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THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2009
Volume 8 Issue 121

Santa Monica Daily Press



A MAN'S WORLD?
SEE PAGE 13

We have you covered

THE FEELING GREEN ALL OVER ISSUE

St. Monica faces learning curve

BY DANIEL ARCHULETA
Managing Editor

ST. MONICA A return to the Camino Real League was supposed to make the Mariners more competitive.

Having played in the ultra competitive Del Rey League for the past four years, St. Monica Catholic High School's baseball team was coming off a 4-17 record, prompting the return to the Camino Real League.

The team appeared to be ready, returning all but one player from last season's team. But, as Head Coach Jack White said, "things happen."

One player decided to play volleyball this season, another became academically ineligible. One player even wanted to forgo his senior season to work on his grades.

"We've lost a couple of players," White said. "Guys that I was counting on."

Even with those losses, the team began the season 3-1 and appeared to be no worse for wear. To improve the team's depth, White decided to tap the junior varsity ranks.

He brought up a few players to help pop-

SEE BASEBALL PAGE 11

Actor Isaiah Washington and wife face eviction

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES Isaiah Washington's landlord has started an eviction procedure against the former "Grey's Anatomy" star, claiming he owes $100,000 in rent.

Documents filed in Santa Monica, on Tuesday claim that Washington and his wife have fallen behind on their $20,000 a month payments on a home in the Venice area of Los Angeles. The complaint filed by Sandalwood Properties states the Washingtons have not paid rent since November.

The 45-year-old actor lost his role on "Grey's Anatomy" in 2007 after using an anti-gay slur at the Golden Globe Awards. He has since appeared in a handful of episodes in other TV series. The filing was first reported by RadarOnline.com.



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

TO THE FUTURE: **A plan to reinvigorate the Civic Center may include major changes to the structures and facilities in the aging area.**

Envisioning a city center

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL When the Exposition Light Rail rolls into Santa Monica in the next six to eight years, the Downtown terminal is expected to swarm with several hundred passengers with each inbound train, squeezing an already impacted area.

Such a scenario has raised some flags for city planning officials who are exploring traffic management measures to institute around the Expo station at the infamously congested Fourth Street and Colorado Avenue intersection.

The City Council on Tuesday tackled those options of improving circulation, which served as just one element of a larger discussion on the future of the Civic Center area and the role that the light rail is expected to play.

The Exposition Light Rail, as a system, is expected to carry about 62,000 passengers, translating to about 200 to 400 people off each train in Santa Monica.

"That's a lot of people to put on this little intersection," said Bob Odermatt, a City Hall transportation planning consultant.

A team of interdepartmental managers, including Housing and Economic Development, Public Works, Planning and Community Development, Big Blue Bus, and Community and Cultural Services, explored a variety of options to alleviate the expected impact to the Colorado and Fourth Street intersection, weighing how each traffic calming measure would impact developments and future projects in the Civic Center area.

Those options include adding a roundabout in front of the Rand Corp., and constructing a bridge from Second to Main Street, which has been proposed in the Civic Center Specific Plan but could conflict with a Moreton Bay Fig tree located on the south side of the I-10 Freeway.

The team is looking to further explore the Fourth Street freeway offramp through the existing City Hall north parking lot and onto Main Street, possibly continuing it through the future Palisades Garden Walk to Ocean Avenue. Doing so would help disperse traffic more efficiently, said Jeff Tumlin, a City Hall consultant from Nelson/Nygaard Associates.

SEE CIVIC CENTER PAGE 10

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Poetry and prose
Novel Cafe
212 Pier Ave., 8 p.m. — 10 p.m.
Share your writing or your favorite wordsmith at Novel Cafe. Readers can select any kind of writing (poetry, fiction, non-fiction, etc.) up to 1,000 words. Come read, listen and enjoy! Call (310) 396-8566 for more information.

UCLA Festival of Preservation
UCLA Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd., 7:30 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.
UCLA presents three oft forgotten films: "The Naked Eye," "The Bridge: A True Story of a Troubled Child" and "Wedlock." "The Naked Eye" highlights the art of photography and the evolution of the art and is the longest of the pieces. "The Bridge" is a short, dramatic film about an emotionally troubled boy and "Wedlock" is an experimental short. Tickets are $9 general admission. Call (310) 206-3456 for more information.

Friday, March 27, 2009

'Jumping the Median'
The Other Space at Santa Monica Playhouse
1211 Fourth St., 8 p.m.
Steve Connell's five new plays run the gamut from sexy and outrageous to moving and provocative. Above all, they're unabashedly fun. The evening explores love, loss and life as we know it, accompanied by live music under the direction of Josh Foy and Sekou Andrews. "Jumping the Median" also runs on Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 7 p.m. Tickets are $20. Call (562) 547-6207 for more information.

'Into the Woods'
Lincoln Middle School
1501 California Ave., 7:00 p.m. — 9 p.m.
An ambivalent Cinderella? A blood-thirsty Little Red Ridinghood? A witch who raps? They're all among the cockeyed characters in James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim's fractured fairy tale which happens to be the Lincoln Middle School's annual Spring Musical. Student admission is $5 per ticket and adult admission is $10. Call (310) 393-9227 for more information.

Saturday, March 28, 2009

The alternative way
Santa Monica Pier
380 Santa Monica Pier, 11 a.m.
Pacific Park on the pier is set to electrify the city with a community-driven alternative fuel car rally on the pier upper parking lot while introducing its all-new SIG Alert electric bumper cars. The first 100 drivers will receive free parking on the pier along with fresh coffee and doughnuts. All drivers of alternative fuel cars will receive two free passes to SIG Alert EV from 11 a.m. to noon. Call (310) 260-8744 for more information.

