

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

10 16 27 41 43
Meganumber: 21
Jackpot: \$42 Million

FANTASY 5

1 2 24 28 37

DAILY 3

Daytime: 7 2 1
Evening: 3 5 1

DAILY DERBY

1st: 01 Gold Rush
2nd: 06 Whirl Win
3rd: 02 Lucky Star

RACE TIME: 1:47.13

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

According to a January Associated Press dispatch, an outfit called Rent-a-Priest supplies independent Catholic clergy to perform mass and communion on board cruise ships, even though the reason some are independent is that they're no longer in good standing. (The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said it has begun to screen out unqualified candidates for cruise line jobs.)

In a January CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll, in answer to the question whether President Bush is a "uniter" or a "divider," exactly 49 percent of Americans said he was a uniter, and exactly 49 percent said he was a divider.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 81st day of 2005.
There are 284 days left in the year.

On March 22, 1765, Britain enacted the Stamp Act to raise money from the American colonies. (The Act was repealed the following year.)

In 1933, during Prohibition, President Franklin Roosevelt signed a measure to make wine and beer containing up to 3.2 percent alcohol legal.

In 1946, the British mandate in Transjordan came to an end.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Kindness consists in loving people more than they deserve."

JOSEPH JOUBERT
FRENCH MORALIST (1754-1824)

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Jury finds pair guilty in July 4 shoot-out

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN LA — Two gang members who ignited a violent stand-off with police five years ago, during which five people were shot and 15 taken hostage on the Santa Monica Pier, were found guilty Monday of nearly 50 total charges for a crime spree that began two months prior to the Fourth of July shoot-out.

Jurors today are expected to hear arguments from both sides on whether Oswaldo Amezcua and Joseph Flores should be sentenced to death.

The five-hour standoff began after midnight on July 4, 2000, and ended in the morning dawn with the surrender of Amezcua, a convicted felon wanted in connection with five other slayings. Three Santa Monica police officers and two civilians were shot amid the violent impasse on the pier.

The jury had deliberated for five days prior to announcing the hour-long verdict at the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center in downtown Los Angeles. Amezcua, 29, and Flores, 34, appeared unmoved by the guilty verdicts. The two men, bedecked in orange prison uniforms, talked to each other and their lawyers during the reading. Amezcua faced the jury, occasionally turning his head to stare at the audience while the verdict was read. Flores faced the judge.

Approximately 15 people came to hear the verdict, some of whom were law enforcement officials and members of the media.

KTTV was granted permission to film the verdict, after Deputy District Attorney Darren Levine made the case to Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert J.

See **GUILTY**, page 6



Kim Calvert/Special to the Daily Press

WHAT'S THE BUZZ? Santa Monica firefighters hose down a bee-laden tree on the 1400 block of the Third Street Promenade on Monday. Firefighters used a combination of water and foam to extract the swarm from their makeshift hive. Portions of the Promenade were closed down temporarily.

Bees 'N' the hood: Hive closes Promenade

BY KIM CALVERT

Special to the Daily Press

THIRD STREET — A swarm of bees in a small tree in the 1400 block of Third Street Promenade resulted in a portion of the area being closed down on Monday while the Santa Monica Fire Department hosed the insects with a mixture of water and foam.

"The foam coats the wings of the bees, making it impossible for them to fly," said Santa

Monica Fire Battalion Chief Carl Bjerke, who was at the scene.

Bjerke said the bees, which fell to the base of the tree, would most likely die and until then, the area would be roped off with yellow tape.

Los Angeles County Vector Control also was at the scene to see if any of the bees were "africanized." Vector Control is in charge of handling the county's encephalitis, Lyme disease, Africanized honeybees, and other vector-borne diseases and vector

related problems.

Bjerke said he doubted the bees were africanized, but given the public scare about "killer bees" it was normal procedure to test bees that exhibited unusual behavior or caused public complaints.

Fire Chief Jim Hone said bee swarms frequently happen in the spring when a new queen bee is hatched in an existing hive and must leave to establish her own hive. Other bees follow the new queen, resulting in a swarm at a new location.

Homeless man stands trial for 1998 murder

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN LA — A Santa Monica homeless man charged with the murder of a woman nearly seven years ago began his trial Monday, without an attorney or a jury.

David Thomas Wright was charged with murder for allegedly killing Aviva Labbe, then a 20 year-old woman who authorities

found dead on June 14, 1998. Labbe was found wearing a dark blouse and maroon sweatpants, lying face down in a walkway on the 200 block of Hill Street, at a vacant Santa Monica home.

Labbe's murder had been classified as a "cold case" and remained unsolved for nearly four years until a sampling of Wright's DNA linked him in 2002 to the murder through the U.S. Depart-

ment of Justice's database system, authorities said. Convicted felons are required to give a DNA sample, which puts them in the database for authorities to periodically check.

Wright, 49, was found in the California state prison system serving a six-year sentence for battery of a Santa Monica police

See **COLD CASE**, page 6

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Ready and Agle: Interim planning director named

By Daily Press staff

City Manager Susan E. McCarthy has named Andy Agle acting director of the city's planning and community development department while a search for a successor to Suzanne Frick, who is leaving Santa Monica for a similar position in the city of Long Beach, is conducted.

Agle has been with the city for seven years, as assistant director of the department. Prior to that, Agle was a project manager for the city of Anaheim Redevelopment Agency, and project manager and advisor for several regional planning and transportation agencies. He has a B.A. in economics from Pomona College and a master's degree in public affairs and urban and regional planning from Princeton University. In his capacity as assistant director, he has overseen a variety of interdepartmental projects for the city, including the master development plan for the Civic Center; design of the public safety facility; development agreement for the RAND corporate headquarters, and design of the new civic center parking facility which has just begun construction.

Democrats go on the defensive

By Daily Press staff

Local Democrats are rallying around what they believe is a threat to their freedom as Americans.

The Santa Monica Democratic Club later this month will consider action regarding the perceived threat to Americans' civil liberties, the Bill of Rights, and the U.S. Constitution through what they describe as an abuse of the Federal Patriot Act.

The featured speaker, Stephen Rohde, is a constitutional lawyer, lecturer and writer. He is past president of Southern California American Civil Liberties Union, and of the Beverly Hills Bar Association. He is a frequent speaker to bar associations, universities, and religious organizations regarding the possible threat to civil liberties and what can be done to restore them.

He is the author of "American Words of Freedom," which explores the origins, history and meaning of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The event will be held in the community room at St. Anne's Church, 20th Street and Colorado Boulevard, on Wednesday, March 30, at 7 p.m.

Free parking is available and the public is welcome at no charge. Refreshments will be served.

Einstein's theory not rocket science

By Daily Press staff

As part of the celebration of its 75th anniversary, Santa Monica College will present a special feature show, "Einstein's Universe," in the college's Friday night astronomy series in April and May.

The feature show takes a look at Einstein's theory of relativity, which 100 years ago launched a scientific revolution that led to the discovery of warped space, black holes, the Big Bang and more.

"Einstein's Revolution" is scheduled for 8 p.m. on April 1, 8 and 22 and May 6 and 13.

The guest lecture in April will be "Galactic Train Wrecks." UCLA researcher Sarah Gallagher will explore the largest collisions in our universe, when galaxies of billions of stars smash together. The guest lecture will be on April 29.

The feature show and guest lecture are at 8 p.m. Each is preceded by "The Night Sky Show," which re-creates the night sky and provides the latest information on space exploration at 7 p.m.

The astronomy shows are held in the John Drescher Planetarium, which features the state-of-the-art Digistar projection system. It is located on the second floor of Drescher Hall, 1900 Pico Blvd. The guest lecture is in science lecture hall 140.

See BRIEFS, page 6



SURF REPORT

On Tuesday, we're expecting another pulse of westerly wind swell, but this next system is looking smaller. Rain is also expected. As for size, we're calling for 12-second period WNW in the chest- to head-high range.

