THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2006 Volume 5, Issue 112

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO
1 2 4 6 35
Meganumber: 17
Jackpot: $27 million

FANTASY 5
6 16 25 28 37

DAILY 3
Daytime: 1 3 0
Evening: 4 7 1

DAILY DERBY
1st: 12 Lucky Charms
2nd: 02 Lucky Star
3rd: 07 Eureka !

RACE TIME: 1.41.97

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: http://www.calottery.com

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

James Clifford Hanna, of Canada's Yukon Territory, argued in court in February that "James Clifford Hanna" was merely a name involuntarily given to him and that since he never officially accepted it, he can't be forced to pay James Clifford Hanna's taxes. (He lost.) In December, Terry Dresdow of Milwaukee became the latest person to have his car stolen and retrofitted by the thief with fancy equipment, and then to get his car back after the thief was caught. His 1989 Chevrolet Caprice, which cost him $1,200 used, now has a top-of-the-line stereo system, deluxe spoked wheels and keyless entry.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 82nd day of 2006. There are 283 days left in the year

On March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry made his famous call for American independence from Britain, telling the Virginia Provincial Convention, ``Give me liberty, or give me death!''
In 1919, Benito Mussolini founded his Fascist political movement in Milan, Italy.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I speak the truth, not so much as I would, but as much as I dare; and I dare a little more, as I grow older."

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE
FRENCH ESSAYIST

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Wanna be startin' somethin'

Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Students set out to run laps during the 2006 SMASH School Jog-A-Thon. The PTA-sponsored program raised money for arts and technology programs, with a goal of $10,000. Groups of students, parents and faculty ran in 25-minute intervals.

A mall staple bags it

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

SM PLACE — While bargain hunters said they were sad to see it go, many people seemed excited by the departure of Robinsons-May here earlier this week, as it opens the door to redeveloping a mall that has seen its sales slip and customers flock to the more popular Third Street Promenade.

The retail giant closed its doors Monday as part of a business-realignment plan by Federated Department Stores, which operates both Macy's and Robinsons-May following its merger last year with May Company, the parent of Robinsons-May. Under the reported $11 billion deal, Federated agreed to close Robinsons-May stores at locations where there also was a Macy's.

So far in Southern California, 14 stores have been shut down, including the one at Santa Monica Place mall. About 150 employees from the Santa Monica store have been offered jobs at other stores, including the Macy's at the mall.

Many stores that have been shut down have been replaced by other retailers, such as Federated-owned Bloomingdales, while other mall operators have chosen to include smaller retail chains to maximize space.

Macerich Co., which owns Santa Monica Place, is looking to purchase the store from Federated and possibly add another major retailer, or remodel that section of the mall so it's more in line with recent trends in retail construction — open-air shopping centers, or "lifestyle centers," complete with retail, restaurants, movie theaters and recreation.

"I think this is a great opportunity," said Marco La Mandri, a consultant who has helped recreate downtown areas across the

See ROBINSONS-MAY, page 10

Generating new ideas on energy

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE — Residents and business owners may be able to generate enough energy to power the entire city, saving money while protecting the environment, according to a study on energy independence.

The study also found that conservation and efficiency measures could reduce the city's energy consumption by as much as 38 percent, allowing residents to make a profit by selling the excess power they generate through the use of solar and thermal technologies.

The study was part of what's been called a "community energy independence initiative," approved in concept by the City Council last week as part of its efforts to protect the environment while also protecting residents and businesses from a volatile energy market, where the

See ENERGY INDEPENDENCE, page 11

Step out of liquid

Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Sheldon Sims and Francis Awe of the Nigerian Talking Drum Ensemble perform a water blessing at Venice Beach on Wednesday for World Water Day. The performance was intended to raise awareness for the world water crisis.

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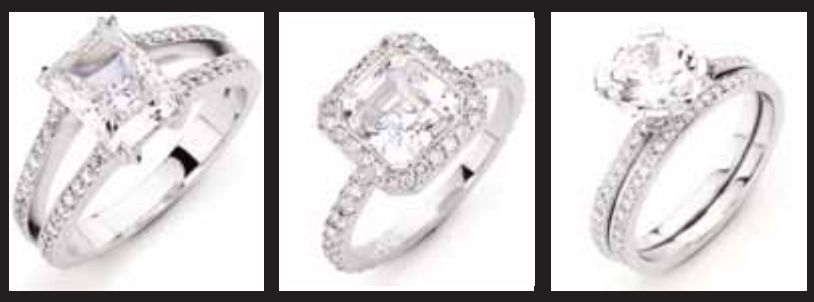

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HOROSCOPES

Enjoy life, Cancer

Santa Monica Daily Press

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ You take the lead, and projects run smoothly. When you get an idea, you might be unstoppable as you make it a reality. You might act in ways that others don't understand. Ultimately, the results count. Tonight: Happy as can be.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Inspiration knocks on your door, whether you are daydreaming or hanging out with friends. Meetings might draw important new information. Open up to unthinkable approaches. You will like the end results. Tonight: Find some mind candy to treat yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You might want to ask a partner to go in a new direction or support an important choice. Both of you need to deal with a key person, but your results could differ dramatically. Learn from this situation. Tonight: Make time for a special person.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ A situation might have you regrouping once more. Your perspective will transform as a result. You might want someone else to ride in the driver's seat. By stepping out and being a passenger, angst will dissolve. Tonight: Enjoy life.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ You need to dig into a project. Though you might want and, on some level, need to cut off the outside world, important information needs to filter through. Pace yourself, stopping for well-timed breaks. Clear out as much as you need to. Tonight: Happy as a cat.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ You don't have to put on your thinking cap as much as let your emotions well up and follow your feelings. Perhaps as a Virgo you could find this process more difficult than many. Allow more fun into your life. Tonight: Let the flirt in you out.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ If you can make home your Grand Central Station today, by all means do. Expect your schedule to be tossed to the high heavens as you regroup. Think carefully about what you need to do. Lighten up. Tonight: Snuggle in.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Speak your mind rather than hold back. Surprising results will follow you. Carefully consider options that surround a personal matter. You might want to think twice before you jump into action. Tonight: Dinner with friends.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ You might need to rethink a personal matter in terms of financial ramifications. Sometimes spontaneity works, but right now covering all your bases might be a very smart move. Gather feedback from others. Ultimately, you will make the right choice. Tonight: Order in.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Examine your long-term goals more carefully, because you can have what you desire right now. Just take aim and shoot. Get feedback before you leap into action. Understand what is necessary. Your mind works overtime. Tonight: Make a party out of a get-together.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★ Don't feel like you have to do anything right now. Use the present planetary climate for research and making sure your ducks are in a row. You could love what goes on behind the scenes. You simply cannot talk about it. Tonight: Fly high.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Your words tend to ring bells. Finally, you get the results you desire. Laughter punctuates your decisions. Know that you are on a roll. Act like you are on a roll. A meeting or gathering helps you get a better grasp on a situation. Tonight: Zero in on what you want.

CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL AUDIT PENDING

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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Santa Monica really digs St. Joseph Center

By Daily Press staff

A social service agency dedicated to helping poor families got a hand of support from Santa Monica this week.

Santa Monica Mayor Robert Holbrook on Wednesday gave a congratulatory address before a crowd of more than 100 people at St. Joseph Center's groundbreaking event.

"It is a partnership that we appreciate," said Holbrook, describing the relationship Santa Monica shares with the Venice-based social service agency.

On the eve of its 30th anniversary, St. Joseph Center is getting ready to build a new main service center at its 204 Hampton Dr. site. Charles Oltman, vice president for the architectural design firm Austin AECOM, said the new building is "a quality, yet economical project." Scheduled for completion towards the latter half of 2007, it will meet the needs of 3,000 working poor individuals and offer such services as affordable childcare, job training and free groceries.

On hand were St. Joseph Center's original founders, Sister Louise Bernstein and Sister Marilyn Rudy.

"This is very hard to believe," said Bernstein. 'It's become all we've hoped for and so much more."

Hard hats on and shovels in hand, the two sisters, along with others including Santa Monica City Councilmembers Kevin McKeown and Richard Bloom, ceremonially dug into a pile of earth to commemorate the start of construction.

St. Joseph Center plans to demolish the old St. Clements school building and begin construction within the next few months. To receive regular e-mail updates about the construction timetable, call (310) 396-6468, ext. 327, or write to publicrelations@stjosephctr.org.

YMCA in the throes of fundraising

By Daily Press staff

Future possibilities at the YMCA can be made possible if today can be sustained.

The YMCA is in the midst of its 2006 sustaining campaign, "Making Tomorrow Possible," with a goal of $180,000. All funds benefit the YMCA's programs, providing a safety net for those in the community who might not be able to afford its services. The campaign is focused on how youth programs instill a sense of responsibility, education and leadership. It also is focused on how the YMCA is able to provide assistance to families that want the experience of engaging in traditional YMCA values, and how its older adults have a sense of belonging to a greater community.

By contributing to the annual sustaining campaign, the YMCA is able to reach out to families and individuals who might otherwise not be able to afford the services. Making the YMCA's community programs accessible not only helps those in need, but creates a broader diversity within its walls, YMCA officials said.

Contributions can be sent to the Santa Monica Family YMCA at 1332 Sixth St., Santa Monica, Ca. 90401, or to make a credit card pledge, call Scott at (310) 393-2721.

Photo courtesy

The campaign team of the Santa Monica Family YMCA's Annual Sustaining Campaign has set a goal of $180,000 to ensure they can keep providing a safety net.

SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 2"	36" - 72"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	27	12/12

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	96" - 120"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	50	6/6

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	156" - 188"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	150	26/28

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	18" - 48"	8:30 am - 10:00 pm	55	11/16

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Wet

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	24" - 36"	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	20	4/4

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 2"	36" - 72"	8:30 am - 4:30 pm	26	14/14

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
(24 Hrs) 0"	48" - 60"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	26	5/11

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

CONDITIONS WATER TEMP: 54°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (1-2 FT)

Today the swell fades, leaving mostly waist to chest high surf for AM sessions, smaller though in the afternoon.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

NW bumps up a bit for SoCal Wednesday...