Sunday, March 29, 2009

Fire and spice
Royce Hall at UCLA
10745 Dickson Plaza, 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.
Spanish master of the classical guitar Angel Romero performs his signature piece, "Concierto de Aranjuez." Guest vocal artists will turn up the heat on the classical music experience. (310) 873-7777.

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

Schwarzenegger vows to relocate 'tent city'

JULIET WILLIAMS
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO California will help Sacramento officials relocate about 150 people from a homeless encampment that put the city in the international spotlight, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said Wednesday.

The governor said he will try to find state money and suggested he would provide assistance for other cities struggling with chronic homeless problems.

Schwarzenegger said Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson approached him at a public function to talk about homelessness. He later accompanied the mayor on a visit to the so-called "tent city," which sits along the banks of the American River about one mile northeast of the state Capitol.

"I told him, I promised him right off the top, without really knowing yet the whole issue and what we can do, I said, 'I will be 100 percent behind you,'" the governor said during a Wednesday news conference. "So yes, we want to help as much as we can, anyone in any city."

The governor's appearance Wednesday with the mayor at the state fairgrounds came a day after the Sacramento City Council approved Johnson's proposal to relocate residents of the homeless camp.

Johnson wants to add 50 beds and keep open through the end of June a shelter at the fairgrounds that is run by Volunteers of America. Schwarzenegger said state officials are helping with the transition.

The city has located places for 100 others at local shelters and through longer-term housing units. It hopes to close the encampment by the end of April.

Johnson's relocation plan is estimated to cost about $1 million.

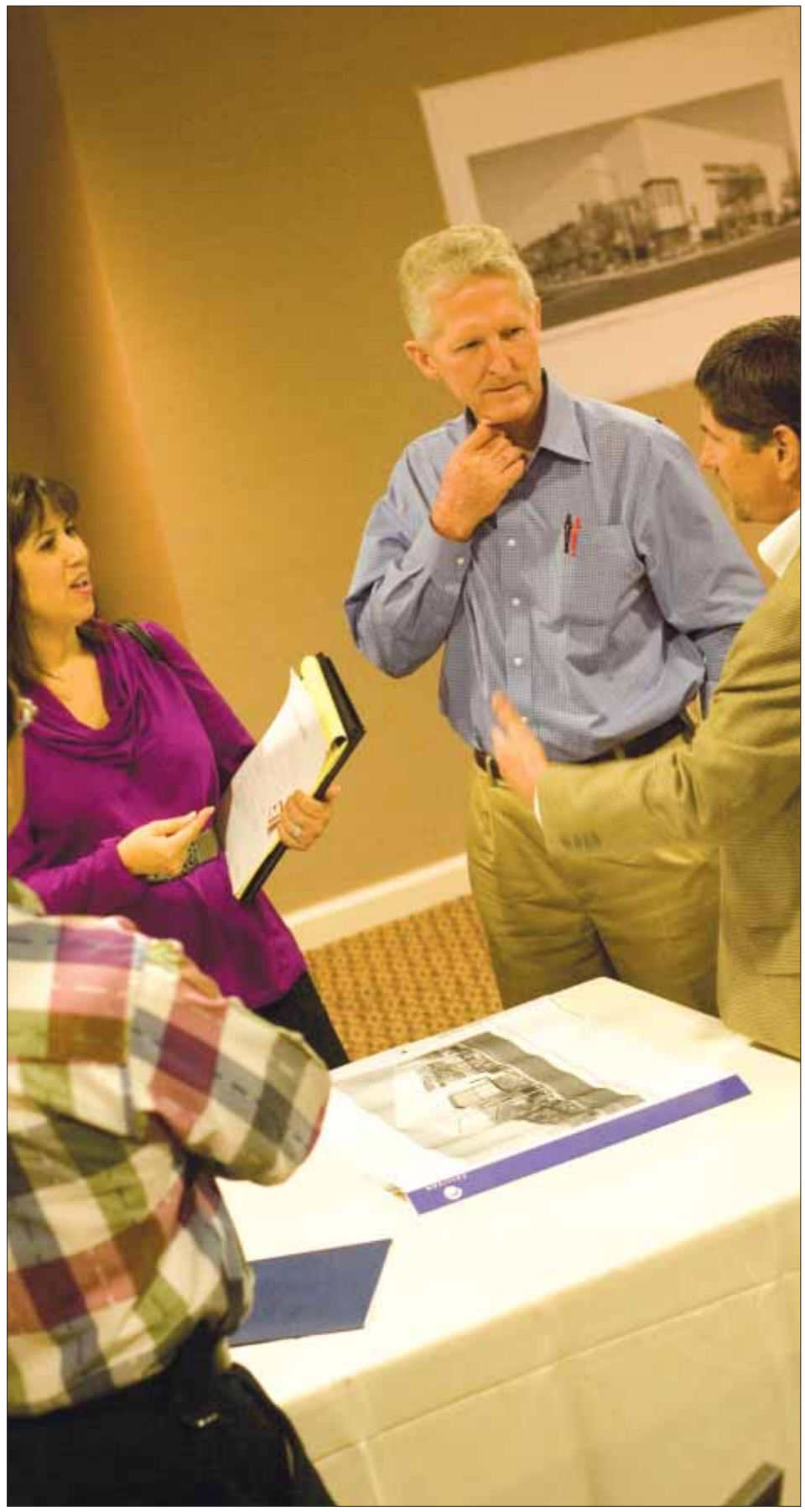
Media outlets from around the world visited the collection of tents and tarpaulins after it was featured on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" last month. Many of the reports inaccurately portrayed the camp as home to a thousand or more refugees of the recession, forced to live outdoors after losing their jobs and savings.