Today the water is:

61°

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	N/A	N/A	12:32	1.0	4:47	4.3	7:37	3.6
SUNDAY	12:07	2.7	1:04	-0.1	5:47	4.5	7:49	3.8
MONDAY	12:42	2.2	1:31	-0.2	6:30	4.8	8:02	4.0
TUESDAY	1:13	1.8	1:54	-0.3	7:06	5.1	8:17	4.2
WEDNESDAY	1:42	1.4	2:16	-0.2	7:39	5.2	8:33	4.5
THURSDAY	2:07	1.0	2:40	-0.3	8:04	4.7	9:02	4.0
FRIDAY	2:31	0.7	3:02	-0.1	8:34	4.2	9:30	3.4

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The Q Line

A protest was held last week at Santa Monica College by area students who are upset that the Armed Forces are recruiting on campus.

Some argue that college campuses are not the appropriate place for recruitment while others are against it simply because they are against the war in Iraq.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you

believe it's appropriate the Armed Forces to recruit on college campuses?"

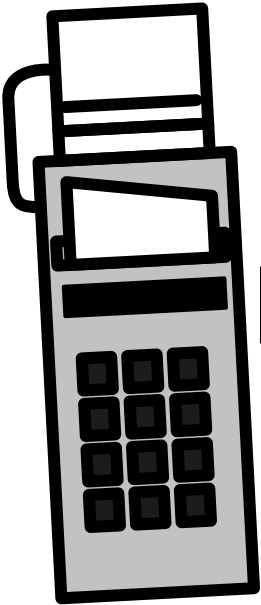
Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition. Please try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for support in time of loss

Editor:

As the mother of Jonathan Hernandez, I would like to express my sincerest appreciation and thank you for the generous support I have received from members of the community regarding the tragic loss of my son.

Natalie Preciado
Santa Monica

Father of slain sons offers advice

(Editor's note: This letter is intended as an open letter to city government, leaders and voters. The writer references this month's murders of two young adults at the Moose Lodge in Santa Monica).

Editor:

I am the father of Michael Anthony Juarez and Anthony Robert Juarez, two young men who were violently murdered on Lincoln Boulevard on Oct. 27, 1998, at 11:48 a.m. I now consider theirs a "cold case."

What's ahead?

Can you see the future results of the path you are on?

Your children, grandchildren and loved ones will be the ones destined to suffer.

The third world is here. You have tried the "new ideas," maybe we should return to the rule "do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

You, as our leaders, should start to think towards the future. What do you want the future leaders who will assume the positions that you vacate to be like? Intelligent design is in your heart, look there for the answers.

One person, or one segment of people, is not responsible for the negative changes that we, as a city, have been through. In one area we have gone from protect and serve to disrespect and arrest. The City Council and the Santa Monica Police Department must take responsibilities for their failures. At times it seems that the only crimes that are being solved are the crimes that solve themselves. Remember, respect begets respect and, by design, that begins with those in authority. Solve our problems as if it were your family that has been wronged.

Maybe the city should have a three-strike policy against disrespectful and aggressive city employees. Then, we could rid ourselves of those who would cost the city the loss of reputation and revenue. These types of employees will cause problems for all. It's only a matter of time.

One thing the citizens, voters of Santa Monica, know is that you're not doing your job. But you are doing well with your personal agendas.

I suggest that you stand down and stand back and realize that pre-school through age 35 is the future. At about 45, you become the history of your actions.

In closing, I would say to the witnesses of any violent crime, "come forth, be strong and share your love, your loved ones could be next and you would want someone to help you." To Chief Butts, regarding his past statement about not having officers present where they are not wanted, "... 25 police cars at (funeral) services," I don't

believe that was wanted or warranted. My opinion is that the officers were not at these services out of respect for the families or the deceased. To the killers of my sons and the killers at the Moose Lodge, I would tell you, "You would say that you felt disrespected so you did what you thought you had to do. In reality, you disrespected yourselves and if you want respect, turn yourselves in. I, for one, would respect that. Finally, I would say to the families of this recent tragedy, I hope that the journey for your family is not as long or as arduous as ours, God bless you and yours.

Bill Guillermo Juarez
Santa Monica

City Hall needs to stop procrastinating

Editor:

Most of us in my profession think that the city of Santa Monica has done a poor job of plotting its future by drafting a badly flawed zoning ordinance. It more resembles swiss cheese in that the holes represent the interests that have been left out. It was put together in answer to the shrill cries of a political constituency flexing its muscle without a broad view of the needs of all the community. The original concept remains "if you don't vote here, you have no say in the future of your land."

As well intended as the document is, many of the flaws have never been addressed.

One of its most egregious features is the concept that if a use is not a permitted use, it cannot be allowed, even by variance or conditional use permit. The wording is: "Other uses determined by the zoning administrator to be similar to those listed above and not more disruptive or disturbing than permitted uses." There is a term used by other planning departments which allows consideration of unlisted uses. That is "special circumstances." But here in Santa Monica, the inevitable answer is, "You can't do that."

The ever-changing ordinances we have been subjected to make it very difficult for property owners to know what they can do with their property a few years in the future when they are able to improve it. Within reason, there should be a way to allow an owner of some years standing, to utilize the ordinance as it was when they bought the property. This is especially true in the R-1 district because many have anticipated the use of the property they bought when they were younger and improvement was just a dream.

Tonight the City Council will consider extending an emergency ordinance for another 18 months because the planning department has failed to fulfill its promise of a two year turn around. The City Council should refuse to renew the ordinance unless they allow for those who have anticipated building or adding to their property by allowing them to use the ordinance as it stood before this emergency amendment was passed a year ago. This is the time to acknowledge special circumstances, such as proof that the owner had prepared plans before the ordinance was heard or had lived on the site for five years.

James Mount
Santa Monica

Congress' posturing can take your breath away



WHAT'S THE POINT?

BY DAVID PISSARRA

In an astonishing feat of willpower, the Republican-led Congress this past weekend was actually motivated enough to WORK on a Saturday and a Sunday, in order to pass legislation that will likely delay the death of Terri Schiavo.

Of course, it's only because the headlines will read well in the next election.

I'm not sure what is the most surprising aspect of this action taken by Congress. The fact they worked on the weekend, the fact that they are getting involved in a single person's fate, or the fact that this latest jaunt into federal jurisdiction is really only a thinly concealed attempt to get more headlines. Congress has the power, granted to it by the Constitution, to determine what types of lawsuits a federal court can hear. In this case, they have specifically stated that the family members of Theresa Marie Schiavo, may file a lawsuit to re-examine if her Constitutional rights have been denied. The law completely ignores all the other litigation in

this matter, and specifically rules that the prior rulings are of no value.

Then there is the fact that Schiavo's husband has for the last 15 years tried to enforce her wishes. Congress is simply wiping all that away, and saying, "Let's let a federal court decide if her wishes were to live on life support or to die gracefully." Evidently those Congressmen and Senators who are so hip on the whole "Marriage is an institution between a man and a woman" seems to have inserted some fine print: "So long as Congress thinks that the parties in the marriage are doing the right thing."

I'm astounded that this Congress, who were elected on a platform of personal responsibility; keeping the government out of our personal business; marriage is defined as a union of a man and woman and smaller government is better, are taking such an obvious, grandstanding, over-the-top, headline-grabbing, publicity-seeking position over literally, the dying body of Terri Schiavo.

If the past actions of this Congress and the Clown-in-Chief weren't bad enough, add to it this latest ill-thought-out, stomach-churning attempt to capitalize on the Greek drama that has become Terri Schiavo's 15 minutes of fame.

How these arrogant condescending

pettifoggers in Washington can sleep at night is beyond me. Their posturing and grandstanding over the still breathing corpse of a dead woman is likely the most repulsive act I've had the misfortune to witness. I thought the Defense of Marriage act was bad. I thought they could not do worse than that silly "don't ask, don't tell" baloney. But this, this is a new low in political posturing.

These are the same rubes who stand in the front of a cathedral and pontificate about the immorality of homosexuals and how God doesn't want loving couples to marry because it's an abomination and that the government should stay out of the marriage business. Yet they are more than willing to get involved in the internal marital life of Michael and Terri Schiavo.