Small NW by week's end...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

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

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The Q Line

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The new film "Thank You for Smoking" makes light of much of the nation's demonization of smoking, as well as smokers. Here in Santa Monica, anti-smoking laws have already been passed in efforts to rid the beaches and parks of smoke.

The discussion proves timely for Californians, as this week also marked the premiere of the City of Calabasas' new ban of smoking "everywhere ... except as otherwise provided" — the first such wide-sweeping provision in the country. The laws restrict smokers to their homes, balconies and scant designated areas in and around the city.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know: **Has Santa Monica gone far enough to protect citizens from secondhand smoke, or has it already gone too far?**

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition.

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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Santa Monica just spinning its wheels

Editor:

As a resident of the Santa Monica community, I attended Saturday's forum hoping to learn something new and provide my input. I left very disappointed at 11:15 a.m. and did not achieve either of my objectives. The program started over 35 minutes late. This is not acceptable for those of us who dedicated our morning to give our hearts, time and mind in honor of Eddie Lopez. The next 15 minutes was political nonsense. Over 15 minutes was wasted introducing everyone in attendance. Finally, the first speakers up to the podium proceed to tell the audience about all the great things the Santa Monica community and Virginia Park are doing. Again, this is not the place to pat ourselves on the back when we are assembling, because a beautiful young man was killed on Pico Boulevard. What we are doing is clearly not enough. The gang violence plan that was put together a year ago is clearly not working, if we meet on the one year anniversary of its inception over the memory of a murdered child. I left in such a state of shear disappointment, disbelief and disgust. The failure of this community to address this gang violence problem continued last Saturday morning at this forum.

Dr. Lisette Bauersachs
Santa Monica

No more room for 'bleeding hearts'

Editor:

Your reporter's recent feature on the feeding of the homeless in Pacific Palisades Park was fair and balanced (SMDP, March 17, page 1). Nothing can be added that has not been verbalized over and over: That these do-gooders who provide these meals come from a distance. In other words, this problem is not in their backyard. These self-styled good Samaritans would be called enablers in another sector. These unfortunate homeless need to be helped, evaluated and, as much as possible, aided in a re-entry into a better and more mainstream life. This concept is not overly popular in very liberal Santa Monica, but those of us who do embrace this solution and don't feel helping them in a larger, more corrective way infringes upon their civil rights can take heart. Because, folks, the times they are a'changin'. With the commercial and residential growth of Santa Monica comes a more conservative mindset. To implement truly constructive help for the homeless is an idea whose time has come. Bleeding hearts, your time is done.

Sunny Collins
Santa Monica

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to editor@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

City needn't be wary of using imagination

EYE ON THE CITY
BY ELIZABETH RIEL

When it comes to addressing Santa Monica's parking problems, why is it that City Hall always takes the easy way out?

Witness the city's proposed plan to build new parking garages for 1,712 more cars in the already congested downtown area. The lack of imagination, long-range thinking and creative solutions exhibited in this plan is appalling. What's even more appalling is that it took officials six years to come up with this flawed and short-sighted $100 million boondoggle.

Where to begin? First, the plan is based on a "target parking ratio" that compares Santa Monica with other cities including Portland, Ore., Alexandria, Va., and Portsmouth, NH. City Hall's plan states that these cities allocate about 1.5 to 2.2 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial development. Therefore, the illustrious parking task force decided to allot 2.1 parking spaces.

The problem is that this parking ratio is just plain wrong. Take a look at the EPA's January 2006 report, "Parking Spaces, Community Places: Finding the Balance Through Smart Growth Solutions." It states that Portland — a city five times larger than Santa Monica — allows buildings in its central business district a maximum of .7 to 1.0 parking spaces. That's far below the range stated in Santa Monica's proposed plan.

Why are we setting a parking goal at the highest end of this range anyway? Are we saying that we can't come up with any better alternatives than just allowing as many cars as possible downtown?

And I'm not sure why we're comparing ourselves to cities like Portsmouth, Alexandria and Portland. I've actually lived in or nearby all three cities and they vastly differ from Santa Monica in terms of population, availability of public transportation, density and usable land.

Second, the proposed plan also is based on the presumption that development downtown will proceed at a rate similar to what's happened over the past 10 years, roughly 50,000 square feet per year.

Is it just my imagination or have city officials and more importantly, residents, not yet decided on how much development we want downtown? Why are we basing our parking plan on development assumptions that may or may not be correct? The fact that a proposal for downtown parking has been put forth before we know what the master plan will be is the height of arrogance and incompetence.

Third, the city's report also states that 14 intersections downtown are projected to operate at unacceptable conditions in 2015. That's without the new parking project, folks. Doesn't it figure that bringing more cars and traffic into the downtown area to park at the new structures would only make this congestion worse?

For a city that prides itself on its progressiveness and sustainability, why aren't we looking at alternatives to massive parking structures? Perhaps the parking task force should consult the EPA report for innovative solutions and ways to reduce the demand for parking.

How about improving transit options, like more frequent and reliable Big Blue Bus runs and better service? Installing more and safer places to park bicycles? Encouraging employers to sell parking rights on weekends? Renting existing lots that are currently vacant on the weekends? Running free shuttle buses from hotels to downtown?

Or what about building parking structures farther away that use free shuttles and incentive-based approaches to attract people who otherwise might park downtown? Free movie tickets or restaurant coupons, anyone?

The report did get one thing right — parking is consistently cited as one of the top three issues facing Santa Monica residents. But traffic ranks as the No. 2 concern of residents, ahead of parking. So why did city officials just propose a plan that will increase traffic on some of our busiest streets?

In a March 10 editorial, the Santa Monica Daily Press called the idea of reducing parking spaces and putting a hold on the proposed plan "asinine."

The only thing that's asinine here is proposing an unimaginative, narrow-minded parking plan that will do nothing more than increase traffic and congestion for years to come in downtown Santa Monica.

(Elizabeth Riel is a Santa Monica resident. Write her at elizriel@yahoo.com.)

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COMMENTARY

GUEST COMMENTARY **BY JOHN W. WHITEHEAD**

Losing freedoms are means to an end

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." — The First Amendment.

The American people are in grave danger of losing their basic freedoms. The simple fact is that the Constitution is being undermined on virtually every front. Two recent events — one a poll, the other a speech — highlight just how far down the road we have gone.

A survey released several weeks ago by the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum found that less than 1 percent of adults who responded to a national poll could identify the five rights protected by the First Amendment — freedom of religion, speech, the press, assembly and the right to petition the government. On the other hand, more than half — 52 percent — of the respondents could name at least two of the characters in the animated "Simpsons" television family, and 20 percent could name all five. And although half could name none of the freedoms in the First Amendment, a majority — 54 percent — could name at least one of the three judges on the TV program American Idol, 41 percent could name two and one-fourth could name all three.

In a culture infatuated with celebrity and consumed in entertainment, it should come as no surprise that the American people know virtually nothing about their rights. They are constitutionally illiterate. "There was a depth of confusion that we weren't expecting," noted Dave Anderson, executive director of the museum. "I think people take their freedoms for granted. Bottom line."

But it gets worse. Many who responded to the survey had a strange conception of what was in the First Amendment. For example, 21 percent said the "right to own a pet" was listed someplace between "Congress shall make no law" and "redress of grievances." Some 17 percent said that the First Amendment contained the "right to drive a car," and 38 percent believed that "taking the Fifth" was part of the First Amendment. Think about this for a moment. How could James Madison, who depended on horses for transportation in his day, have placed the "right to drive a car" in the First Amendment?

The second event occurred on March 9. That day, newly retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor gave an address at Georgetown University to corporate lawyers. In her speech, O'Connor said that the United States is in danger of edging toward authoritarian government — even a dictatorship — if the judiciary is undermined. O'Connor specifically pointed to the barrage of criticism which the Republican right has heaped on the courts.

In her address, O'Connor singled out a warning to the judiciary issued last year by scandal-ridden Tom Delay (R-Tex.), the former Republican leader in the House of Representatives. After the courts refused to save Terry Schiavo's life last March, Delay, speaking at the Christian Right's Justice Sunday, said: "The time will come for the men responsible for this to answer for their behavior." Delay later called for the impeachment of the judges involved in the Schiavo case, calling for more scrutiny of "an arrogant, out-of-control, unaccountable judiciary that thumbed their nose at Congress and the president."

These sorts of threats, O'Connor said, "pose a direct threat to our constitutional freedom." And as she told the lawyers assembled, "I want you to tune your ears to these attacks. You have an obligation to speak up. Statutes and constitutions do not protect judicial independence — people do."

One of the essential foundations of American government is an independent judiciary. An independent judiciary exists to protect individual rights from the other branches of the government. If not, those rights would amount to nothing. Thus, the courts must occasionally correct a president and even strike down a congressional enactment if it is unconstitutional. Of course, this will, as O'Connor said, occasionally upset the politicians. But if the courts didn't do this, they would not be doing their job — that is, to preserve the system of checks and balances so crucial to democratic government.

This balance is particularly relevant for us today when presidents routinely attempt to end-run the Constitution and a flaccid Congress has a near inability to act. In times such as these, the courts must act as a check on runaway executive power. If not, there is nothing to stop an imperial presidency. That is why O'Connor warned: "We must be ever-vigilant against those who strong-arm the judiciary."

We live in strange times — we may even be at a crossroads. There are those who believe we may soon be forced to choose between freedom and security once and for all. But when Americans have little clue as to what their freedoms really are, what do you suppose they will choose? As Justice O'Connor concluded: "It takes a lot of degeneration before a country falls to dictatorship, but we should avoid these ends by avoiding these beginnings."

I fear the "beginnings" have already begun.

(Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute. He can be contacted at johnw@rutherford.org.)

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STATE

Superintendent: California students are on 'right track'

BY JULIET WILLIAMS
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Less than a third of California schools have met the state's achievement goals, but a majority of them continue to make progress, state Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell said Tuesday.

"California students, by any measurement, continue to make academic progress. Public education in the state of California is on the right track," O'Connell said as he released the annual statewide Academic Performance Index scores and improvement targets.

The state wants all schools to score at least 800 out of a possible 1,000.