Homeless advocates in the city paint a far different picture. They say the encampment has been there for years and is home to about 150 people, most of whom are part of the city's chronic homeless population.

Sacramento, a city of 476,000, had an estimated 2,700 homeless people last year.

Tracking the number of homeless is difficult, but the federal Housing and Urban

SEE **TENT CITY** PAGE 10



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

MAKING A PITCH: **Mike Fedorchek, vice president of MATT Construction (right) along with his Senior Project Manager Stephen Montoya, (left) talk with a subcontracting company Wednesday morning. Nordstrom officials heading the Santa Monica Place project held the open house to solicit interest from women and minority-owned subcontracting businesses.**

Nordstrom reaches out to women, minorities

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

PICO BLVD For upscale fashion retailer Nordstrom, diversity goes beyond the collection sitting on its racks or the faces of employees manning the floor.

With construction expected to break ground on the Seattle-based department store's second Westside location this summer, Nordstrom officials heading the Santa Monica Place project on Wednesday held an open house at the Sheraton Delfina to solicit interest from women and minority-owned subcontracting businesses.

The 128,000 square-foot department store is slated to open in the former Robinsons-May building at the corner of Broadway and Second Street next year, serving as one of two anchors — the other being Bloomingdale's — for the renovated open-air mall.

That project, whose final price tag has yet to be determined, will likely involve a team of minority and/or women subcontractors thanks to a 20-year-old company program that seeks to provide more opportunities to historically socially-disadvantaged groups.

More than a dozen businesses reserved a spot at the three-hour open house to learn more about the project and procedure that the company uses for selecting vendors.

"It's giving back and being part of the community and helping the economic development of the community," said Christine Young, the manager of the Supplier Diversity Program.

The company is looking to fill approximately 60 subcontracting trades for the project, covering everything from painting to carpet installation.

"There's really no limit to it," said Mike Fedorchek, the vice president of Matt Construction, which is the general contractor. "The important part is it's not limited to just the prime subcontractor level, it's anywhere throughout the whole supply chain."

Many minority contractors face challenges of access when trying to land deals for

SEE **CONTRACTS** PAGE 12

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Dream deferred

Editor:

This past year I met someone who has truly lived the American Dream. She grew up sharing a bed with her three siblings, going to the toilet in an outhouse until she was 15 and helping her parents with their family business, literally run out of their garage. With hard work she excelled in her studies and was admitted to the best university in the country. She now has a high paying job, a toilet of her own, and a bright future ahead. Her name is Nguyen Thu Huyen and she lives in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Since I left Santa Monica to teach English in Vietnam, Huyen and her family – from her 96-year-old great grandmother all the way down to her 3-year-old nephew – have welcomed me into their lives with open arms. I'm the first foreigner any of them have ever met, yet they've treated me like one of their own. You would never know that Huyen's 20-year-old uncle was killed, and his body never found, during the Vietnam War.

In six weeks I'm going home to visit my family. Huyen has met my parents and my sister and is always inquiring about the rest of my family. When I invited Huyen to join me on my trip to meet them, she lit up from ear to ear. Huyen never dreamed of visiting America; but like everything else in her life, she knows anything is possible.

After three months of collecting all the necessary documents, Huyen had her visa interview. I walked Huyen to the front door of the embassy, wished her luck, and then went and sat in a café around the corner. Two hours later, my phone rang. It was Huyen's number. I picked it up and said, "Hello." There was silence on the other end. After a moment I heard through a choked up voice, "I'm done now."

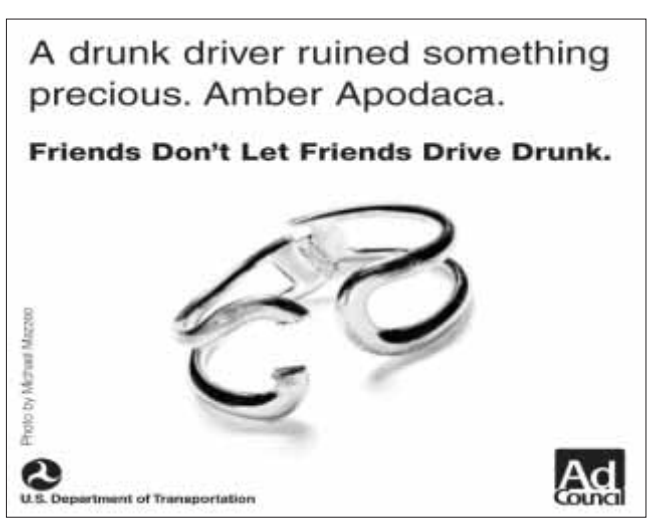
Huyen didn't get her visa. She was handed a formulated rejection letter with one word written in a blank: "ties." The interviewer told Huyen she doesn't have enough money in her bank account or property in her name to visit America.

I could go on about how Huyen has all her "ties" to Vietnam (her family, her job, her bank accounts, etc.). But I won't. I could go on about how America has become a country that favors the rich – words literally said to Huyen by a U.S. State Department employee. But I won't. I could go on about how in tough economic times the USA just lost a lot of tourist dollars. But I won't. I could go on about how America was once a nation of immigrants but now we're the hardest nation in the world to even just visit. But I won't. I could go on about the criminality of charging $131 for a five-minute interview in a country where the average yearly income is $832. (It's like saving two months salary to buy a girl a diamond ring just to be able to ask her out on a date even though she knows you're not her type.) But I won't.

All I will say is this: After hanging up the phone with Huyen, I quickly jogged over to the embassy. Huyen was standing in front of the building, tears forming in her eyes. As I hugged her she said, "I really wanted to meet your grandmas."