I thought the point of marriage was that you had someone to make these kinds of decisions for you. I may be mistaken but if I can't trust my spouse to make the right choice for my life, why the hell marry them in the first place?

President Bush willingly signed this bill, which is really nothing more than private legislation, since it expires in 30 days, and is only applicable to the Schiavo family, which is in my book an egregious overstepping of his role as president. He should have vetoed it, as against public

policy. But that would make him look bad.

Of course, the delicious irony in all this is that the president's record on executions is legendary. He was renowned for the speed with which his administration executed convicted killers in Texas, in spite of their pleas for leniency and clemency. Guess that compassionate conservative thing only applies to the brain dead.

I know very little about the internal relationship between Michael and Terri Schiavo. He maintains in public that she would not have wanted to live this way. Frankly, I have to believe that is true. I cannot believe that anyone would want to become what she has.

The doctors say she is brain dead. The court says she is brain dead. Only her body doesn't know it. That happens. Of course it happened a lot less in biblical times, before ventilators, feeding tubes, EEG's, ECG's and Republicans. It used to be that people would just die. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes loudly, sometimes quietly.

If it were not for the technology that man developed, Terri Schiavo would likely have died a quiet death years ago. And

COMMENTARY



Taking a pit stop might just chase sinking feeling



ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

The arrangement with parent-daughter visits is that I come out for major holidays, and they come out when the weather is crappy. Only this year with mudslides and marine layer heralding LA's spring, I'm not sure who got the better tradeoff.

Mom and dad kind of felt stuck in the PCH mud, waiting on me as I meandered through 20-minute roadways to reach them only 90 minutes later.

But I did eventually come to pull them out of the mire, and dragged them off to the La Brea tar pits instead.

My dad, the anthropology/history buff, was as happy as Sherman on the war trail, while my mom, the scientist, had visions of sanitation plants in her head.

Neither was discontent, though, when we came to the entrance of Hancock Park, the lovely grassy knoll surrounding the pits.

It would seem like your run-of-the-mill, everyday park except for the fact that the ground pools with tar just inches from the sidewalk. We noticed traces of tar in patches on the ground, and climbing the root structure at the bottom of the trees. The park also holds the only creek-stream I've seen with a gurgling black tint to it.

While mom and dad were intrigued seeing the first two tar pits, they were blown away at the immensity of the main pit, bubbling with crude oil and adorned with dramatic mammoth statues.

Visitors of the tar pits know the distinct scene: One mammoth writhing in distress to escape the pit, and one with her baby watching in agony from the side.

Politicians up in personal affairs should learn to just get up and out

WHAT'S THE POINT?, from page 4

if it was me in that bed, I'd prefer the quiet death. To become the focal point of this inane battle regarding life support is not the way in which I would want to be remembered.

Now we have the ability to prolong life and I'm not sure it is a good thing. I'm positive that Congress getting involved is a bad thing.

Congress should not be in the business of interfering with a married couples' affairs. Whether it is in the bedroom with contraception, in the kids' room with how they are raised, or in the hospital room with how those emotionally charged final decisions are made.

What seems to have happened in the last election is that we have a Congress that is bound and determined to infiltrate its way into our personal lives, our professional lives and legislating the life and death decisions that were supposed to be made by a woman's husband. He is a man that she trusted enough to marry. He is a

The dialogue between the three goes something like this:

"I told you not to go in there, Frank. Why didn't you listen to me?"

"Martha, stop lecturing me and get me out!"

"Daddy!!"

"If you only used the map like I told you to. Why can't you stop for directions?"

"Dang it, woman. Stop nagging, and give me a trunk, will ya?"

This Colombian mammoth wasn't the only animal to make this fatal mistake. Complete skeletons of mastodons, saber-toothed cats and western camels made their way into the murky pit and eventually the Page Museum. Not to mention a slew of six-foot ground sloths, bison and more than 120 dire wolves.

Looking at the remains of these prehistoric animals completely baffles me. I can't begin to imagine an LA with mastodons and camels roaming about, let alone one without BMWs and Pamela Anderson.

To think that there was a time when Hugh Hefner didn't have a mansion, Demi Moore wasn't dating 20-year-old boys, and TRL was only a concept at little girls' slumber parties. Life was relatively peaceful — that is until you fall into a tar pit and get ravaged by wolves.

As I look at the razor-sharp teeth of the saber-toothed cat and the 12-foot frame of the threatening mammoth, I think as much as I don't like "Wife Swap," I'll take my chances in 2005. I'd rather have my car stuck on the asphalt of LA traffic than slowly sink as an angry pachyderm makes me his plaything. At least I'm not stuck in LA traffic forever. It's just with mudslides and two-hour rush hour that it sometimes feels that way.

(Heidi is a freelance writer, and can be reached at anydayinla@gmail.com.)

man who says he promised her that he wouldn't let this happen to her, and frankly, he's done about as good as one could expect. He's fought the battle for 15 years now. He's not divorced her. He's stood by her. He seems sincere in his motives to me.

I believe her parents need to let her husband make the best decision he can, and Congress needs to butt the hell out. If marriage is going to mean anything in this country, and God knows it means less and less each day, the only way I see to stand up for it is to honor the people who are honoring their vows.

Michael Schiavo is a stranger to me. But he has my respect for fighting to respect his wife's wishes. I wish I could say the same for the president, but, you know, he's a politician.

(David Pizarra is a business development attorney and partner in the Santa Monica law firm of Pizarra & Grist. He can be reached at (310) 664-9969 or by e-mail at dpizarra@pizarra.com.)

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Defendant declines attorney, trial by jury

COLD CASE, from page 1

officer during an unrelated incident, authorities said. In January of 2001, a jury found him guilty of battery, resisting arrest, and failing to register himself as a sex offender.

Sources close to the case didn't offer why Wright opted not to be represented by an attorney and to let a judge alone decide his case, especially since it's believed such circumstances would not work in his favor.

Wright appeared in court Monday looking withdrawn. His hair was pulled back and crimped. He wore glasses and had a long white goatee, speaking slowly to Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ruth Ann Kwan, who will determine if he is guilty.

Leonard M. Garber, who once represented Wright and has since become Wright's "stand-by" attorney, said he explained to Wright that he may do better in court with a jury trial, but Wright refused the advice. He has fired two public defenders assigned to the case, delaying the case for nearly two years.

Garber said he felt Wright was not

competent to stand trial and informed him as such, which Garber said might have also had to do with why Wright decided to represent himself.

Three psychiatrists evaluated Wright and only one of them felt he was not competent to stand trial, Garber said.

Wright, who spoke briefly during the trial, declined to give an opening statement.

Los Angeles Deputy District Attorney Ellen Aragon during her opening statement laid out her case and indicated several witnesses would be testifying. She also requested permission to admit into court the witness testimony of two women who accused Wright of sexually assaulting them in the early '90s.

Wright's rap sheet goes back to at least 1990, when he pleaded no contest to petty theft. In 1993, he was convicted of possessing a dagger and given probation. In 1994, Wright was sentenced to two years in prison for assault with intent. In 1999, Wright was acquitted for possessing a deadly weapon.

Although using information from prior records is typically ill-advised by defense counsels, Wright decided to allow the wit-

nesses to speak against him.

"Let's do it," Wright said.

The trial is expected to last a week, with interruptions that may arise because Judge Kwan is expecting a death in the family.

A DNA expert is scheduled on Wednesday to testify about the accuracy of the samples collected by the Serological Research Institute, which Aragon said has compiled semen samples that match Wright's and was found in Labbe's rectum. Cigarette butts near the scene also match an oral swab taken from Wright, prosecutors said.

Wright won't face the death penalty if found guilty, a special panel within the DA's office decided in 2003.

Wright was homeless and living on the streets of Santa Monica before being arrested. Sandie Richards, a reverend at the Church at Ocean Park, is scheduled to testify in the trial. Richards knew of Wright, who frequently laid his possessions at the church, which is located across the street from the murder scene.