The Department of Education gives each school a base score between 200 and 1,000, based on the results of statewide testing and a growth target they are expected to meet for the following year. Schools also are ranked on a scale of 1 to 10 in a system that compares the school by demographics with 100 others around the state.

But O'Connell's so-called "growth model," in which all schools are expected to make incremental progress each year, is not compatible with some of the standards in the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which has a goal of having all students proficient at grade level by 2013.

Having two systems with different measures of student performance is complicated for parents and administrators, O'Connell acknowledged. He said his office wants to "harmonize" the state and federal systems.

Critics say the state's API system is too complicated and allows failing schools to hide poor performance because their growth target changes each year. California Business for Education Excellence, a lobbying group pushing for tougher standards, said the API system should be scrapped.

It would take some schools 50 years to achieve grade-level proficiency with API's goals, said the group's president, Jim Lanich.

"If the target keeps shifting each year, how can we know with any certainty which schools are actually improving academic achievement? How can we know which schools are closing achievement gaps?" Lanich said in a statement.

Schools that fail to meet No Child Left Behind benchmarks face escalating sanctions, while California has only voluntary accountability programs. There is no deadline to meet the 800 API goal.

The competing systems mean some California schools score well by state standards but fail under federal ones, Secretary of Education Alan Bersin said during an education forum last week in Pomona. He said the API system needs revision.

> **"California students, by any measurement, continue to make academic progress. Public education in the state of California is on the right track,"**
>
> **JACK O'CONNELL**
> Superintendent of Public Instruction

"It does not put enough of a spotlight on the academic achievement gap, which I consider the primary failure of our academic institutions," he said.

On Tuesday, O'Connell said that nearly 12 percent of high schools have met the 800 target, compared with just 5 percent when the API system began in 1999. He attributed improvements to the looming high school exit exam, which students are required to pass this year for the first time to graduate.

Whether federal officials will grant California more flexibility is unclear. The state did not apply to be one of 10 states in a pilot program to submit alternate achievement models this year.

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STATE

STATE BRIEFS

Council decides against cop out

By The Associated Press

RIALTO, Calif. — The city council reversed a decision to disband the Police Department, ending months of acrimony over the plan to contract with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement duties.

The council voted Sept. 13 to dump the police department, leading to months of legal wrangling and recall efforts. City Attorney Robert Owen announced Tuesday night the city council had changed its mind.

"It is now clear the council stands united in one position, that the community has suffered long enough from the divisiveness created by the issue, and the time has come for the council to move forward in a united effort to solve its policing problems," Owen said.

The decision was announced after the council emerged from a closed session. It came after a state official's legal opinion that City Clerk Barbara McGee erred when she invalidated 85 percent of more than 5,000 signatures on petitions to put the fate of the police department on a ballot.

Mayor Judith Vargas and Councilman Ed Scott can now move to negotiate a two-year contract with the police union, Owen said, adding a two-year contract should allow enough time to "rebuild the department" and resolve several lawsuits filed in the aftermath of the council's Sept. 13 vote.

"I look forward to meeting tomorrow with the (Rialto Police Benefit Association). We've opened a door to our Police Department to become the department it needs to be," Scott said.

Judge admits lack of judgment

By The Associated Press

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — Superior Court Judge Bernard Schwartz admitted to seeking preferential treatment when police pulled him over for drunken driving in Pismo Beach last summer.

Schwartz, who is assigned to the Hall of Justice downtown, admitted to the state Commission on Judicial Performance that he sought preferential treatment because he was a judge. He was appointed to the bench in October 2003.

Schwartz was pulled over by Pismo Beach police officers on July 16. He pleaded no contest to drunken driving in San Luis Obispo County on Sept. 25.

Schwartz attorney Edward George Jr. filed a reply to the commission saying the judge admitted driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.17 percent, more than twice the legal limit for driving in California.

Schwartz also admitted to the commission's allegations that he repeatedly tried to avoid being arrested and jailed by seeking preferential treatment because he is a judge.

After all attempts to avoid arrest and jail failed, Schwartz began to swear at the officers, the commission said. The commission — composed of three judges, two lawyers and six members of the public — can remove, censure, publicly admonish or privately discipline the judge.

A nightmarish ride ends safely

By The Associated Press

POMONA, Calif. — Carjackers splashed a man with gasoline at the end of the ordeal and put him in the trunk, but they couldn't find a match so they locked him in the car where he stewed all night in gas fumes.

The Fontana man, whose name wasn't released, was rescued Tuesday morning after a Pomona Unified School District employee spotted the car parked near Diamond Ranch High School.

The victim was stopped at a red light on Phillips Ranch Road at 11 p.m. Monday when an armed carjacker opened the passenger door and got inside, investigators said. He was ordered to drive to a secluded area near the high school where two more men were waiting.

The three men took the victim's money and items inside the car, then they ordered the victim to lie down in the trunk of his car, where he was doused with gasoline, investigators said.

The trio apparently planned to set the man and his vehicle ablaze before fleeing, but they couldn't find a match, police said.

At about 5 a.m., a school district employee saw the vehicle and called police. Firefighters took the victim to a hospital where he was treated for minor injuries and released.

Sniff doesn't like whiff of new motto

By The Associated Press

LA QUINTA, Calif. — The Coachella Valley's proposed tourism marketing slogan "Give in to the desert, you're surrounded" doesn't sit well with Councilman Stanley Sniff.

"I would hope that is not finalized," Sniff said Tuesday during a presentation by Jeff Beckelman, president of the eight-city Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Authority.

"Obviously, 'You're surrounded' has received a lot of concern," Beckelman told the council. "'You're surrounded' is a subhead. The main tag line is, 'Give in to the desert.'

"When you take a tag line out of context, it really loses its meaning and gets confusing."

Beckelman has been making the rounds in the eight desert cities since the authority picked the slogan in January. He also got a cool reception in Palm Desert earlier this month.

Sniff said the slogan was hard to remember.

"You have until close to the end of the year to convince us that we're spending our money properly," Mayor Don Adolph told Beckelman.

"We listened to how we could best interact with your community," Beckelman said. "How we fit in the Southern California (and) Southwestern marketplace."

The presentation outlined 15 main selling-point categories for the Coachella Valley, ranging from gambling to nature to gay offerings. The marketing campaign would feature each city under several of those headings.

"We think we're selling the sizzle, the excitement," Beckelman said. He added, "This isn't set in stone yet."

The authority will spend about $500,000 on advertising during the next 12 months, running ads in travel and trade magazines, the Internet and through other outlets.

Officials on edge after girl's rape

By The Associated Press

INDIO, Calif. — Security was increased at a Coachella Valley elementary school after a 10-year-old girl reported she was sexually assaulted in the school bathroom.

The Palm View Elementary School student, who was taken to John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital, was attacked earlier this month, Sgt. Jorge Pinon of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department said in a news release.

No information about the girl was being released, sheriff's spokesman Dennis Gutierrez said, adding it was the first time he's heard of such a young student being raped on campus during school hours.

Principal Maria Grieve said the Sheriff's Department informed her about the incident Monday afternoon. A full-time security guard and two additional yard supervisors were on hand Tuesday at the 650-student school.

Pilot may have dipped to new lows

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A Mexican airline pilot was charged with groping women in Manhattan Beach and El Segundo dress shops.

Ernesto Margolies Coloma, 37, who flies for Mexico's leading regional airline Aerolitoral, was arrested March 16 after he allegedly asked an El Segundo dress shop owner to try on some clothes for him.

"He is an airline pilot, and he flies into LAX periodically," El Segundo police Lt. Walt Krumbach said.

Coloma pleaded not guilty on Monday to three misdemeanor counts of sexual battery. Bail was set at $25,000 and Coloma was ordered to hand over his passport, pilot's license and visa.

In January, Manhattan Beach police issued a warning that a man had walked into several downtown stores and molested or was about to molest female clerks who tried on clothes for him.

Krumbach said the man would act as if he were adjusting the dress or skirt for them, then he would touch their breasts, buttocks and waists.

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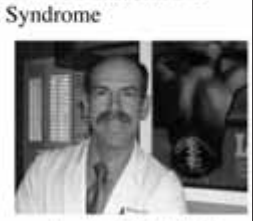
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STATE

Auction block is end of the line for 'Duke'

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD
AP Political Writer

RANCHO DOMINGUEZ, Calif. — Silver-plated candelabras. A cedar-lined lingerie cabinet. Persian rugs. An oak hutch carved with lions' heads, tree limbs and acorns.

The ill-gotten spoils from former Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham's bribery scheme — a household of valuable antiques, rugs and home furnishings — will be auctioned by the government Thursday.

The public on Tuesday was given a preview of the loot, which was laid out in orderly rows in a warehouse near Los Angeles. The items were purchased for Cunningham — who is serving a prison term for taking $2.4 million in bribes — by defense contractors in exchange for his influence in the award of government contracts.

"Lavish," said Jim Sudomir, a retiree from Fallbrook, summing up Cunningham's lifestyle as he looked over the display. "If he was going to be a crook he should have been a smarter one. He thought he was above all that. ... Look where he's at now. He's in jail."

The inventory reveals that the contractors spared little expense to appease Cunningham's collector's tastes.

There is a leather sofa festooned with brass tacks. A deeply grained, solid cherry sleigh bed. Nearly a dozen rugs, splayed over wooden skids. Marble-topped nightstands, armoires and sideboards, many featuring stained glass, brass fittings and intricate carvings.

Together, they provide a peek into the lifestyle of a corrupt, privileged congressman.

"There's a real mix of different styles — art deco, French Provincial, American pioneer," said Britney Sheehan, who works for the company that will auction the goods.

Sheehan said she could not disclose the estimate of what the 34 lots might fetch, since officials don't want to influence potential bidders. Some of the rugs have previously been valued at as much as $40,000.

Cunningham's property is among hundreds of seized items that will be sold, ranging from luxury cars to computer equipment.

Anyone can make an offer on his items — except Cunningham.

Cunningham's prison term, eight years and four months, was described by attorneys for both sides as the longest prison sentence ever given to a member of Congress. The corruption scheme is unmatched in the annals of Congress.