Huyen has lived the American dream, although her dreams of America will now never be the same.

Ben August
Vietnam





Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

The madness of March

ONCE AGAIN, THE IDES OF MARCH HAVE brought us the Madness of the NCAA men's college basketball tournament. It's fitting that "Selection Sunday" fell on March 15 because the Big Dance has become a kind of Shakespearean tragedy about hypocrisy and the death of amateur athletics.

In this story, the role of Othello or Hamlet is played by Jim Calhoun, head coach of the top-seeded UConn Huskies, but it could just as well be Pete Carroll of USC if this was January and we were talking about a BCS championship. Coach Calhoun, the highest-paid state employee, was recently asked if his salary could be justified in light of Connecticut's budget deficit. Part of his response was, "My best advice to you … shut up."

Coach Carroll handles the issue much better, saying he just tries to "do (his) part" while making over $4 million per year. Whether it's Calhoun or Carroll, basketball or football, Connecticut or California, public or private university, the moral of the story is the same: it's wrong for a multibillion-dollar industry to be based on the labor of people required to work for free — and not giving college athletes their share is indefensible.

There is no way to tell how much money is being made off the tournament, but the official numbers are mind-blowingly big. It's almost impossible to measure the benefit to the local economies in cities from Philadelphia to Portland and from Greensboro to Glendale, but it's predicted that because of the Final Four, the long-suffering city of Detroit (which should host this event every year) will see a $50 million impact in three days.

CBS alone is paying $6 billion over the next 11 years, making it tough to imagine how much the network must be making off these players if it's willing to pony up over a half-a-billion dollars for three weekends of games. An estimated $4 billion will be wagered on the tournament — more than half of it illegally — with nearly every workplace in America running its own pool and many newspapers publishing a handy gambler's guide. Despite the recession, there is plenty to go around.

The schools and athletic conferences also get in on the action. Half the TV money goes to the schools based on how many scholarships they give out and how many sports they play, and the other half goes to conferences based on their teams' performance in the six previous tournaments.

So there is a very real incentive for schools to maintain large and active athletic departments while being part of "power" athletic conferences. UConn, for example, plays in the Big East — a conference that made almost $15 million from the 2007 tournament while eight other conferences made a little more than $1 million each — and Huskie men's basketball makes the university about $12 million per year. I'd be surprised if UCLA hoops is bringing in much less than that, and USC's athletic department revenue has doubled to over $76 million during Carroll's eight years.

At tournament time, especially the last three games, it's amazing to see how many professionals are earning a living off amateur basketball. Oddly, as the venues get bigger, the number of available tickets gets smaller — until the Final Four when the entire lower section of the largest arenas in America are typically reserved for media and the press, the luxury boxes are all taken by corporate sponsors and their invited guests, and whatever seats are left go to the bigger conferences and the booster clubs of the bigger programs. Of course, the scarcity drives up ticket prices.

THERE IS NO WAY TO TELL HOW MUCH MONEY IS BEING MADE OFF THE TOURNAMENT, BUT THE OFFICIAL NUMBERS ARE MIND-BLOWINGLY BIG.

Meanwhile, in a situation that is nothing short of tragically ironic, the people actually creating the product (the players on the court) get almost nothing. The NCAA deems a student athlete eligible to play as long as he doesn't get paid. While he works for free, the NCAA, the athletic conferences, and the schools all earn money by marketing his athletic skills.

In exchange, the school teaches him some other marketable skills he might be able to use to earn money once he graduates. But his most marketable skills wouldn't be the ones he learned in four years of classroom study, they'd be the ones he developed during a lifetime on the court. And because there are very few jobs playing professional basketball available, the best time for him to market his athletic skills is while he's in college learning those other skills he'll need for the rest of his life.

The time has come for a Social Security system for student athletes — calculated on a per-student basis depending on how much revenue that athlete's sport contributes to the athletic department and paid once the student leaves school — with bonuses for graduating and for graduating on-time. It would provide an incentive to go to or stay in college, dull the influence of agents and their hollow promises of NBA millions, and be a nice cushion in case the job market's a little tight for a 6-foot-9, 230 pound sociology major with a smooth jump shot.

KENNY MACK is a multi-platform content provider living in Santa Monica who has all no. 1's in his Final Four with Pitt beating UConn in the championship game. He can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com

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CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL

The Santa Monica Daily Press is published six days a week, Monday through Saturday.

19,000 daily circulation, 46,450 daily readership. Circulation is audited and verified by Circulation Verification Council, 2006. Serving the City of Santa Monica, and the communities of Venice Beach, Brentwood, West LA. Members of CNPA, AFCP, CVC, Associated Press, IFPA, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce.

Published by Newlon Rouge, LLC

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The Rand Stand

Keith Lockitch
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

The real meaning of 'Earth Hour'

ON SATURDAY, MARCH 28, CITIES AROUND the world will turn off their lights to observe "Earth Hour." Iconic landmarks from the Sydney Opera House to Manhattan's skyscrapers will be darkened to encourage reduced energy use and signal a commitment to fighting climate change.

While a one-hour blackout will admittedly have little effect on carbon emissions, what matters, organizers say, is the event's symbolic meaning. That's true, but not in the way organizers intend.

We hear constantly that the debate is over on climate change, that man-made greenhouse gases are indisputably causing a planetary emergency. But there is ample scientific evidence to reject the claims of climate catastrophe. And what's never mentioned? The fact that reducing greenhouse gases to the degree sought by climate activists would, itself, cause significant harm.