Blood from Labbe's bludgeoned head stained a white wall where her body was found, according to the Santa Monica

Police Department, who investigated the murder.

During the autopsy, LA County supervising criminalist Dan Anderson testified in an earlier court proceeding that he found a foreign object inside Labbe's body. Upon further investigation, Anderson discovered that a beeping pager had been lodged in Labbe's rectum. It is unknown whether or not the beeper is connected to Wright.

A key at the murder scene belonged to a motel on Lincoln Boulevard, where it was determined Labbe lived shortly before she was killed.

During the investigation, Santa Monica Police detectives spoke with Labbe's cousin, Leslie Tutnick, who at the time was Labbe's only local relative. Tutnick told police she was trying to help Labbe get through emotional distress. She also described Labbe as "someone desperately trying to get her act together," according to court testimony.

Aragon has previously said the details of Labbe's activities shortly before her death are unclear although there had been a suggestion that she was prostituting herself.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

Tickets are \$5 each or \$9 for the "double bill," with discounts for children and senior citizens. For information, call (310) 434-4223 or (310) 434-3000.

A Circle of trust for activists

By Daily Press staff

Now there's a support group for activists in Santa Monica.

The Activist Support Circle, a new emotional support endeavor for longtime and just-beginning progressive activists, will hold a public gathering on Wednesday, March 30 at 7 p.m. at the Friends Meeting Hall located at 1440 Harvard St.

More than 40 progressive activists of all ages and varied causes met during an introductory gathering on Feb. 23. The general consensus was that regularly scheduled Activist Support Circle gatherings will be helpful in providing a supportive and safe opportunity for sharing and discussion of activist-related frustrations and fears, as well as activist-related hopes and aspirations, event organizers said. There is no charge to attend the gatherings.

Organizers say that all progressive activists, whether they are working with an established organization or individually, or whether they are working on issues such as peace, the environment, civil liberties, human rights or a host of other progressive causes, are invited to attend.

Free parking is available on-site or along Santa Monica Boulevard. For further information, call (310) 399-1000.

Pier standoff shooters admit to murdering other gang members

GUILTY, from page 1

Perry that witnesses didn't want their faces on television or their names mentioned in the newspapers, in fear of reprisals from gang members.

Judge Perry allowed the verdict reading to be filmed, on the basis the witness portion of the proceedings had already passed, and because he felt the case had a significance to the public, since the defendants were apprehended on the Fourth of July, when the pier is typically bustling with visitors.

Amezcu and Flores have admitted to a string of murders and attempted murders directed at other gang members and police that spanned from their hometown of Baldwin Park to Victorville, Ontario, Fontana and Santa Monica. They openly told prosecutors Santa Monica Police were "very lucky" to escape the 2000 incident without fatalities.

Amezcu was found guilty of the attempted murder of the three officers and civilians he shot. The pair's crime spree began in April of 2000 and included four counts of first-degree murder.

The jury found both men guilty of the April 11, 2000, murder of John Luis Diaz, the murder of Arturo Madrigal on May 25 of that year, and the June 19, 2000, double-murder of George Orlando Flores (no relation to the defendant) and Luis George Reyes.

In addition to the murder charges, Amezcu and Flores were found guilty of robbery, arson, false imprisonment and assault on a peace officer, part of which charges arose from the pier

stand-off, which included the taking of hostages.

The shoot-out began shortly after Santa Monica Police received a phone call around 1 a.m. from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department telling them Flores was on the pier. Investigators had located Flores by placing a call to his pager and tracing the call.

Police arrived and managed to take Flores into custody after an altercation. Amezcu, however, ran into the nearby Playland Arcade. He attempted to exit the rear of the arcade, but encountered officers and opened fire, according to police. Amezcu then took 15 people hostage, finally releasing the last of the hostages and surrendering at 6:40 a.m.

The pier was closed to thousands of tourists and visitors throughout the day.

Both men were acquitted of a fifth murder, that of another gang member who was fatally shot on June 7, 2000 as he answered the door of his Victorville home.

Each of the Santa Monica officers shot during the stand-off have since recovered, according to Santa Monica Police Department Lt. Frank Fabrega. SMPD Officer Chris Coria was shot in the arm and Officer Steven Wong was shot in the leg. Sgt. Jim Hurt, also struck in the leg, has since moved on to the California Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement. A 17-year-old civilian was shot in the leg, as was a 35-year-old female civilian.

The jury will begin sentencing deliberations once both sides have presented their cases.

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STATE



Injured worker group wants to go lobbying

BY STEVE LAWRENCE

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Mark Hayes' cell phone is busy these days with calls from workers who have suffered job-related injuries. They see his name in the newspaper and find some way to track him down.

"They want to tell you their story; they need some place to vent," said Hayes, who hopes to provide those workers with political clout as well as a sympathetic ear.

Hayes, a former Orange County court reporter who has had his own work-related injuries, is president of Voters Injured at Work, a new group that is trying to organize injured workers into a potent lobbying force.

The group is an outgrowth of the sweeping changes that the state has made in its workers' compensation system since the fall of 2003, changes that labor unions, workers' attorneys and some doctors contend have harmed injured workers.

"There was simply no balance left in the system," says Peggy Sugarman, a former chief deputy director of the state Division of Workers' Compensation who came up with the idea of forming Voters Injured At Work. She's now the group's executive director.

Groups representing employers and workers' comp insurers say Hayes' organization is just a front group for workers' attorneys, part of a strategy by the California Applicants' Attorneys Association to attack the workers' comp overhaul through workers.

"VIAW seems to be one way to get one degree of distance from their organization," says Jerry Azevedo, a spokesman for the Workers' Compensation Action Network, a coalition of employers and insurers. "At least as yet there is no degree of separation."

The applicants' attorneys have provided VIAW with \$80,000 in seed money to get up and running and have offered another \$20,000. But VIAW is an independent group run by a board made up of injured workers and the widow of an injured worker, Sugarman said.

The fact that the group is actively recruiting injured workers as members and charging them dues also undercuts the front group accusation, but employers and insurers will keep making that claim "because it's a mantra they feel works," she added.

VIAW's leaders say their success in recruiting injured workers has been better than they expected. More than 800 people have signed up and over 600 have paid the \$25 in annual dues since the nonprofit organization announced its existence at a series of press conferences in mid-January.

"It looks like they are coming in at about 20 checks a day," said Sugarman.

But getting members out to organizational meetings has been more difficult.

Only five, including a member of the group's board of directors, showed up for a recent meeting in Sacramento.

"I'm kind of scratching my head about what does it take to get people out there," Sugarman said. "Whether people have trouble because they don't have money to drive, or don't have cars, don't have computers or don't check their e-mails."

One of the injured workers who attended the Sacramento meeting, Lisa Thorpe, said finding out about Voters Injured at Work "was like a godsend."

"I thought, 'Oh my God, I've got to contact these people,'" she said. "I've been through hell and back again through workers' compensation, and it's starting all over again for me now with the new laws changing."

The Fairfield resident has been receiving laser treatments to deaden the pain from a back injury she suffered when she slipped on a wet, soapy floor while working as a restaurant kitchen manager in 1998 in Redding.

It had been taking about two weeks to get her workers' comp insurer to authorize the treatments. But it took five months to get permission the last time around under the new utilization review procedures adopted by lawmakers, Thorpe said.

She's hoping VIAW can convince lawmakers to roll back the changes they made.

Angie Wei, a lobbyist for the California Labor Federation, says Voters Injured at Work can fill an "important niche."

"Often times for injured workers it's an awfully lonely fight against insurance companies for denying their benefits," she said. "They need an advocate and this organization can be a collective advocate for injured workers."

Besides the applicants' attorneys, doctors have contributed about \$5,000 in seed money, and VIAW is also making money by selling T-shirts and hats, Sugarman said.