"Lavish, if he was going to be a crook he should have been a smarter one. He thought he was above all that. ... Look where he's at now. He's in jail."

JIM SUDOMIR
Retiree from Fallbrook

In addition to his prison sentence, Cunningham was ordered to pay $1.8 million in restitution for back taxes and forfeit an additional $1.85 million for cash bribes he received, plus the proceeds from the sale of his mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, one of America's wealthiest communities.

The furnishes came from the home.

Some of the property is already gone. Cunningham sold a Rolls-Royce — one of the bribes — before he was indicted. He also transferred ownership of a yacht, another illegal gift from contractors.

Cunningham put his public office up for auction, and Thursday the ill-gained household goes to the highest bidder. Assistant U.S. Attorney Phil Halpern called the auction an "appropriate part of the legal process."

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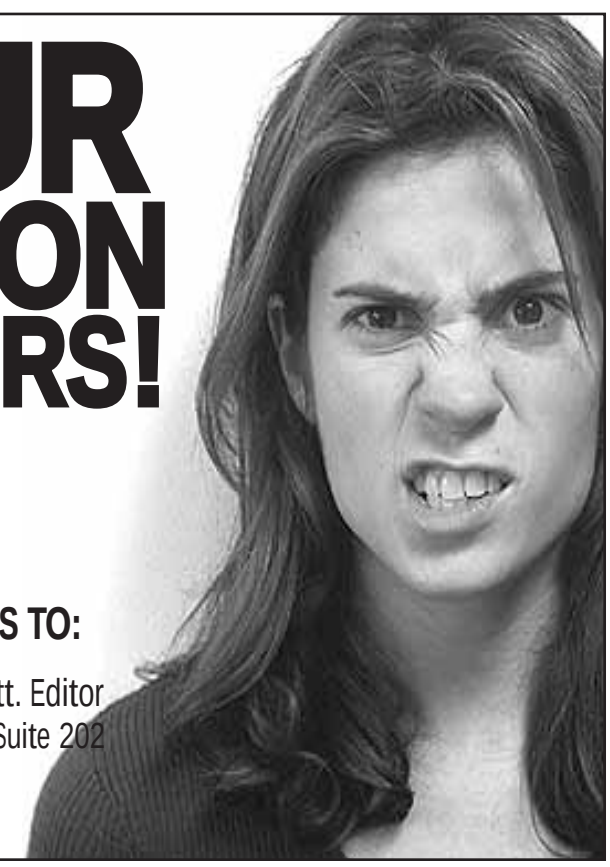


Business

History grinds away

THE WEEKLY RECKONING
BY BILL BONNER

Well, another week has passed away. What history was made?

First, the U.S. current account hit a new record. American economists brushed it aside, but it is a warning of more history to come. Neither a person, nor an economy, nor even an empire can spend more than it makes forever.

But what history are we talking about? An epic on the U.S. economy such as: American Wealth: Gone with the Wind? Or, a sentimental narrative of Ben Bernanke's role: Catcher at the Fed? Ah, there's the trouble with history. You can only read it after it has been written. We don't even know the title. There are no sneak previews, advance releases, no outlines or summaries. When we write a book, everyone knows months in advance what it will say. The publisher has the gist of it in his hands even before we begin writing. And then, when the manuscript is completed, we send it around to friends and colleagues to see how they react to it. If they are not too appalled, we send the thing to press.

Not so with history. No mortal eyes see it until after the fact, until after it has happened, until after the damage has been sustained. Until then, we just guess and whisper to one another with nothing more to go on than what history has written before. Is this war in Iraq going to be like Britain's war in Iraq of the 1920s? Or like France's war in Algeria of the 1950s? Will the next bear market on Wall Street be like the bear market of 2000-2001 or the bear market of 1966-1982? Yes, like Jacqueline Suzanne or Tom Clancy, history has her favorite plots, her habitual characters, her familiar twists and turns. But, she has to keep us guessing too or we will stop reading.

How will the current account story play out? We look at history's previous works and we find little to help us. Usually, it is a third world banana republic that runs deficits of this magnitude not an empire that has gone bananas. When the deficits reach 5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the world's investors typically won't stand for it. They sell off the nation's currency and its bonds and vow never to go near the country again, not even for a holiday.

Meanwhile, in the homeland, things turn nasty. In Argentina, for example, the middle class was practically wiped out in the last chapter of that South American classic, Greenspan of the Pampas. The rich had their money in Miami — in dollars. The poor had nothing to lose, but those who trusted the government, its money, and its promises, were cleaned out.

But what's this? Since 2001, the Argentine Peso has risen 7 percent against the dollar. The U.S. is running a current account deficit of 7 percent of GDP — and rising. If we could tell anything from reading history's other financial farces, we would guess that what awaits the U.S. dollar is inflation and then hyperinflation.

All over the world, central bankers are doing their level best to create it.

No one wants a rising currency.

That does not mean they won't get it. For here is the dramatic tension in this story: While everyone wants inflation, other factors are working against it. China, India, the Internet, globalization, and Wal-Mart — all are pushing prices down, not up. And we wonder, too, if history would write a story with such an ambiguous moral lesson. Millions of middle-class debtors have borrowed money, confident that they will never have to pay it back. The Bank of Ben Bernanke will make sure of that, they told themselves when they stuck their hands out. The fed chairman has gone on record saying that he would drop money from helicopters, if necessary, in order to make sure that a 2006 dollar will be worth more than a 2007 dollar, which will be worth more than a 2008 dollar.

Yes, that is another illustration of how history grinds away. The dollar was once stable and solid and the Fed was set up to make sure it stayed that way. Instead, the Fed gradually destroys the dollar and provides speculators with an opportunity. Now, they can anticipate the Fed's game and play their own. They can borrow more than they should, knowing that the money they pay back will be worth less than it should. They can join the Fed in cheating the savers and lenders — who, of course, have their own little hustles going. But, will history really let America's borrowers off the hook? What kind of morality tale would it be if the all these gamers, opportunists, and chiselers got what they expected, rather than what they deserved?

(For more insight and analysis, visit www.dailyreckoning.com.)

Bundle of McClatchy papers likely to be sold off piecemeal

BY DEBORAH YAO
AP Business Writer

PHILADELPHIA — The bloc of 12 newspapers being sold by the McClatchy Co. as part of its acquisition of Knight Ridder Inc. will likely be broken up and bought by several buyers, McClatchy said Tuesday.

Elaine Lintecum, a spokeswoman for McClatchy, said there has been strong interest in the papers by several parties, although she declined to name them.

"It's not likely to be one transaction," she said. "It's not likely to be 12 transactions. It's somewhere in between."

Last week, McClatchy agreed to pay $4.5 billion in cash and stock to acquire San Jose, Calif.-based Knight Ridder, the parent of The Philadelphia Inquirer and the Philadelphia Daily News.

The deal gives Sacramento, Calif.-based McClatchy 32 newspapers. Of those, 12 will be sold, including the two Philadelphia dailies and the Times Leader in Wilkes-Barre.

The papers are being jettisoned because they're in slower growing markets.

Analysts have cited industry leader Gannett Co. in McLean, Va., as a possible buyer, as well as MediaNews Group Inc., a privately held newspaper company based in Denver and run by William Dean Singleton. The Newspaper Guild, backed by financier Ron Burkle, also announced its interest.

John Morton, president of Morton Research Inc., a media consulting company in Silver Spring, Md., said the logical buyers for most of the dailies would be publishing companies in nearby areas. That's because a publisher that owns several newspapers becomes more attractive to advertisers, who only need to deal with one company and get exposure to several cities.

"Most newspapers like to cluster ownership," said Morton, who also writes a column about the newspaper industry for the American Journalism Review.

By buying nearby papers, Morton said, a publisher can boost ad revenue and cut costs by consolidating administration and publishing functions. Antitrust issues shouldn't be a problem if the two publications aren't in the same city or adjacent communities.

Morton said it makes sense for MediaNews to buy the San Jose Mercury News and The Monterey County Herald, both in Northern California, since it owns a slew of newspapers in the East Bay.

Singleton also recently visited the Inquirer, fueling speculation that he might buy the paper.

MediaNews didn't immediately return a call seeking comment.

The owner of The Plain Dealer in Cleveland, Advance Publications in New York, could be interested in the Akron Beacon Journal.

Gannett could take a look at The News-Sentinel in Fort Wayne, Ind., since it owns The Indianapolis Star and a paper in Muncie, Ind. Gannett also might be a bidder for the Philadelphia papers, since it's shown interest in entering big markets in recent years.

Gannett declined to comment.

As for the Newspaper Guild and Burkle's Yucaipa Cos. in Los Angeles, Morton said unions that have talked about buying papers on the block often couldn't get financing.

The Guild is different because the union has Burkle's backing. But Morton notes that it's unusual for outside equity investors to get into the newspaper industry. One scenario is that the investor will flip the property after about five years, once it gets a good return.

Don't neglect nest egg while building business

MARKET MATTERS
BY BRIAN HEPP

Your ideas are fresh, the plan is complete and you're ready to begin building your business. While your dreams of becoming an entrepreneur may seem to be right around the corner, consider the challenges before you leap too far. On the road ahead, there could be financial uncertainty and loss, but even in the land of risk, debt and development, abandoning your nest egg is a mistake. While investing in your new business may be the first thing on your mind, don't forget about funding your future.

Establish balance by starting slow. You will never be able to nurture your nest egg if you are easily enticed by the fancy stuff. The last thing you need is a large overhead, so you may want to consider starting slow, perhaps working out of your home in the first few years and limiting the amount of equipment you buy. Research and development costs are inevitable, but remember, this process can be quite effective, even without the latest gadgets.

Diversify your assets. You should save for retirement separate from your business. Relying solely on the proceeds from the sale of your business down the road is a very risky strategy for retirement planning. The business cycle is quite unpredictable, so it is impossible to predict what someone will pay for it in the future. Take advantage of the many ways you can grow your nest egg savings on a tax-deferred basis, as well as reduce your personal taxes.

