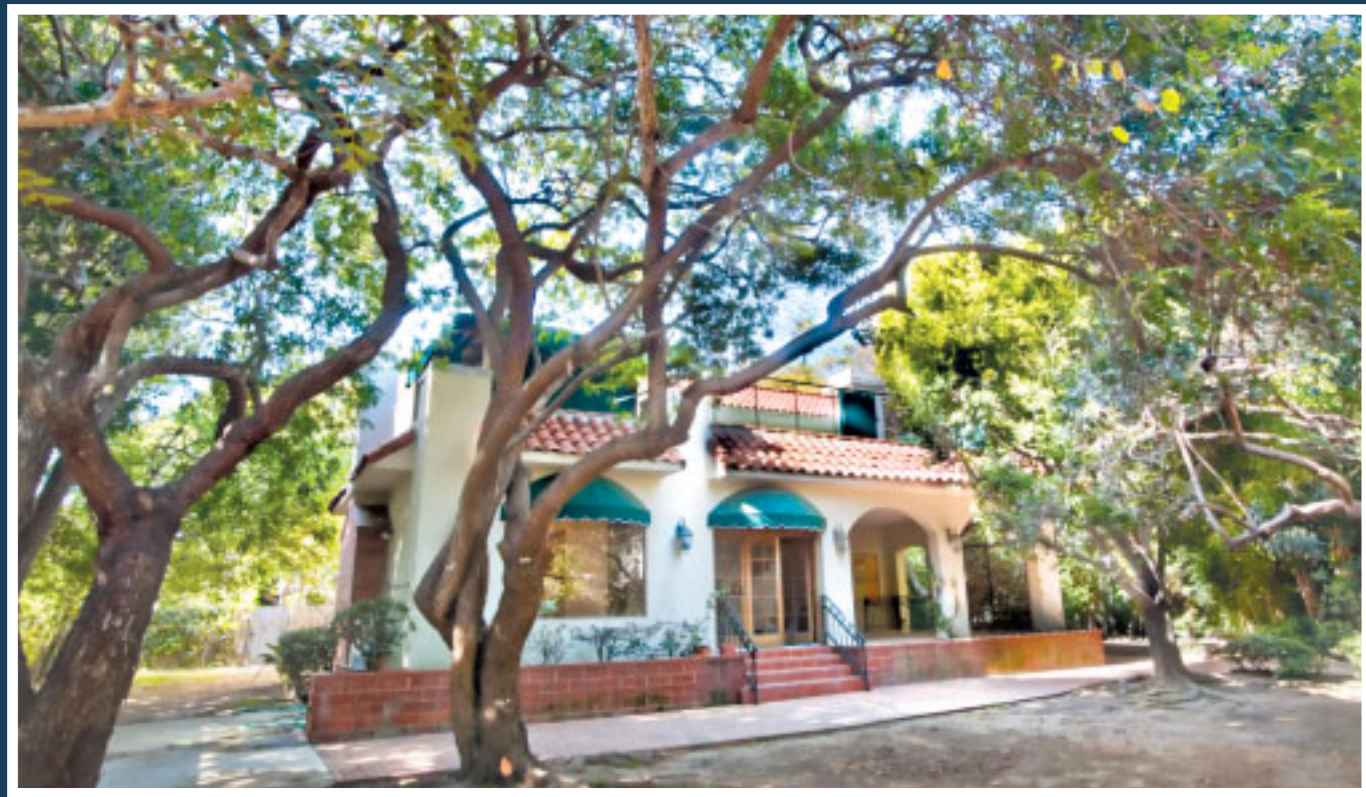
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