The group has a Web site that is linked to some labor group sites, is putting together a newsletter and is working on a rally in April to mark the anniversary of the enactment of the workers' comp legislation pushed through last year by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

It's also one of the plaintiffs, along with applicants' attorneys, in a lawsuit challenging Schwarzenegger administration regulations that critics say will result in big benefit cuts for disabled workers.

Hayes says it will take time for the group to gain respect and clout but he thinks it can become a potent force in California politics.

"We have to establish some credibility," he said. "There have been a lot of groups that have been started to help injured workers, but they just have not done it. Until we can actually show them we're different and we're going to keep on growing (we won't have that credibility). It just takes time."



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Discounting all of our troubles only allows us to kid ourselves

How Much Is Enough?
By Connie Dawson

One of the most easily understood ways of identifying why our lives may not be what we say we want them to be is to learn to recognize when we're discounting.

By discounting, we keep ourselves from solving problems, keep from getting our feet out of the mud, keep ourselves from moving out of a stuck place and from getting our needs met.

Becoming aware

Discounting may be done in several ways:

By exaggerating a problem that a problem seems silly.

Example: "Our friend Harry does not have a problem with alcohol. Drunks stumble around and Harry doesn't stumble around and he goes to work every day."

By making a problem much less than it really is.

Example: "What on Earth are you talking about? You either worry too much or you have an over-active imagination."

Once we know how to recognize discounting, it's as if someone spit in our soup. We can't keep doing what we're doing once we come to accept the negative impact of what's going on. It's a simple matter to learn how discounting works.

In the dark

Ordinarily, we're not aware that the reason we are discounting is to keep problems at a distance. To some extent, it is ingrained in our culture. Everyone does it. How do we know it's happening? Every now and then

we can feel a little discomfort — a twinge that tells us something isn't quite right. Something doesn't compute. But we may not consciously acknowledge our discomfort because if we did, we'd be faced with addressing the problem.

Example: A mom says, "My son is a bright kid with a great sense of humor but he's very evasive about his schoolwork. 'I'm the slowest and lowest in the class,' he says with a twinkle in his eye. Whenever I try to find out how he's doing, I allow myself to be detoured. Something isn't right, but his dad isn't worried, so I'm not either."

Discounting another name for denial

There are levels of discounting (denial) that reveal how deeply stuck someone is. Here's a situation that shows how discounting works.

One mom, newly aware the impact of overindulgence on children, tells her partner she's concerned he's overindulging their son.

Level 1: Discounting the existence of the problem.

"The neighbors do it, but I don't."

Level 2: Discounting the severity of the problem.

"OK, I know I spend a lot on Jerry, but he really likes and uses all the stuff I get him."

Level 3: Discounting the solvability of the problem.

"For all the things I get for Jerry, he always wants more. But what do you do? All kids are like that these days."

Level 4: Discounting one's personal power to put a solution into effect.

"I'm sure there are other parents, or somebody, who knows what to do about this because every kid can't be as persistent as ours. I know I cave in too quickly."

Eureka! Empowerment

"I want to stop resenting Jerry's 'never satisfied' attitude. I'll find out what to do about this so I stop resenting him and so Jerry doesn't grow up to believe he'll always get someone else to buy what he wants."

The moral of the story?

The damage resulting from chronic overindulgence is a problem worth solving as soon as it is recognized. Replacing overindulgent behaviors with behaviors more supportive of your child's optimal development is doing your child and yourself a huge favor.

(Connie Dawson, Jean Illsley Clarke and David Bredehoft are co-authors of "How Much Is Enough? Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likeable, Responsible and Respectful Children, Toddlers to Teens." Dawson can be reached at cdawson@whidbey.com.)



DEAR DORIE

Lonely moms need to lean on others

Dear Dorie,

I am a new mom with a beautiful 3-month-old baby. My husband is a great partner and father but his work hours are pretty long — about 12 hours a day. I'm lucky enough to stay at home with the baby, but I'm really feeling lonely and confused. Weekends are awesome, but weekdays are really tough. My son is pretty fussy and I guess that's normal, but aren't I supposed to be happy?

— New Mom

Dear New Mom,

Parenting an infant is the most rewarding but most difficult thing you'll have to do in your life, and support is required. While you feel terribly alone all week, you are never really alone with an infant (squeezing a shower in while he's asleep in the crib does not count as alone). Your weekends may feel fulfilling because of necessary adult companionship and help with caregiving.

Get yourself to a mother/infant support group, parenting class or mother/infant activity as soon as possible. Try Family Connections at Joslyn Park on Monday mornings; Baby & Me at the YWCA for Tuesdays or Thursdays; Library Laptime for infants and parents on a variety of days. Call my program at (310) 452-6132 for a detailed weekly schedule of the many options you have to leave the house with your infant, and get social and emotional support from the parenting community.

Finally, you are not alone. About 75 percent of mothers experience some sort of isolation and/or depression in the first year of motherhood. You need a good old-fashioned village to help you with your little treasure. Go for it and keep me posted.

Dorie

(Dorie Meek is director of the Infant & Family Support Program, provided by Saint John's Health Center in partnership with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. Meek answers questions concerning children ages birth to 5 years old. Submit your questions to "Dear Dorie" at meek@smmusd.org, or call (310) 452-6132; fax (310) 452-6392.)

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TODAY! – TUESDAY, MARCH 22

SPRING VACATIONS SPECIAL, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Learn about the different ways artists illustrate books and try it yourself. Ages 3 and up. Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Ave., 829-7081. FREE!

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

STARLIGHT STARBRIGHT CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION GALA EVENING

A STELLAR NIGHT honors Steven Spielberg for his continuous contributions to brighten the lives of seriously ill children and their families. The evening includes dinner, silent auction and surprise musical guest. The Beverly Hilton's International Ballroom, 9876 Wilshire Blvd., 6:00 p.m. cocktails, 7:00 p.m. dinner, call 479-1212 to reserve your ticket.

FRIDAY – SUNDAY, MARCH 25 – 27, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

BIG BUNNY'S SPRING FLING at the LA ZOO. Enjoy this spring celebration with rabbits, funny bunny ears, crafts and special family entertainment. FREE with admission: \$10 adults, \$5 children. 5333 Zoo Dr., LA, 323-644-6400.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

WILDLIFE WENDY and **HER PERFORMING PAR-ROTS**, 2:00 p.m. LA Central Library, 630 W. 5th St., Downtown. All ages, FREE! 213-228-7000.

BLESSING of the ANIMALS, noon – 5:00 p.m.

Bring your pet for this centuries-old tradition of blessing. El Pueblos Historical Monument, Placita Olvera, 125 Paseo de la Plaza, LA. FREE! 213-625-5045.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27 – HAPPY EASTER!

BIRD WATCHING for YOUNG CHILDREN and PARENTS, 10:00 a.m. Special short walk for families. Malibu Lagoon State Beach, 23200 PCH. FREE! All ages. 393-6205.

VEGETABLE HUNT, 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. Help find seed packets to create a garden with. Zimmer Children's Museum, 6505 Wilshire Blvd., LA. FREE with admission: \$5 adults, \$3 children, ages 2 and under are free. 323-761-8998

LOW-COST BIRTH DOULA SERVICES – DONA (Doulas of North America) Trained doulas seeking to attend births to fulfill certification requirements are available to you in exchange for completion of required paperwork and a minimal fee (\$50 - \$100) to cover expenses. Please call Nina at 310-395-7321 for more information.

What is a doula? "A woman experienced in childbirth who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support before, during and just after childbirth." (Klaus, Kennell and Klaus in *Mothering the Mother*)

TUESDAY

Movies for Moms! Mar. 22 – Hostage starring Bruce Willis, Kevin Pollack and Ben Foster. Action/Suspense, Rated "R." 11:00 a.m., Loews Broadway, 1441 3rd St. Promenade – for Moms and babies newborn – 1 year old. Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable. Visit www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms for details.

Storytelling

Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.

Toddler Storytime; 10:00 a.m. For 2 year olds with adult.

Preschool Story Time; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-5.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

Cuentos Para Pequenos – 10:00 a.m., six-week series in Spanish for 24 – 36 month olds with adult. Mar. 1 – April 5 and April 26 – May 31.