Establishing an owner-only 401(k) plan may be a great place to start because this type of retirement plan is structured for those who want to increase their retirement savings while keeping plan administration costs low. This is a good fit for the new entrepreneur because to establish this type of retirement plan, the company cannot employ anyone other than owners and their spouses. In 2006, an owner can make an employer contribution of up to 25 percent of his or her eligible compensation — an individual's eligible compensation cannot exceed $220,000 for 2006 — in addition to his or her salary deferral contributions of $15,000. All contributions have the potential to accumulate tax-deferred and salary deferrals decrease the owner's taxable income. It is important to remember that the combination of employer and employee contributions cannot exceed 100 percent of the owner's compensation or $44,000. Also, owners 50 years old or older can make an additional $5,000 catch-up contribution for 2006.

Of course, this is just one retirement plan option to consider. The most important point is that you invest time and energy into your new business while nurturing your nest egg just the same. In a time of increased competition and market volatility, you never know what the future may hold. Be prepared.

(Brian Hepp is a financial consultant for Santa Monica-based A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc. Member SIPC. He can be reached at (310) 453-0077 or at brian.hepp@agedwards.com. A.G. Edwards is a full-service retail brokerage firm that offers a complete spectrum of financial products and services, including stocks, bonds and mutual funds, financial retirement planning and tax-advantage investments.)

Checking out: Robinsons' exit leaves some questions

ROBINSONS-MAY, from page 1

country and is currently working with property owners here to create vision for the future of downtown Santa Monica. "When you have a major anchor like Robinsons-May, they take up a lot of space. Now you have the opportunity to see how you can better use that space … which may include opening up the mall and integrating it with the Third Street Promenade so, to shoppers, the transition from the Promenade to the mall would be seamless."

Randy Brant, a senior vice president of Macerich, said the company, which operates more than 70 malls across the country, is evaluating its options and is hoping to finalize a deal with Federated soon to purchase the Robinsons-May location and its 137,000 square feet of retail space.

"We feel confident we will reach a deal, and once it is finalized, we should announce our plan," he said. "But I have nothing to announce at this point."

Brant said several major retailers have contacted Macerich and are interested in moving in.

Macerich angered many residents in 2004 when it announced plans to demolish the mall and replace it with three skyscrapers, standing as tall as 21 stories, that would have included apartments, condos, office space and retail space. The proposal also included extending the Third Street Promenade to Colorado Avenue.

The City Council rejected the idea after intense public comment showed overwhelming opposition to the development.

"Any time you talk about increasing density, especially on the Westside (of Los Angeles County), there will be a huge push back," said Jack Keyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp. "People just don't want it. The idea of more people means more traffic congestion, and traffic is just a huge problem for the Westside. If you decide to expand the mall and put in some unique stores and sort of open it up to the Promenade, then maybe the community would buy into it."

In brainstorming sessions held last year with more than 300 residents, many said they would like to see the Promenade extend past the mall through the Civic Center to Main Street, with an emphasis on preserving open space. Residents in those sessions said they would support the creation of more housing and office space, but the height of any new buildings would have to be capped at 12 stories.

Many said they would like to see the mall transformed into an open-air shopping center like the Grove.

"Enclosed malls are outdated," Keyser said. "People want that sort of walking experience, that outdoor ambiance. Older malls also have a real problem with the homogenization of retail. No matter where you go, it's the same old stores. With these lifestyle centers there is sort of the same thing going on, but it's the ambiance that draws people."

While there is excitement in the air over the future of the mall, there are those who warn that the mall could be in for some rough times until decisions are made regarding redevelopment and a new retailer to anchor the mall is chosen.

Without Robinsons-May, some said they have no reason to visit the mall.

"Robinsons-May was so much cheaper than Macy's, but they always had quality stuff," said Lela Witherspoon, a shopper. "Now, I'll just have to find somewhere else to shop where I can get discounts. Some probably won't even miss it now that it's gone, but to those of us who love to hunt for bargains, this is going to be a big loss."

Rob York, a consultant for the Bayside District Corp., an organization that manages downtown with City Hall, said the mall could lose several tenants

See ROBINSONS-MAY, page 11

Birds of a feather

Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

A quartet of birds perch themselves in an Agava, the indigenous plants growing along Bay Street.

LOCAL

City envisions future of independent power

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE, from page 1

price for power can fluctuate greatly from month to month.

"We are future-proofing the community … making ourselves more energy secure and also improving the quality of our buildings by becoming more efficient," said Susan Munves, City Hall's energy and green building programs administrator. "We will be saving money that would otherwise be wasted on electricity, and we are protecting the environment."

The solar study calculates that commercial buildings would account for about 30 percent of the total investment. Industrial and municipal buildings would represent 6 percent and 3 percent, respectively, with residential buildings accounting for the remaining 61 percent.

It also is expected that the initiative would substantially benefit the local economy by creating energy cost savings that may be re-invested locally. The installation of solar panels also may provide employment opportunities, according to the study.

The study identified 17,500 structures here that are physically suitable for the installation of rooftop solar electric or solar thermal systems. While it will take between 15 and 20 years to reach the goal of total energy independence, the council has instructed Munves and her staff to embark on a two-year pilot program to demonstrate how the initiative could work, as well as a cost-benefit analysis.

Current estimates put the cost of the two-year project at $966,000. The study found that the project could generate an estimated net savings of $375,863, with a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in the amount of 430 tons.

Properties to be included in the pilot project include, but are not limited to, the Village multi-family residential complex to be located in the newly-designed Civic Center, the public beach club to be located at the former Marion Davies estate, the Civic Center parking structure and the Big Blue Bus facility.

A total of 50 buildings — public, private, commercial and residential — will be included in the two-year project, with more public buildings to possibly be added as the project progresses, according to the study.

There is some concern that the initiative will not be able to produce the type of energy generation outlined in the study conducted by Munves and her staff, and that once installed, the equipment will not last long enough to warrant such an investment.

Munves said those are questions she and her staff will answer as they develop a business plan and seek offers from companies who manufacture and install solar panels, turbines and other green technology.

According to Munves, her staff also will have to invest a lot of time and money into educating the public about the project and the benefits of installing solar technology.

Getting businesses and residents to jump on board, however, could prove difficult. According to a survey conducted by City Hall, less than half of the 250 property owners contacted said they were supportive of investing in an integrated energy system.

"The downside to this is that it requires substantial investment at first and the payback is not always fast enough for businesses and their short-term outlook for profits," Munves said.

For commercial property owners, City Hall could enter into a public/private partnership with investment firms to provide owners with a lease/purchase option to finance and install photovoltaic, or solar electric systems on their buildings, according to the study.

Under that approach, the building owner would enter into a long-term power purchase agreement with the investment firm and receive a savings on Southern California Edison's utility rate based on the kilowatt-hours produced by the installed systems. The firm would invest a significant portion of the money needed for each installation of solar or other technology and, in exchange, retain ownership of the system and accrue any rebates and tax incentives. City Hall could use its own bond financing to cover the remaining portion of the cost of the systems, be guaranteed reimbursement by the investors, and retain the solar renewable energy credits (SRECS) that could be later sold to pay for additional investment in renewable energy for the community.

For residential property owners, City Hall could solicit prospective hardware suppliers, installers, and local financial institutions to participate in the energy independence initiative. Residents could be offered a pre-qualified package of services and hardware at a reduced cost. After installation, each of the commercial and residential properties would be monitored to ensure that the upgrades perform as designed and, on an ongoing basis, each site would be monitored to calculate energy savings.

In 20 years, Munves said she hopes Santa Monica will be a leader in using renewable energy, with each home generating power from the rays of the sun. City Hall also could invest in technology that harnesses energy generated by ocean waves rolling into the Santa Monica Bay.

"We must be committed to moving away from fossil fuels," Munves said. "Or else we will choke under global warming."

For merchants, it's wait-and-see

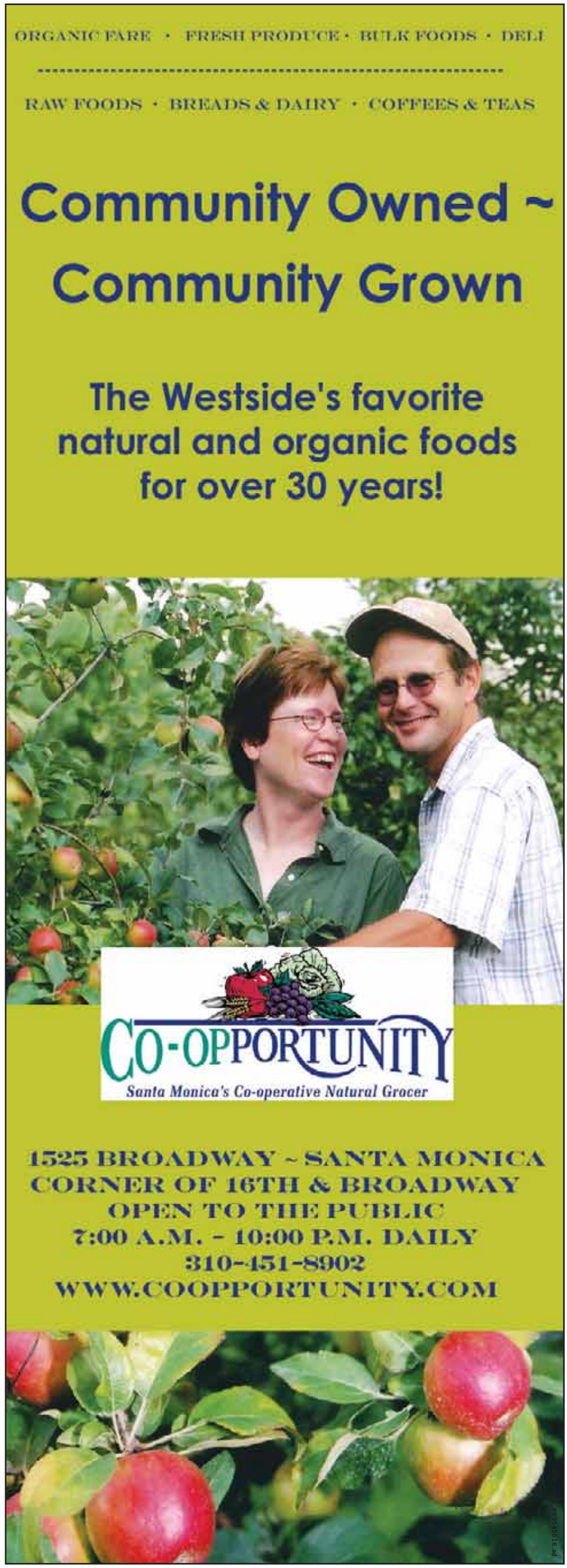
ROBINSONS-MAY, from page 10

over the coming months if business takes a turn for the worse.