Politicians and environmentalists, including those behind Earth Hour, are not calling on people just to change a few light bulbs, they are calling for a truly massive reduction in carbon emissions — as much as 80 percent below 1990 levels. Because our energy is overwhelmingly carbon-based (fossil fuels provide more than 80 percent of world energy), and because the claims of abundant "green energy" from breezes and sunbeams are a myth, this necessarily means a massive reduction in our energy use.

People don't have a clear view of what this would mean in practice. We, in the industrialized world, take our abundant energy for granted and don't consider just how much we benefit from its use in every minute of every day. Driving our cars to work and school, sitting in our lighted, heated homes and offices, powering our computers and countless other labor-saving appliances, we count on the indispensable values that industrial energy makes possible: hospitals and grocery stores, factories and farms, international travel and global telecommunications. It is hard for us to project the degree of sacrifice and harm that proposed climate policies would force upon us.

This blindness to the vital importance of energy is precisely what Earth Hour exploits. It sends the comforting-but-false message: Cutting off fossil fuels would be easy and even fun! People spend the hour stargazing and holding torch-lit beach parties; restaurants offer special candle-lit dinners. Earth Hour makes the renunciation of energy seem like a big party.

Participants spend an enjoyable 60 minutes in the dark, safe in the knowledge that the life-saving benefits of industrial civilization are just a light switch away. This bears no relation whatsoever to what life would actually be like under the sort of draconian carbon-reduction policies that climate activists are demanding: punishing carbon taxes, severe emissions caps, outright bans on the construction of power plants.

Forget one measly hour with just the lights off. How about Earth Month, without any form of fossil fuel energy? Try spending a month shivering in the dark without heating, electricity, refrigeration; without power plants or generators; without any of the labor-saving, time-saving, and therefore life-saving products that industrial energy makes possible.

Those who claim that we must cut off our carbon emissions to prevent an alleged global catastrophe need to learn the indisputable fact that cutting off our carbon emissions would be a global catastrophe. What we really need is greater awareness of just how indispensable carbon-based energy is to human life (including, of course, to our ability to cope with any changes in the climate).

It is true that the importance of Earth Hour is its symbolic meaning. But that meaning is the opposite of the one intended. The lights of our cities and monuments are a symbol of human achievement, of what mankind has accomplished in rising from the cave to the skyscraper. Earth Hour presents the disturbing spectacle of people celebrating those lights being extinguished. Its call for people to renounce energy and to rejoice at darkened skyscrapers makes its real meaning unmistakably clear: Earth Hour symbolizes the renunciation of industrial civilization.

KEITH LOCKITCH, Ph.D. in physics, is a fellow at the Ayn Rand Center for Individual Rights, focusing on science and environmentalism. The Ayn Rand Center is a division of the Ayn Rand Institute and promotes the philosophy of Ayn Rand, author of "Atlas Shrugged" and "The Fountainhead."

The Q Line

Keeping it local

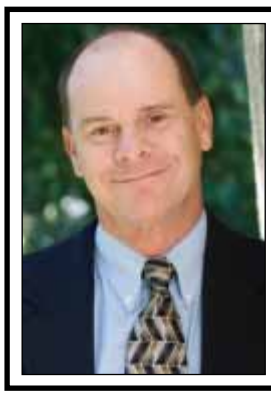
City Hall and the Bayside District Corp. have recently joined forces to launch the "Buy Local" program, which aims to keep dollars in Santa Monica.

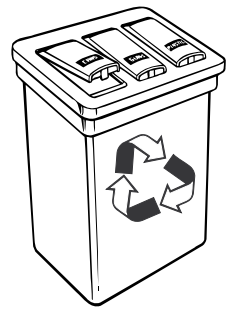
So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Are you inclined to spend locally to help the ailing economy, and why?

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Stores offering freebies, perks to lure in shoppers

BY LOUISE CRAWFORD
For The Associated Press

In these tough economic times, what's a store to do to make sure it's still in business a year from now?

"Get a tarot card reader," said Emese Boone, owner of Box Turtle in Little Rock, Ark.

And she's not kidding — Boone hired a local tarot card reader to give free readings during a recent jewelry trunk show in her clothing, jewelry and housewares shop.

Retailers like Boone are hoping special events, classes, blood pressure screenings and even career counseling will inspire shoppers to keep on shopping during the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression.

Boone has also thrown a cocktail party and book signing and started a rewards program that gives customers a 20 percent discount every time they spend $500 in her store.

"The place is like a party," says Tanya Fitzgerald, a customer who discovered the shop through its special events. "It's more fun and personal."

Do these perks translate into dollars? Not necessarily — and it costs money to pay for entertainment and refreshments. Still, shop owners think it's worth a try.

Tamara Lee, owner of Brooklyn Mercantile in New York, is teaming up with a local nurse practitioner who will conduct free breast cancer and blood pressure screenings, as well as free nutrition workshops.

In addition to her usual sewing and craft workshops, Lee is planning to enlist a career coach who will offer guidance to customers. Her shop had already become a local gathering place for those interested in do-it-yourself activities, but even those have suffered.

"Because of the economic climate, people are worried about their work lives, they're cutting back on extraneous spending and looking inward," said Lee. "They want to do things to fix up their homes without spending money."

Still, independent businesses like Lee's are managing to hold on during the downturn.

Holiday sales declined an average of 5 percent at independent stores last year, according to research by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. Overall December retail sales were down 9.8 percent from the previous year, according to the Commerce Department.

The picture was bleaker for Sasha Wingate, who saw sales decline 40 percent over the holidays at her store BellJar in San Francisco, which sells an eclectic mix of soap, candles, jewelry, clothing and updated vintage furniture.