Lap Time – 11:00 a.m., six-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the SMMUSD Infant & Family Support Programs. Mar. 1 – April 5 and April 26 – May 31.

Twilight Story Time -7pm – an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Family Story Time – 7:00 p.m., all ages.

TERRIFIC TUESDAYS – 3:30 p.m., stories and crafts for ages 5 – 9. (Every other Tuesday, Mar. 26, April 12 & 26, May 10 & 24).

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.

Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 2 to 3 year olds.

Register March 30 for next session – April 19 – May 24.

Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis

For ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, www.storyopolis.com

Barnes and Noble at the Grove

Storytime for ages 2 – 6. 10:00 a.m. 189 Grove Drive, LA, 323-525-0270

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Infant/Toddler & Me Classes - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – Walkers to 3 years; 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. & 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. – ages 0 to 1 year; classes in partnership with the Infant and Family Support Program. 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Thursday nights 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Itsy Bitsy Yoga – Tots (crawling to 24 months) – 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Baby (6 weeks to pre-crawling) – 11:00 – noon. With Khefri Riley at Ocean Oasis, 1333 Ocean Ave. Register at www.khefri.net or call 323-549-5383.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Yoga for ages 4 -7, 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. (Students may be dropped off at 3:30 for indoor play, song and snacks). \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required. 1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 - no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Storytelling

The Talking Stick Coffee Lounge – 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052

10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4 at this neighborhood coffee shop.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

Toddler Story Time – 9:30 a.m., for two year olds.

Preschool Story Time – 10:30 a.m.; six-week series for 3-5 year olds with adult.

Session dates are Mar. 2 – April 6 and April 27 – June 1 for both..

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Lap Time – 10:15 & 11:15 a.m., ages 0-2. Current session thru March 31.

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. –392-3804.

Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5.

Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144

Border's, Westwood – 11am – 310-475-3444.

Classes

Rhythm Child Parent & Me Rhythms, Santa Monica Studios, 3025 Olympic Blvd., 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. Next session is April 16 – May 4. Children explore rhythms through drum play. Ages 6 mos. – 3.5 years; \$100 for 8 weeks. Call 204-5466 or visit www.rhythmchild.net for more info.

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Parent Support (3 – 5 years) – 9:15 – 10:15 a.m.; Infant/Toddler and Me (0-12 mos.) – 10:30 – 11:00 a.m.; Parents of Adolescents Support Group – 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, \$15

Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Step Aerobics, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay \$90 for 10 classes.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Mommy and Me Yoga (ages 4- 6), 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. and 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song. \$165 for an 8 week session, \$75 for additional sibling.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774, no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Other

Puppetolio – 1:00 p.m., 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Babystyle, 1324 Montana Avenue, 434-9590 10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids

ages 0-4.

Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.

Toddler Storytime; 10:00 a.m.; for 2 year olds with adult.

Preschool Story Time; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-5.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

La Hora Del Cuento – 7:00 p.m. Spanish stories, songs and rhymes for all ages.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Toddler Story Time – 10:15 a.m., for 2 year olds. Session dates are Feb. 24 – March 31 and April 14 – May 19.

Preschool Story Time – 11:15 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds.

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Toddler & Me Classes, Walkers to 3 years – 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. and 10:45 – 11:45 a.m.; classes in partnership with the Infant and Family Support Program.

Yoga & Exercise

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Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Yoga for ages 6 - 10, 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. (students may be dropped off at 3:30 for indoor play, song and snacks). \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required.

Family Yoga, 5:15 – 6:30 p.m., includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song. 8-week series for parents and 1 child, \$250, \$100 each additional child. 1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 - no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 4-8 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

Parent's Night Out at Child's Play, 2299 Westwood Blvd., 6:00 – 11:00 p.m.

Kids get a night of supervised fun with pizza, games and more while parents go out. Ages 3-10, \$9 per hour, \$7 siblings, 3 hour minimum. Reservations required, 470-4997. www.child-splayonline.net

La Leche League of LA/Mar Vista – meets the 2nd Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Call 310-390-2529 for info.

Planetarium Show at SMC's John Drescher Planetarium, 7:00 p.m. – Night Sky Show, 8:00 p.m. – featured program. \$5 adults, \$4 children. Pico and 17th St., 434-3000.

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Toddler & Me (1-3 years) – 9:20 – 10:20 a.m.; Parent Support (1-3 years) – 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Mommy and Me Dance– celebrate the wonderful world of imagination Fridays at the Electric Lodge. 9:45 – 10:45 a.m. ages 14 - 24 months; 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. ages 2 – 4. 6 classes for \$75 or \$14 per class. First class free! 1416 Electric Ave, Venice, 306-1854.

Yoga & Exercise

Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Indoor Cycling, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay \$90 for 10 classes.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45 p.m., \$15.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Yoga for ages 8 - 11, 4:30 – 5:45 p.m., includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song. \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required. 1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Other

Baby Attuned - Fridays, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., A new program promoting sensitive parenting and developmental awareness. Parent-completed developmental screening, with review and feedback from a licensed clinical developmental psychologist and experienced pediatric nurse practitioner, Eileen Escarce, PhD, MSN. (PSY 18819). Introductory fee: \$15 per screening with feedback. 1137 2nd Ave, Suite 213. By appointment only 310-367-1155.

SATURDAY

Storytelling

Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade –

Kid's Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110

Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 10:30am – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144.

Children's Book World – 10580 1/2 Pico Blvd, LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-800K.

Village Books, 1049 SwarthmoreAve, Pacific Palisades – 10:30 a.m. – 454-4063.

Yoga & Exercise

Santa Monica Yoga – Pre- & Post-Natal Yoga, Saturdays – 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

1640 Ocean Park Blvd, 396-4040, www.santa-monica-yoga.com

Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.(babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:00 a.m., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Yoga for ages 6 -10, 9:45 – 10:55 a.m., includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song; Yoga Girls (ages 12 and up), 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required. 1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Other

Snow White at the Santa Monica Playhouse Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. (thru April); \$12 adults, \$10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 2 for reservations, www.santamonica-playhouse.com

Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Magicopolis – 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St.,

Admission is \$20 for evening, \$15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

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Second Saturday every month at The Pump Station, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Contact Kristan Ritchie at 310-802-8013 or visit www.preciousprintstudios.com for more info.

Breastfeeding

Working Mother's Support Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd. - 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., \$12 fee, led by Ilka Sternberger, certified lactation educator. Call 826-5774 for more info.

SUNDAY – HAPPY EASTER!

Main Street Farmer's Market – 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., corner of Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Pony rides, live music, lots of vendors and great family socializing.

Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Magicopolis – 2 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$15. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

Snow White at the Santa Monica Playhouse Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. (thru April); \$12 adults, \$10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 2 for reservations, www.santamonica-playhouse.com

MONDAY

Storytelling

Main Library – Lap Time at Joslyn Park, Craft Room, 9:30 a.m. A series for babies up to two years old. (no lap time or Family Connections on Mar. 21 & 28)

"Family Connections" – 10:00 a.m., immediately following Lap Time - a series of discussions related to early childhood development and growth. Children welcome, free.

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main Street, 310-392-3804.

"Spanish for Little Ones", 11:15 a.m.

Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Toddler Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110

MOMS Club of Santa Monica – New Mother Group – for new moms with babies ages 0-6 months. Meet for conversation, support and playtime. All new Moms welcome! Call Clare at 395-7422 for time, location and more info.

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Toddler & Me (1-3 years) – 9:20 – 10:20 a.m.; Parent Support (1-3 years) – 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 - no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, \$15

Yoga Garden, - Restorative yoga for pre/postnatal – 6:30 p.m., 310-450-0133. www.yoga-gardenstudios.com

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

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STATE

Schwarzenegger diminished, but Dems still seem undersized

BY BETH FOUHY
 AP Political Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — There’s little doubt that after 16 months in office, California’s action hero-turned-governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has begun to shrink to human size. But so far, that’s done little to elevate Democrats, who still seem a bit puny by comparison.