"This certainly opens up some interesting opportunities, but in the short term this is a big problem," York said of Robinsons-May's departure. "The mall already has trouble attracting shoppers and sort of building that excitement that brings people in, and this is only going to create a greater challenge."

Several merchants with stores near Robinsons-May in Santa Monica Place said they are taking a "wait-and-see" attitude before they start to worry about how the loss of the retailer would affect their businesses. Some said they have seen more customers purchasing merchandise from them because Robinsons-May is gone. But they said that could drop off as word gets out that "there is nothing on this side of the mall."

"It's been only two days now since it closed, so I'm not going to panic," said Samina Azzat of Purse Collections. "It would be good though if we had some more higher-end retail so that more residents come. Right now, it's mostly tourists who support us."



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NATIONAL

Delayed deportation gets Supreme attention

BY JENNIFER TALHELM
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — In a case that could determine how the country deals with thousands of longtime illegal residents, the U.S. Supreme Court considered Wednesday whether a deported Mexican should be allowed to re-enter the U.S. and join his family in Utah.

Humberto Fernandez-Vargas first came to the U.S. from Mexico in the 1970s. Although he was deported several times early on, he has lived steadily in the U.S. since 1982. He married a U.S. citizen, fathered a child and started a trucking company.

But after he applied for legal status in 2001, he was deported under a 1996 law, which revoked the right to an appeal before an immigration judge. He was barred from applying for legal residency or even from seeking relief.

At issue is whether the law should have applied to Fernandez-Vargas at all, since he last entered the U.S. more than a decade before the statute was enacted.

Sri Srinivasan, assistant to the solicitor general, argued Wednesday for the government that the law took effect when Fernandez-Vargas was deported the last time. Also, Congress was clear that it should apply to immigrants who entered the U.S. before the statute was passed.

But Fernandez-Vargas's lawyer, David Gossett, argued that by applying a statute that wasn't in place when Fernandez-Vargas last entered the country, the government unfairly and retroactively created a new punishment.

Justice Antonin Scalia and Chief Justice John Roberts asked why any illegal immigrant who had already been deported would think he had a right to appeal.

"Why wouldn't (the immigrant) think ... 'whatever rules they have for kicking me out would apply?"' Scalia asked.

Gossett answered, "In 1982, my client reasonably expected Congress wouldn't categorically take away from him the right to give him a route to stay."

The lower courts have divided over whether the statute is retroactive. Two U.S. circuit courts of appeals — the 6th and the 9th — have said that the statute should only apply to residents who re-entered the country after the new law became effective.

Others, including the 10th Circuit, which decided Fernandez-Vargas's case, follow the government's argument.

Immigration lawyers and advocacy groups are watching the case. The issue is particularly sensitive now, as Congress is debating whether to again change laws applying to the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants living in the U.S.

The court's decision has widespread implications for those residents, hundreds of thousands of whom may be in the same position as Fernandez-Vargas.

Fernandez-Vargas, who lived primarily in Ogden, Utah, worked as a truck driver and eventually owned his own business. During the 20 years he lived in the country, he was never arrested for any other reason. He married in 2001. His wife and their teenage son have had a tough time dealing with the separation.

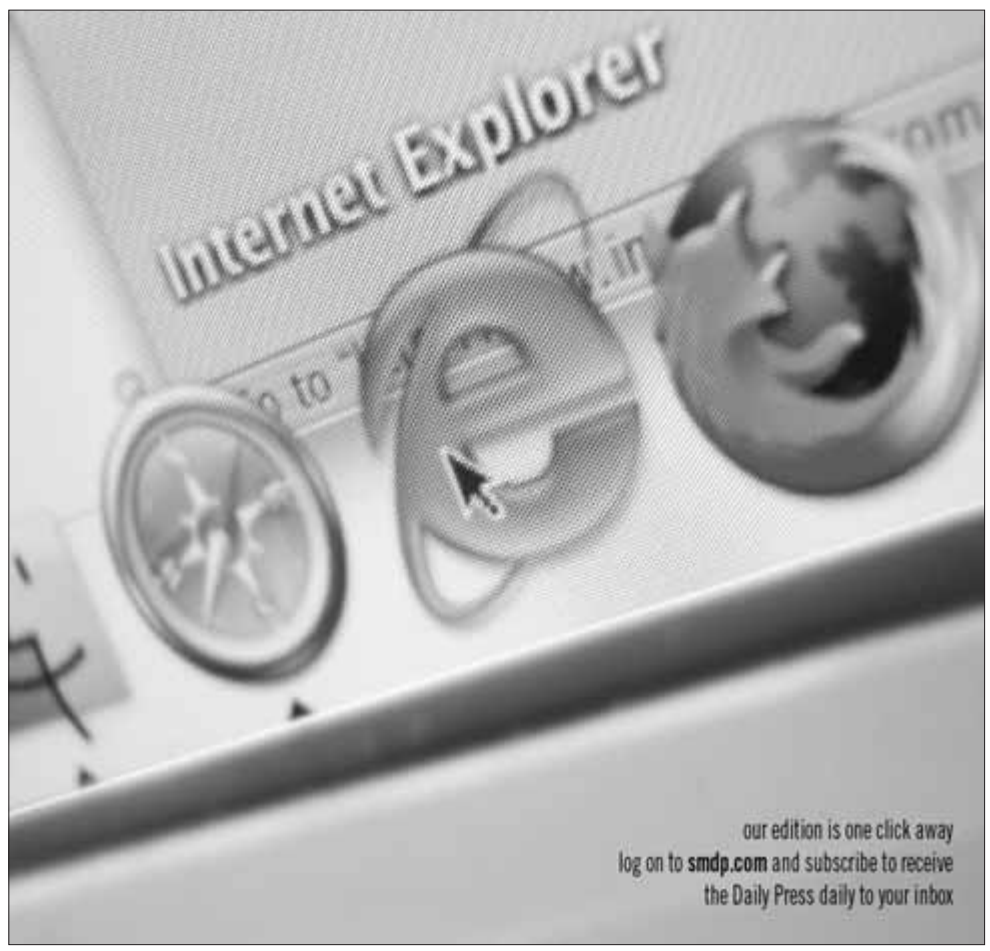
On Wednesday, Justice Stephen Breyer asked what a lawyer might have advised if Fernandez-Vargas had consulted one before he was deported in 2004.

"He would have advised his client to leave .... 'Get out of here fast because if you're caught, you're in trouble,"' Breyer said.

So, he wondered, would an immigrant face a bigger penalty if he had returned to Mexico and appealed to get U.S. residency or if he had applied for legal status from within the U.S. and risked admitting he had re-entered illegally?

Several justices questioned whether the law created a new punishment at all.

But Gossett said removing the right to appeal is not just a procedural change. "Denial is a new penalty," he said.



INTERNATIONAL

U.S., Iraqi forces trap gunmen in 'Triangle of Death'

BY VANESSA ARRINGTON
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — U.S. and Iraqi forces trapped dozens of insurgents Wednesday during a two-hour gunbattle at a police station south of Baghdad, a day after 100 masked gunmen stormed a jail near the Iranian border and freed more than 30 prisoners, most of them fellow insurgents.

Sixty gunmen, firing rocket-propelled grenades and automatic rifles, attacked the Madain police station before dawn, police Lt. Col. Falah al-Mohammadawi said. U.S. troops and a special Iraqi police unit responded, capturing 50 of the insurgents, including a Syrian, al-Mohammadawi said.

Four policemen, including one commander, were killed and five were wounded, he said. None of the attackers were killed.

Madain, about 14 miles southeast of Baghdad, is at the northern tip of Iraq's Sunni-dominated "Triangle of Death," a region rife with sectarian violence — retaliatory kidnappings and killings in the ongoing conflict between Sunnis and Shiites.

In a highly publicized episode last April, there were reports that Sunni militants had seized 100 Shiites and threatened to kill them unless all Shiites left the Madain area. Iraqi security forces swept into the region and found no hostages.

In the capital, roadside bombs that targeted police patrols wounded at least six policemen, including four who work as guards at the Education Ministry, police said. Gunmen in western Baghdad attacked a truck carrying Shiite Muslim pilgrims returning from a religious commemoration in the city of Karbala, killing one, police said. Ten were wounded.

Also early Wednesday, gunmen killed three civilians transporting bricks on a country road outside the city of Baqouba northeast of Baghdad, police said. A roadside bomb then exploded when a police patrol went to the site, wounding one officer, police said.

The body of a man wearing an Iraqi military uniform was delivered to a morgue in the southern city of Kut, a morgue official said. The man had been killed outside Madain, he said.

In the Tuesday attack in Muqdadiyah, about 100 gunmen cut phone wires and fired rocket-propelled grenades in a daring operation that freed 18 fellow insurgents who had been captured in police raids just two days earlier.

Police said 15 other captives were sprung in the assault on the Muqdadiyah lockup. Twenty Iraqi security men and at least 10 insurgents were killed in the attack.

In an Internet posting Tuesday night, the military wing of the Mujaheddin Shura Council, a militant Sunni Muslim insurgent group, purportedly claimed to have carried out the operation. The posting said the group killed "40 policemen, liberated 33 prisoners and captured weapons." The claim was posted on the Iraqi News Web site and could not be independently verified.

With the telephone lines cut, the insurgents had 90 minutes to battle their way into the law enforcement compound before police reinforcements showed up from the nearby villages of Wajihiyah and Abu Saida, police said.

Muqdadiyah, on the eastern fringe of the Sunni Triangle north of Baghdad, is about 25 miles from the Iranian border.