Fewer than 10 percent of blind Americans read Braille

BEN NUCKOLS
Associated Press Writer

BALTIMORE Jordan Gilmer has a degenerative condition that eventually will leave him completely blind. But as a child, his teachers did not emphasize Braille, the system of reading in which a series of raised dots signify letters of the alphabet.

Instead, they insisted he use what little vision he had to read print. By the third grade, he was falling behind in his schoolwork.

"They gave him Braille instruction, but they didn't tell us how to get Braille books, and they didn't want him using it during the day," said Jordan's mother, Carrie Gilmer of Minneapolis. Teachers said Braille would be "a thing he uses way off in the far distant future, and don't worry about it."

That experience is common: Fewer than 10 percent of the 1.3 million legally blind people in the United States read Braille, and just 10 percent of blind children are learning it, according to a report to be released Thursday by the National Federation of the Blind.

By comparison, at the height of its use in the 1950s, more than half the nation's blind children were learning Braille. Today Braille is considered by many to be too difficult, too outdated, a last resort.

Instead, teachers ask students to rely on audio texts, voice-recognition software or other technology. And teachers who know Braille often must shuttle between schools, resulting in haphazard instruction, the report says.

"You can find good teachers of the blind in America, but you can't find good programs," said Marc Maurer, the group's president. "There is not a commitment to this population that is at all significant almost anywhere."

Using technology as a substitute for Braille leaves blind people illiterate, the federation said, citing studies that show blind people who know Braille are more likely to earn advanced degrees, find good jobs and live independently.

"It's really sad that so many kids are being shortchanged," said Debby Brackett of Stuart, Fla., who pressured schools to provide capable Braille teachers for her 12-year-old daughter, Winona.

One study found that 44 percent of participants who grew up reading Braille were unemployed, compared with 77 percent for those who relied on print. Overall, blind adults face 70 percent unemployment.

The federation's report pulled together existing research on Braille literacy, and its authors acknowledge that not enough research has been done. The 10 percent figure comes from federal statistics gathered by the American Printing House for the Blind, a company that develops products for the visually impaired.

The federation also did some original research, including a survey of 500 people that found the ability to read Braille correlated with higher levels of education, a higher likelihood of employment and higher income.

The report coincides with the 200th birthday of Louis Braille, the Frenchman who invented the Braille code as a teenager. Resistance to his system was immediate; at one point, the director of Braille's school burned the books he and his classmates had transcribed. The school did not want its blind students becoming too independent; it made money by selling crafts they produced.

The system caught on, but began declining in the 1960s along with the widespread integration of blind children into public schools. It has continued with the advent of technology that some believe makes Braille obsolete.

"Back in about 1970 or so, I was heading to college, and somebody said to me, 'Now that you've got the tape recorder, everything will be all right. In the early 1980s, somebody else said, 'Now that you've got a talking computer, everything will be all right,'" said Marc Maurer, president of the federation.

There's such a thing as too much Axe

BY BETH J. HARPAZ
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK If you have a son over age 10, you may be familiar with a fragrance I refer to as "Eau de Boy."

Eau de Boy comes in two unforgettable scents: Locker Room and Axe.

If you live with the Locker Room variety, then you have one of those boys who won't shower and whose socks and T-shirts must be decontaminated by a HazMat team before going in the laundry.

But if it's the smell of Axe deodorant you're used to, then you've got a kid who creates giant vapor clouds every time he sprays himself with the stuff, causing you to run around opening windows, hoping it dissipates before the entire family passes out.

Susan Wilson, a mother of two boys from Scottsdale, Ariz., had to ban Axe body wash in her house. "The 13-year-old was pretty responsible, but the 10-year-old was out of control!" she said. "They couldn't rinse the wash cloths out well enough, and when I washed them, we all wore Axe!"

A Minnesota state representative, Karen Clark, even proposed phasing out fragrances from schools to protect kids with asthma from their overly perfumed classmates. Clark later scaled the idea down to an awareness campaign that was approved by the City of Minneapolis School Board.

Even the makers of Axe are embarking on an education campaign. "We believe most everything is best in moderation, application of grooming products included," said Jay Mathew, U.S. marketing director for Axe deodorants. "One of our newest ad campaigns for Axe focuses on the best application of our deodorant body sprays. The ads focus on the tagline 'Double Pits to Chesty' and refer to the places where guys should apply the deodorant spray."

That is definitely preferable to what some guys do, the tagline for which seems to be "Double Pits to the World."

Mathew also says the target audience is young men 18-24 — even though the mothers of every 15-year-old in America have memorized the smell of Axe (and its 10 types of body spray, eight deodorant sticks and 14 shower gels).

"As with most brands that cater to college-aged guys, we do see that Axe is aspirational for a younger audience," he said.





Simple Real Food

Amanda Cushman
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

The price is right

I ENJOYED A VERY NICE MEAL AT THE Santa Monica Loews Beach Hotel the other night. The occasion was to review their prix fixe menu that is being featured for spring and I brought my husband in order to sample a couple dishes.

The name of the restaurant there is Ocean & Vine and is located right on the beach with fabulous views of the ocean and Santa Monica Pier.

We waited for a few minutes for our table in a comfortable lounge with the same amazing view. The only distraction was the overwhelming smell of chlorine from the waterfall that surrounds the lounge.

We were seated after about 10 minutes and greeted by our very helpful and attentive waiter. The menu gives the diner a choice of three appetizers and three entrees for the affordable price of $28.

We enjoyed their Loews special cocktail — a raspberry mojito — with an appetizing assortment of breads and what seemed to be a homemade flat bread.

But I have to comment on the ice cold butter, which made it hard to spread and is so unappealing. Leave the butter out for an hour before serving!