By proposing a controversial set of reform proposals — merit pay for teachers, overhauling the state’s public pension system, creating a mechanism to automatically cut state spending and redrawing legislative districts — Schwarzenegger’s aura of invincibility has taken a substantial hit.

Everywhere he goes, he’s trailed by a growing number of protesters — teachers, police and fire fighters who are furious that he’s targeting their job security and retirement.

On MSNBC’s “Hardball” show last week, Schwarzenegger broke a bit of a sweat as host Chris Matthews repeatedly grilled him on why, in his view,



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nurses are a special interest while the drug companies feathering his political nest are not. Commentators and good government groups meanwhile are crying foul over his fund raising, which is so prodigious — and such a departure from his campaign pledge to purge big money from politics — it’s made his money-hungry predecessor, Gray Davis, seem like a piker.

Emboldened by Schwarzenegger’s sinking poll numbers and a whiff of vulnerability, Democrats appear less cowed, and are making a convincing argument that his reform agenda amounts to a Republican power grab.

“No one could have predicted he’d declare nuclear war on teachers and firefighters all in the same year,” said Democratic consultant Roger Salazar. “It was a huge mistake on his part, and whether it’s something his consultants pushed, or a way to triangulate, it’s backfired.”

But try as Democrats might, Schwarzenegger continues to own the state’s political spotlight, and not simply because of his fame and charisma. He’s dominating the discussion because he’s proposing big changes — controversial to be sure — many of which are likely to fail or be negotiated into something both parties can live with. And Democrats risk looking small by positioning themselves as stalwart defenders of the status quo.

“Simply by picking this fight, he has moved the parameters of the debate,” said former Republican Senate leader Jim Brulte, now a government affairs consultant. “Whether this debate goes all the way down to the end, or whether there’s a negotiated compromise solution, the fact that he’s willing to pick this fight is in the long-term interest of the people of California.”

Legislative Democrats have to offer something rather than nothing, or risk playing into Schwarzenegger’s argument that they are enemies of reform. Likewise, Democrats eyeing a run against Schwarzenegger next year must be viewed as a fresh alternative to Schwarzenegger and resist falling into hackneyed complaints.

Launching his own campaign for governor this week, state Treasurer Phil Angelides hammered the governor for his fiscal policies — particularly his reliance on borrowing to balance the state budget and unwillingness to lean more heavily on corporations and the rich to shoulder more of the state’s fiscal burdens.

It’s a strategy Angelides has followed since Schwarzenegger took office in late 2003, earning him the “anti-Arnold” moniker but carrying steep risks for him as well. So far, he’s offered few concrete counterproposals other than raising taxes on the wealthy, which has made him an easy target for Republicans.

Meanwhile, the other major Democrat out of the gate this week, Attorney General Bill Lockyer, reached for an entirely different weapon, criticizing Schwarzenegger for “the arrogance of power” that comes with “the odor of Austrian politics.”

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NATIONAL



Both sides in feeding tube case await ruling

BY VICKIE CHACHERE

Associated Press Writer

PINELLAS PARK, Fla. — The fate of Terri Schiavo once again was in the hands of a judge early Monday following an extraordinary, day-long political fight over the brain-damaged woman that consumed both chambers of Congress and prompted the president to rush back to the White House.

Taking the Senate's lead, the House early Monday passed a bill to let the woman's parents ask a federal judge to prolong Schiavo's life by reinserting her feeding tube. President Bush signed the measure less than an hour later.

An attorney for her parents, Bob and Mary Schindler, later arrived at federal district court in Tampa and filed a request for an emergency injunction to keep their daughter fed.

When the attorney, David Gibbs II, was asked if he had any indication when the judge would rule on the request, he said: "I have no way to know, just that it's in the hands of the court."

Outside the hospice where his daughter entered her fourth day without food or water, Bob Schindler told reporters "I'm numb, I'm just totally numb. This whole thing, it's hard to believe it."

Schiavo's husband, Michael Schiavo, said he was outraged that congressional leaders were intervening in the contentious right-to-die battle. He has battled for years with his wife's parents over whether she should be permitted to die or kept alive through the feeding tube.

"I think that the Congress has more important things to discuss," he told CNN, calling the move political and criticizing House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, who helped broker the congressional compromise.

Outside the hospice, a shout of joy when news of the House bill's passage came. Among those cheering was David Bayly, 45, of Toledo, Ohio: "I'm overjoyed to see the vote and see Terri's life extended by whatever amount God gives her."

The 41-year-old woman's feeding tube was removed Friday on a Florida judge's order. Schiavo could linger for one or two weeks if the tube is not reinserted — as has happened twice before, once on a judge's order and once after Gov. Jeb Bush passed "Terri's Law," which was later declared unconstitutional.

George Felos, a lawyer for Michael Schiavo, did not return repeated phone messages seeking comment Monday. The voicemail box of George Greer, the Florida circuit judge who presides over the case, was full and didn't accept messages.

Terri Schiavo suffered brain damage in 1990 when her heart stopped briefly because of a chemical imbalance. She can breathe on her own, but has relied on the feeding tube to keep her alive.

Court-appointed doctors say she is in a persistent vegetative state with no hope of recovery. Her husband says she would not want to be kept alive in that condition, but her parents insist she could recover with treatment.

Bob Schindler visited his daughter late Sunday and said he noticed the effects of dehydration on her. He said she appeared to be getting tired, but eventually responded to his teasing by making a face at him.

"It tells us she's still with us," he said.

Brian Schiavo, Michael's brother, said he spent Sunday afternoon with his brother and Terri at the hospice, but Terri did not move or make any noises. "Anybody that thinks that she talks and responds, they need to have a mental health examination," he said.

The bill passed in Congress applies only to Schiavo and would allow a federal court to review the case. The House passed the bill on a 203-58 vote early Monday

after calling lawmakers back for an emergency Sunday session. The Senate approved the bill Sunday by voice vote.

"In cases like this one, where there are serious questions and substantial doubts, our society, our laws and our courts should have a presumption in favor of life," President Bush said in a statement after signing the bill.

A crowd of about 50 people prayed and sang outside the hospice. One man played "Amazing Grace" on a trumpet, as a pickup truck pulled a trailer bearing 10-foot-high replicas of the stone Ten Commandments tablets and a huge working version of the Liberty Bell.

Gov. Bush, praised the actions of Congress. "We in government have a duty to protect the weak, disabled and vulnerable," he said in a statement Monday. "I appreciate the efforts of state and federal lawmakers on both sides of the aisle who have taken this duty to heart."

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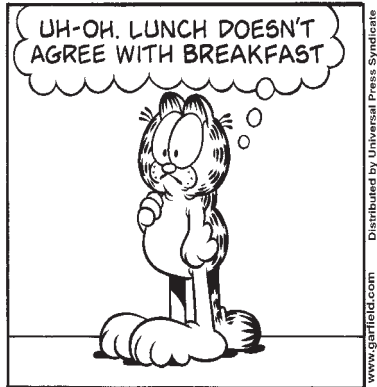