By the time the insurgents fled, taking away the bodies of many of their dead compatriots, nearly two dozen cars were shot up and set on fire and the jail was a charred mass of twisted bunk bed frames and smoldering mattresses.

U.S. helicopters were in the air above the jail after the insurgents had fled. Police said there was firing into the air by residents, but it was not clear if the American aircraft were the targets. None was hit.

The insurgents whose incarceration apparently prompted the assault were detained Sunday during raids by security forces in the nearby villages of Sansal and Arab, police said.

Both U.S. and Iraqi military officials had said last year that the area was no longer an insurgent stronghold, but Tuesday's attack showed the militants still could assemble a large force, capable of operating in the region virtually at will.

The insurgency's strength, spiraling sectarian violence and the continuing stalemate over forming a government in Iraq have led politicians and foreign policy experts to say Iraq was on the brink or perhaps in the midst of civil war.

With an increasing number of Americans calling for a pullout of U.S. forces regardless of the consequences for Iraq, a powerful group of U.S. senators met with interim Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari on Tuesday to discuss prospects for formation of a national unity government.

The Bush administration views that step as all-important in establishing peace and opening the way for the start of a U.S. troop withdrawal as early as this summer.

Al-Jaafari said he believed Iraq's most difficult political hurdles had been crossed and predicted a new government would be ready in the coming weeks.

"I hope that the formation of the new government does not last beyond April," al-Jaafari said after the meeting.

Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan, ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said: "April is fine, but it is necessary that this commitment be kept in order for there to be continued support for the presence of American troops in Iraq."

The committee chairman, Sen. John Warner, a Virginia Republican, said decisions on the U.S. troop presence would be made not only by Bush, Congress and other leaders, but also by the American people — a seeming allusion to declining U.S. popular support for the Iraq war.

Most mainstream Iraqi politicians do not want the United States to withdraw troops until the insurgency is defeated, although some more radical leaders, like firebrand Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, demand an immediate pullout.

In other violence Tuesday, a U.S. soldier with the 4th Infantry Division was killed by small-arms fire while patrolling the streets of western Baghdad, the military reported. At least 2,315 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

Mexicans optimistic for major breakthrough on immigration

BY WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY — Mexico said Wednesday it is optimistic that a major breakthrough granting legal status to some of the millions of its undocumented citizens in the United States could be on the way.

"There are a number of positive signs pointing to the possibility" of the kind of bilateral migration accord this country has been pushing for since 2001, said Ruben Aguilar, spokesman for President Vicente Fox.

Aguilar's comments came as Mexico heads into a pair of high-level meetings with the Bush administration, including a trilateral summit with Canada next week in the Caribbean resort city of Cancun.

Barring such an accord, Mexico at the very least believes a guest-worker program for hundreds of thousands of Mexicans could be approved by Congress, Aguilar said.

Foreign Secretary Luis Ernesto Derbez will meet with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Washington on Thursday as part of the U.S.-Mexican Binational Commission, which annually brings together top officials from both sides to discuss a range of cross-border issues.

Next week, President Bush will travel to Cancun to meet with Fox and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Aguilar said the Fox government continues to view the upcoming meetings with optimism — despite years of little progress, and despite the fact that Bush has said declaring a blanket amnesty for undocumented Mexicans would be a mistake.

"It's a complex issue," Aguilar said when questioned about Bush's comments. "He (Bush) also said there is a possibility of an agreement on temporary workers that could start with at least 400,000" people.

Fox's administration has made a possible bilateral migration agreement with the United States the centerpiece of its foreign policy since shortly after the president took office in December 2000.

Some kind of migration measure approved by the U.S. Congress looked like a possibility in early 2001, but the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks raised new concerns about security that complicated the issue.

Last year, the U.S. House passed a bill that would extend border fences along some stretches of the U.S.-Mexico border while strengthening efforts to curb illegal immigration.

A different bill being considered by the Senate, drafted by Majority Leader Bill Frist, focuses on law enforcement but also includes some increases in visas for unskilled workers. The measure leaves open the possibility of replacing the Frist bill with one that is being drafted by a Senate committee and that could include a guest-worker proposal as well as some form of legal status for illegal immigrants.

Aguilar said Mexico was buoyed by the fact that "there is discussion within the United States that a wall will not resolve any problems."

In full-page advertisements published Monday in three U.S. newspapers, Mexico endorsed "a far-reaching guest workers scheme," but said that in order for it to work "Mexico should participate in its design, management, supervision and evaluation."

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INTERNATIONAL

Border clash threatens war on terror

BY PAUL GARWOOD
Associated Press Writer

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Raging violence along the rugged Pakistan-Afghan border has sent relations between the two countries to new lows and underscored U.S. difficulties in containing a troubled region crucial to winning the war on terror.

The tensions are placing increasing pressure on Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, a U.S. counterterror ally who has been forced to defend his government against claims by Afghan President Hamid Karzai that Pakistan hasn't been doing enough to stem the flow of militants into Afghanistan.

"If the violence in Afghanistan escalates in the spring, then I think we are going to see this relationship become even more tense," said Samina Ahmed, an Islamabad-based expert with the International Crisis Group. "And Pakistanis are really concerned about how this affects their relations with the Americans."

Marine Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, met Pakistani officials in Islamabad on Monday and Tuesday and discussed terrorist incursions into Afghanistan, a senior U.S. defense official said on condition of anonymity because the talks were private. His visit followed one earlier in the month by Gen. John Abizaid, chief of the U.S. Central Command.

More than four years after the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan, an intensifying campaign of bombings, including 30 suicide attacks since the fall, have targeted foreign troops, Afghan security forces and local authorities. Afghan officials claim the attackers operate out of Pakistan.

In addition, insecurity only appears to be growing along the mountainous border, where Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaida and Taliban leaders are believed to be hiding. In the past month, Pakistani forces have fought several battles with pro-Taliban militants in the tribal region of North Waziristan, leaving scores of soldiers and many more suspected militants dead.

On Tuesday, Afghan security forces killed at least 15 suspected Taliban rebels after they crossed the border from neighboring Pakistan, said Abdul Razak, the Afghan frontier security commander. Among them was a midlevel Taliban commander, Mullah Shien, whose followers regularly attacked foreign and Afghan troops and bomb trucks hauling gasoline for the U.S.-led coalition, Razak said.

But Pakistani Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed denied the militants came from Pakistan. "It's nonsense: just another allegation. We have our security forces there who are guarding the border," he said.

Such disputes have raised serious doubts about whether the two governments can work together to fight Islamic militants, let alone track down bin Laden and his associates.

"What the U.S. is trying to do is encourage Afghanistan and Pakistan to have the best possible relationship," said Teresita Schaffer, director of the South Asia program at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. "But it seems that President Bush hadn't realized the sensitive nature of Pakistan-Afghan relations."

Both Afghanistan and Pakistan became top U.S. allies in the war on terror after the 2001 invasion that ousted Afghanistan's Taliban regime. But the two countries have never shaken off mutual distrust over Pakistan's former support of the Taliban.

Last month, Karzai presented Pakistan with locations of alleged terrorist training camps and a list of extremists his government says are at large inside Pakistan.

When Afghan officials then leaked details of the intelligence, Musharraf was outraged. He accused Karzai in a televised interview of providing outdated information and not doing enough to stop militants entering Pakistan in the first place.

"With Karzai and Musharraf going at it, nobody can back down without losing face," said Patrick Cronin, an Asia-U.S. expert for the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It is important these disagreements be dealt with at lower levels. Their own survival is at stake and these countries are at the front line of the struggle against terror."

Afghan and U.S. officials acknowledge that Musharraf has been trying to contain militants in the lawless border regions. But the Bush administration is also urging Pakistan to do more.

Diplomatic pressure on Musharraf could grow as NATO expands its peacekeeping operation into southern Afghanistan, bringing the forces of more nations under threat of attack.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

‘Plastic’ might have been fantastic

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The one big interview Mike Wallace regrets never landing was with Pat Nixon.

Wallace, who was given a lifetime achievement award by the New York Press Club on Tuesday night, said he learned while traveling with the Nixons in 1968 that she was a brave, smart woman — not the “plastic Pat” as she was sometimes portrayed.

“She was a genuine, lovely, fine woman who was bruised by what happened to her husband,” he said. “(She was) intelligent, loyal and raised wonderful kids.”

Wallace, who said last week he was retiring from CBS News’ “60 Minutes” this spring, also said he turned down an offer to become Nixon’s press secretary at the White House.

Asked who was the best president he had seen in his years as a reporter, Wallace — who considers Nancy Reagan a close friend — said it was her husband.

“Ronald Reagan knew who the hell he was,” he said. “He had his convictions. He was comfortable in his skin. I thought he was a superb president.”

Some of Wallace’s “60 Minutes” colleagues were on hand to watch the 87-year-old newsman receive the award. Lesley Stahl even tried to put him on the spot, asking whether there was any question he was embarrassed to have asked. He said no.

“There is no such thing as an indiscreet question,” he said.

Leave it to Andy Rooney to get — as he does on “60 Minutes” — the last word.

“Do you think there’s any possibility you could get CBS management to split your salary up amongst the rest of us?” Rooney said.

BERLIN — Sharon Stone, who returns as the seductive Catherine Tramell in “Basic Instinct 2,” says she has no problem doing a nude scene _ if it’s right for the role.

“It’s pretty easy for me to be naked,” the 48-year-old actress said Wednesday. “I’m a person who feels that if it’s appropriate for the character I’m playing or the mood of the piece, then it’s no big thing.”

Stone is famously known for her “leg crossing” scene in 1992’s “Basic Instinct,” which also starred Michael Douglas.

The actress said she wouldn’t object to her children seeing the movies _ but added that it’s not going to be anytime soon.

“When they’re old enough to see that kind of material, then they’re old enough to see that kind of material,” said Stone, who has two young sons.

Stone, who was nominated for a best actress Oscar for 1995’s “Casino,” said she was happy that she didn’t try to lie about her age to get roles after she turned 40. “You have to give them you until you is what they want,” she said.

“Basic Instinct 2” will be released later this month. Stone was in Berlin to promote the movie.