We ordered the lobster agnolotti and the garlic custard with heirloom tomatoes as our appetizers.

The agnolotti was very well done: small pillows of homemade pasta filled with lobster and topped with a brown butter sauce and wilted leeks.

This was a flavorful albeit rich appetizer that left me wanting more. The custard didn't quite work, though. There was too much custard with not enough of the garnishes that it came with — chopped nuts, tomato coulis and a balsamic sauce. Even with the garnishes it was an odd choice for an entire serving. Maybe if it had been just a taste of custard on a crisp slice of baguette. That could have worked.

Our entrees were herbed goat cheese stuffed prawns and lambchops with duck confit and white bean cassoulet. Here once again the first entrée was nice but the lambchops were over powered with the smokiness of the white beans.

So much so that I was a bit dubious as to where such an intense smoky flavor came from, hopefully not the dreaded liquid smoke (which is a frightening invention of pure chemicals).

The lambchops were cooked perfectly and would have been great without the overwhelming white beans, which were also overly salty.

My shrimp were nice even though I normally do not pair fish or shellfish with dairy — it tasted nice. The orzo it was served with was so rich and creamy I could have eaten that all by itself except for the knawing awareness of how much butter was in it.

We had a lovely glass of shiraz from California with our meal and enjoyed every sip.

At the end of the meal we split a chocolate mousse cake with raspberry coulis which was very nice, although I would have enjoyed it a bit more if it had been served room temperature instead of chilled.

The only other appetizer choice was a bit strange; black truffle and foie gras omelet with fricassee of mushrooms. I am not attracted to an omelet at dinner time and most definitely would not envision truffles and foie gras paired as one flavor would overpower the other.

All in all I liked the place, the service was great and the menu is priced right. I would suggest the chef add a few more options for those of us who would like something less rich and on the lighter side.

Here is my recipe for mushroom fricassee which I serve on a parmesan crostini as an appetizer and find it to be a big hit! Enjoy!

Fricassee of Wild Mushrooms with Parmesan Toasts

Serves 4

Ingredients

2 oz. dried porcini mushrooms, soaked in 1 cup very hot water
11/4 pounds wild mushrooms, such as shitake, cremini, chanterelle
2 tbs. olive oil, plus more for the bread
2 shallots, minced
1 tbs. chopped thyme
Salt, pepper
1/2 cup dry white wine
1 baguette sliced on the diagonal into 1/2 inch slices
1/2 cup grated parmesan
Chopped flat leaf parsley

Procedure

Soak the mushrooms until softened and then drain, reserving the liquid. Strain the liquid through a sieve lined with cheesecloth and set aside. Chop the mushrooms and set aside.

Heat the oven to 400.

Trim the wild mushrooms of their stems and slice thinly.

Heat the olive oil in a large, high-sided skillet over medium high heat and sauté the shallots for 2 minutes, stirring. Add both mushrooms, sauté for about 6 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and thyme. Add the mushroom soaking liquid and bring to a boil, cook until the liquid has almost disappeared. Add the wine and bring to a boil. Cook the mushrooms until about 3/4 of the wine has evaporated, taste for seasoning. Set aside.

Meanwhile, place the slices of bread on a baking sheet and sprinkle with the olive oil and the cheese. Bake until golden and cheese is melted: about 5 to 8 minutes.

Arrange the toasts on a serving platter and spoon the mushrooms on top, garnish with chopped parsley and serve.

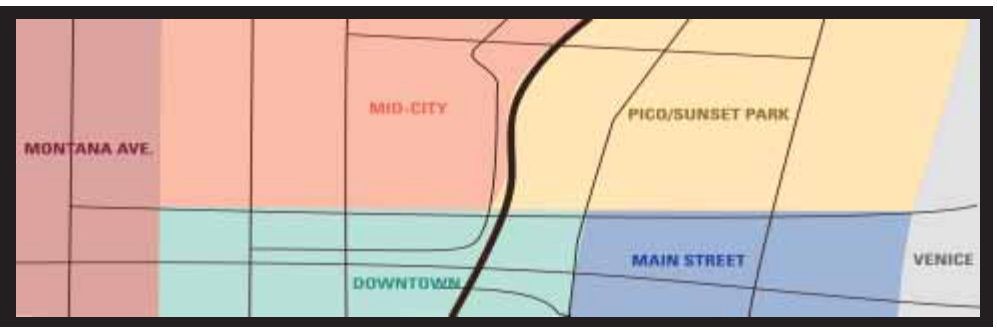
AMANDA CUSHMAN is a culinary educator who has cooked professionally for 25 years. She teaches privately for groups of two to 20 students. She has developed hundreds of recipes for cookbooks as well as food magazines and Web sites. She can be reached amandascooking@gmail.com.

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Future of Civic Center could include covering freeway

FROM CIVIC CENTER PAGE 1

The suggestion received some resistance from City Council members, including Ken Genser and Bobby Shriver, who expressed concerns with extending it to Ocean Avenue.

Councilwoman Pam O'Connor supported further exploring extending the offramp, adding that there are several streets that bisect Central Park in New York City.

"Maybe we don't end up with it but it has worked well in other areas," she said.

Changes in the Civic Center area could include decking the freeway and building a park that would be contiguous with Palisades Garden Walk. Capping the freeway would also allow redevelopment possibilities for the Holiday Inn, which would likely be impacted by any changes made to the I-10. City Hall is also exploring capping the freeway between 14th and 17th streets.

Eileen Fogarty, the director of Planning and Community Development, said the owners of the Holiday Inn have expressed interest in redeveloping their property.

Covering the freeway could also improve air quality.