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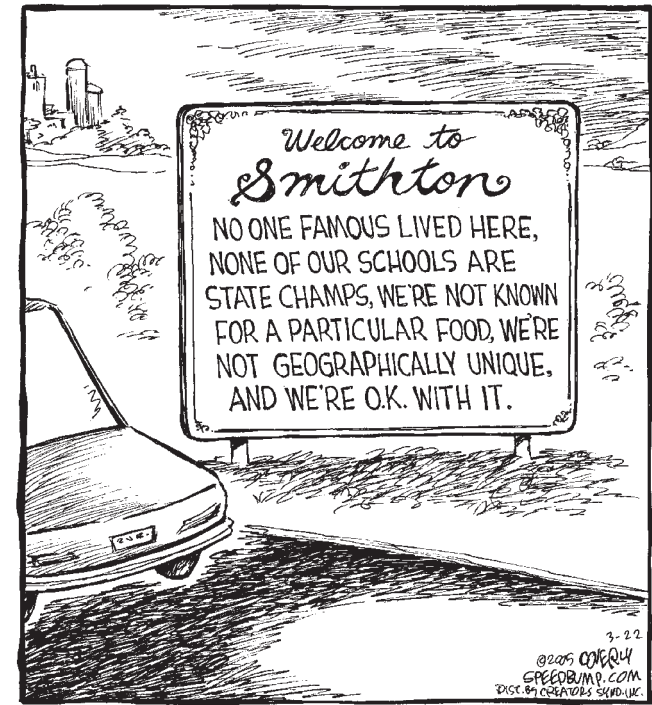
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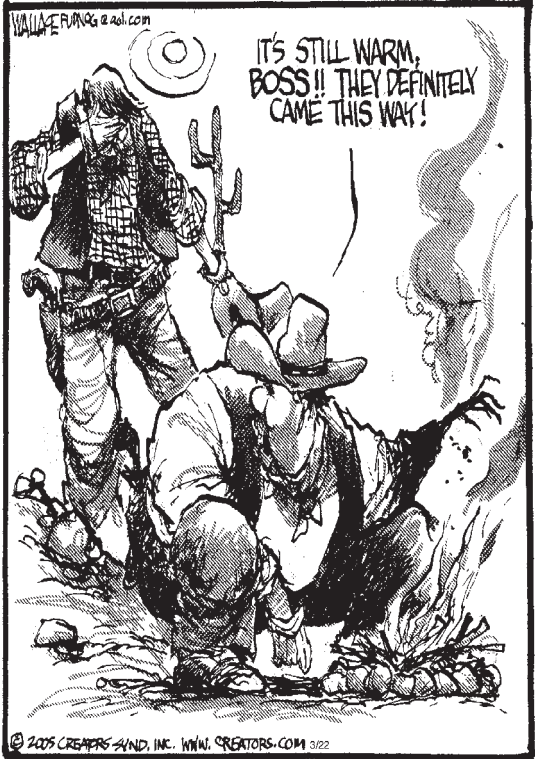


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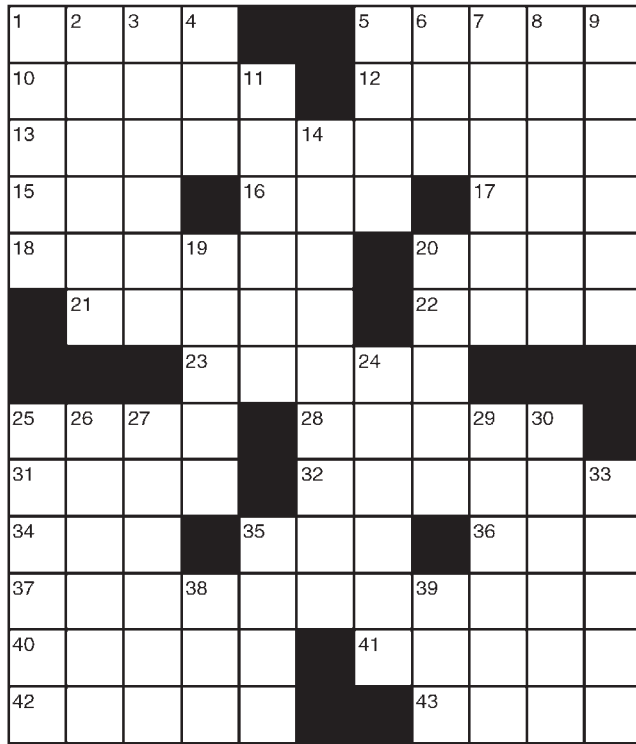
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

From Thunderlips to his ears: Hogan a Hall of Famer

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — And in this corner ... Hulk Hogan.

Sylvester Stallone, star of the "Rocky" and "Rambo" films, will induct Hogan into the WWE Hall of Fame in a ceremony in Los Angeles on April 2, World Wrestling Entertainment announced Monday. Stallone is also co-host with real-life champ Sugar Ray Leonard of "The Contender," NBC's new reality boxing series.

Hogan played Thunderlips in 1982's "Rocky III," starring and directed by Stallone.

The induction ceremony will be held at the Universal Amphitheatre. It is an official WrestleMania Week event in Southern California.

Portions of the hall of fame induction will air that evening on Spike TV (11 p.m. ET).

NEW YORK — The Rev. Al Sharpton, who is campaigning against violence in rap music, plans to buy stock in record companies that produce hip-hop and then become vocal as a stockholder.

"I don't think too many CEOs want to see me come into his stockholders' meeting to say they're not doing enough to stop the violence," Sharpton told the Daily News for Monday editions. Sharpton didn't name the companies or say how much stock he plans to buy.

He also plans to put pressure on the Federal Communications Commission.

"I do not understand how the FCC can make a lot of noise around Janet Jackson and that case with Howard Stern, but has not said anything about a pattern of shooting and other violence at radio stations," Sharpton said.

He was referring to last month's shooting of a member of The Game's entourage at the WQHT-FM studios while the rapper's former mentor, 50 Cent, was being interviewed.

In 2001, another shooting at the station, known as

Hot 97, involved members of Lil' Kim's entourage. Last week, the rapper was convicted of lying about the incident to a grand jury.

Sharpton has accused the station of instigating the violence by having rappers bait each other on the air. After last month's shooting, he proposed a ban on artists connected to any violent acts, denying them airplay on radio and television for 90 days.

"At what point does it go from programming to inciting," he said. "I'm not giving up on rap music, I'm trying to make sure it's rap music and not attack music."

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados — Police said Barbados shouldn't allow Sizzla, who was arrested in Jamaica last week in connection with a weapons seizure, to perform at a concert in Bridgetown.

Sizzla, whose real name is Miguel Collins, is set to perform Sunday at the National Stadium. The status of the concert was unclear following his arrest in Kingston Thursday. The dancehall singer remains in custody but hasn't been charged.

Attempts to reach Sizzla's manager, Phillip Durrell, for comment have been unsuccessful.

"I will recommend to the Minister of Home Affairs not to give him a work permit" to enter the country, Barbados police commissioner Darwin Dottin said Saturday. "Perhaps his presence here would be inimical to good order."

Sizzla was among 33 people arrested after police and military raided the community of August Town in Jamaica's capital of Kingston. Authorities said they seized six AK-47 rifles, three sniper rifles, a submachine gun and 58 rounds of ammunition.

NEW YORK — Jennifer Aniston says she's been able to "tune out" the "tough and the nasty" headlines and rumors surrounding her separation from Brad Pitt.

"There is always going to be the tough and the nasty. You just tune out to that," said Aniston in an interview on "Access Hollywood" to air Monday. Excerpts were released in advance.

Aniston and Pitt, who were married on July 29, 2000, announced their separation in January, after months of tabloid speculation that their marriage was in trouble.

The 36-year-old actress said that despite being on the receiving end of some negative headlines over the past year, she feels the public is rooting for her.

"There has been so much love and support," said Aniston, who starred in NBC's "Friends." "It feels real good."

Aniston also said she doesn't feel like she's made the full transition from television to film actress. "I feel like I have got one good foot in there, and we will see if they still want to have me back," she said. "I've just got to keep making good movies."

Her screen credits include "The Good Girl," "Bruce Almighty," and the upcoming "Derailed."

BRASILIA, Brazil — Lenny Kravitz has donated one of the guitars used in his first tour of Latin America to Brazil's Zero Hunger campaign. Kravitz handed the guitar to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva just hours before his concert in Brasilia on Saturday.

The guitar will be auctioned on the Internet, Silva's press office said. The food distribution program seeks to end hunger among some 54 million Brazilians who live on a dollar a day or less.

Kravitz's tour of Latin America, which began March 4 in Mexico, concluded Monday in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It also had stops in Chile and Argentina.

According to the singer's Web site, Kravitz will open the U.S. leg of his tour April 5 in Dallas. Stops on the tour also include New York, Boston, Chicago, Denver and Los Angeles.

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