SMITHFIELD, N.C. — The Smithfield Post Office is now the Ava Gardner Post Office.

President Bush signed legislation Monday to rename the post office in honor of the Oscar-nominated actress, who grew up in Johnston County.

“Ava Gardner was a small-town girl who became a big-time celebrity,” said Rep. Bob Etheridge, D-N.C., who sponsored the bill to rename the post office.

Gardner was nominated for a best-actress Oscar for 1953’s “Mogambo.” Her films also include “The Night of the Iguana” and “On the Beach.”

She had a series of high-profile marriages, to Mickey Rooney, Artie Shaw and Frank Sinatra. The actress died in 1990, at age 67.

LONDON — The wife of Britain’s Prince Charles said she was “lost for words” at being named “Spouse of the Year” by a satirical magazine for older readers.

The former Camilla Parker Bowles said Tuesday she regretted being unable to attend the awards ceremony organized by The Oldie magazine because she was on “spousing duties” in “some far-flung corner of the globe.” Her speech was read by friend and author Jilly Cooper.

The royal couple began a tour of the Middle East on Monday.

Cooper said Camilla, who became the Duchess of Cornwall when she married Charles last year, was “absolutely knocked out, thrilled to bits” to receive the award.

The citation said the 58-year-old duchess had shown strength and conviction under the public gaze.

Her marriage last April has thrust the home-loving duchess into the spotlight as she has carried out a variety of royal duties with her husband.

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1441 3rd Street
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Capote
2:00pm 4:45pm 7:30pm 10:15pm
The Hills Have Eyes
2:15pm 5:15pm 8pm 10:30pm
Find Me Guilty
1:45pm 4:30pm 7:15pm 10:pm
Transamerica
1:00pm 4:05pm 7pm 9:45pm

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

Aquamarine
11:10am 1:40pm 4:10pm 6:40pm
The Libertine
2:10pm 4:50pm 7:30pm 10:20pm
Munich
11:30am 9:10pm
The Pink Panther
3:00pm 5:20pm 7:40pm 9:50pm
The Libertine
2:20pm 5pm 7:40pm 10:20pm
She’s the Man
11:20am 1:50pm 4:30pm 7:20 pm 10:00pm
V for Vendetta
11:00am 1:00pm 2:00pm 4:00pm 5:00pm 7:00pm 8:00pm 10:10pm

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

Eight Below
1:40pm 4:20pm 7:10pm 9:50pm
16 Blocks
2:15pm 4:50pm 7:25pm 10:05pm
Date Movie
7:20pm 9:40pm
Dave Chappelle’s Block Party
1:50pm 4:40pm 7:35pm 10:15pm
Failure to Launch
2:25pm 4:55pm 7:30pm 10pm
The Shaggy Dog
2pm 2:40pm 4:30pm 5:10pm 7pm 7:40pm 9:30pm 10:10pm
Curious George
2:30pm 5:00pm

Nuwilshire Theatre
1314 Wilshire Blvd
(310) 281-8228

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

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

Ask the Dust
1:20pm 4:10pm 7:10pm 9:55pm
CSA: The Confederate State of America
1:00pm 3:20pm 5:40pm 8:00pm 10:15pm
Duck Season
1:00pm 3:15pm 5:30pm 7:45pm 10pm
Don’t Come Knocking
1:40pm 4:20pm 7:00pm 9:40pm

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Avenue
(323) 466-FILM

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

Questions or comments? Email calendar@smdp.com

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The Dinette Set by Julie Larson

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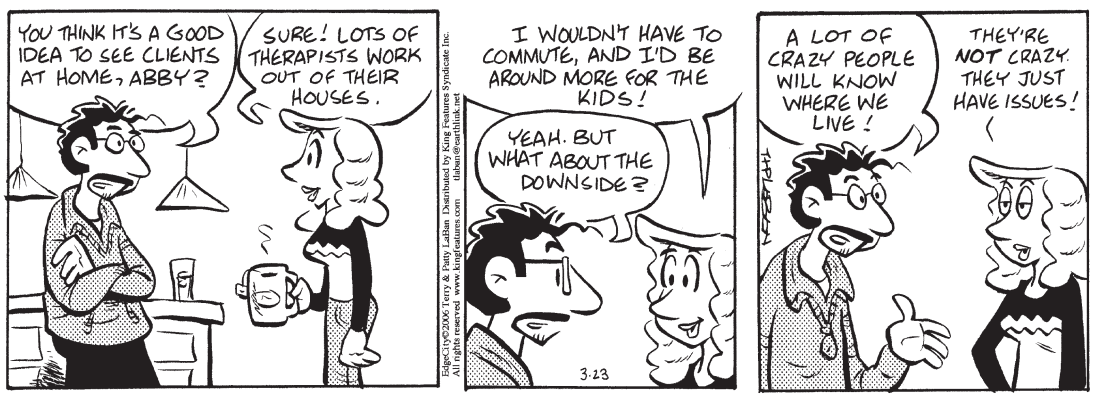
edge City

by Terry & Patty LaBan



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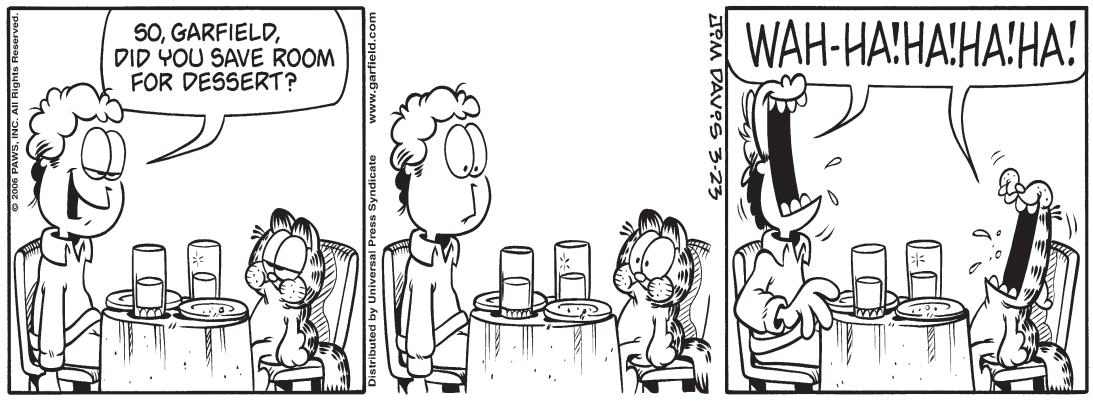
By Jim Davis



Speed Bump®

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By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Recipe instruction
5 Berates
11 Late-night name
12 Writer Balzac
13 To boot
14 Certify
15 Appropriate
17 Pasture
18 City on the Mohawk
22 Blatant
24 Movie chimp
25 Signing need
26 Dapper fellow
27 Surrendering cry
30 Future fern
32 Teakettle output
33 Buddy
34 Bible city
38 One under par
41 Dandling spot
42 Standards
43 Bakery worker
44 Become bankrupt
45 Watch over

DOWN

1 Smelting waste
2 Blab
3 Bold disrespect
4 Tenant
5 Movie sleuth
6 Soaking spot
7 All told
8 Buck's mate
9 Hosp. parts
10 Clique
16 Horse bit
19 Laziness
20 Nicholas, for one
21 First-rate
22 Major work
23 Let off anger
28 "Ed Wood" Oscar winner
29 Net receipts?
30 Hotel amenity
31 "Sit down!"
35 Relish
36 New driver, usually
37 Grazing group
38 Tom Hanks film
39 Altar words
40 Yank's foe

T	O	T	E	■	S	P	I	N	E	T
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L	I	K	E	■	I	C	E	D	U	P
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Yesterday's answer

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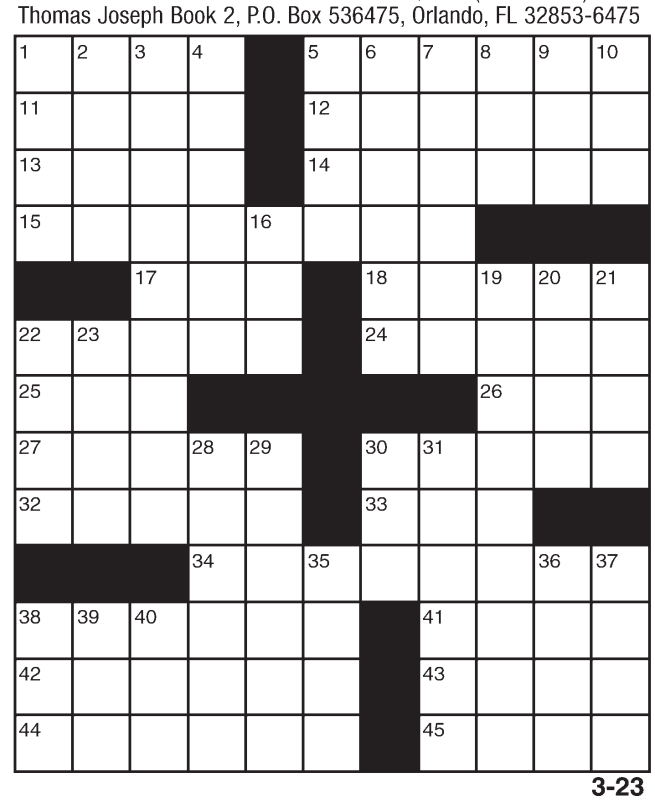

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Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF FLORICE WILSON TALLEY
Case No. BP097233

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of FLORICE WILSON TAL-LEY

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

THE PETITION FOR PRO-BATE requests that Frumeh Labow be appointed as personal repre-sentative to administer the estate of the decedent.

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

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

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

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

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

Attorney for petitioner:
PAUL F COHEN ESQ
SBN 046612
4929 WILSHIRE BLVD
STE 410
LOS ANGELES CA 90010
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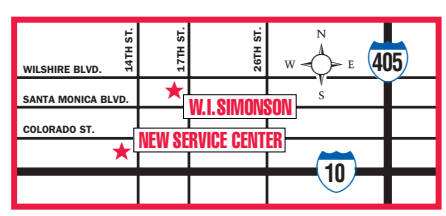

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