"We could reduce air pollution by capping and gathering all the foul air and filtering it before it's released into the environment," Odermatt said.

EDUCATION CENTER MOVES FORWARD

A long-awaited dream of early childhood education advocates to create a center for children of city employees could soon come true.

The City Manager received the green light from the council to begin negotiating an agreement with Santa Monica College to develop an Early Childcare Education Center on the Civic Auditorium Campus.

SMC has already earmarked about $7 million in bond funds for early childhood development while the Rand Corp. has contributed another half million dollars.

About $9 million total, including funds from the Redevelopment Agency, has been designated, said Barbara Stinchfield, the director of Community and Cultural Services.

The City Manager was also authorized to begin seeking firms who might be interested in exploring a public/private partnership to use the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium.

Stinchfield said that through various studies conducted on the cultural life of Santa Monica, it became clear that the community has a desire for its own facility without having to travel to Downtown Los Angeles or Hollywood.

"With light rail coming in and with that sentiment, we feel that the time is right to really start looking and envisioning how to reposition the Civic Auditorium for the future," she said.

Michael Myers, a member of the Arts Commission, agreed, pointing out that the last time he went to the Civic Auditorium was in 1989 for a Don Henley and Bonnie Raitt concert.

"It was the first concert my parents brought me to and it didn't take me forever to get home," he said. "With the revitalization of the civic, all of us can have that feeling again."

Councilman Richard Bloom said that changes to the Civic Center area is a chance for city officials and staff to leave a lasting legacy for the future of Santa Monica.

"I think it's a process that has kind of slowly been moving forward for really many years now," he said. "We already have a world class city in my view but this is an extraordinary opportunity to take a greater leap forward into the future."

melodyh@smdp.com

California had homeless population of about 160,000 in 2007

FROM TENT CITY PAGE 3

Development Department estimated California had a homeless population of about 160,000 in 2007. Advocates say the number has likely grown as the economy has declined.

"We cannot look away and pretend like this does not happen, because it is happening and we must take action," Schwarzenegger said Wednesday. "And that is why we are doing all we can to do right by the people who are living in these difficult circumstances in these difficult times."

The problem is noticeable in cities big and small, from Los Angeles and San Francisco to Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz. HUD reported that about 43 percent of all homeless people in California are in Los Angeles County.

San Francisco receives little assistance from the state in its efforts to address a widespread homeless problem, said Nathan Ballard, spokesman for Mayor Gavin Newsom.

"Forty years ago, the state closed the mental hospitals. The money never followed the mentally ill to the cities," Ballard said in a statement. "Since then, mayors like Mayor Newsom and Mayor Johnson have been left holding the bag."

The press offices of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa did not return a telephone message seeking comment.

Schwarzenegger said he hand-delivered a letter to President Barack Obama last week asking him to accelerate money from the federal stimulus package to help address homelessness in California. The letter said the state expects to receive $180 million for that purpose, about $2.4 million of it destined for Sacramento.

Still, Schwarzenegger acknowledged that homelessness is a chronic problem nationwide and "no one really has found the sweet spot yet" for a permanent solution.





COLLEGE TRY

Fabian Lewkowicz *FabianLewkowicz.com*

UCLA Chancellor Gene Block (left) speaks with Santa Monica College biology student David Campos, 21, about transferring to UCLA at the SMC Theatre Arts Main Stage on Wednesday.

St. Monica returns to Camino Real League

FROM **BASEBALL** PAGE 1

ulate his bench and everything appeared to be set.

A three-game losing streak later and — again — the team is examining itself and looking for answers.

"I think we're just not playing all seven innings," senior shortstop Jose Munoz said during a break in classes on Wednesday. "We've just been giving up too many runs [during the losing streak]."

The games were close, with St. Monica losing by a combined five runs.

The crafty infielder said that the team's top starting pitchers will have to play a major role in ending the streak. Munoz said that lefty junior Andy Loef will have to continue his effective pitching if the team is to right the ship and head into the postseason with momentum.

White agrees that Loef is the key to solidifying the starting rotation, but added that he has a couple of other hurlers who he feels are capable of shutting down opposing hitters.

He said that senior lefty Hector Santiesteban has the stuff to complement Loef as the second starter in the rotation.

"He doesn't throw the ball as hard as Loef, but he's crafty," White said of his second starter. "He mixes it up, hits his spots.

"They are a good duo."

Catcher Anthony Yoshinaga will get an audition for the third spot in the rotation today against league rival Grace Brethren on the road.

White believes that he has the moxie to fill the role of a starter and has the added benefit of calling games behind the plate, which Yoshinaga said is his favorite part of playing ball.

As far as the closer role goes, White said that it varies game to game. Loef, who is 2-1 as a starter, has been called on to close a game. Danny White, the coach's son, is another player who may be called upon to shut down opponents late in games.

White added that he expected his team to pitch and field well this season, but has been impressed with his team's offensive prowess.

Munoz has paced the team with a stellar .619 batting average and has proven to be the team's most valuable offensive threat.

"I don't know how he could do any more than he's already doing," White said. "He's been a real team leader."

Mike Redondo, a sophomore second baseman, is the team's second best hitter this year, White said. His .400 average and two home runs have played a major part on offense.

White concluded that if his players can continue to play they way they have during the young season, he holds fast to the belief that the Mariners can make the playoffs.

But, it won't be without a fight from fellow league teams.

"I think it is going to be really even," White said. "All the teams are going to be pretty competitive."

Of course, leave it to a player to have even greater aspirations.

"I hope we can go all the way to a [California Interscholastic Federation] championship," Yoshinaga said. "It's on us to come through, we have the best team in the league."

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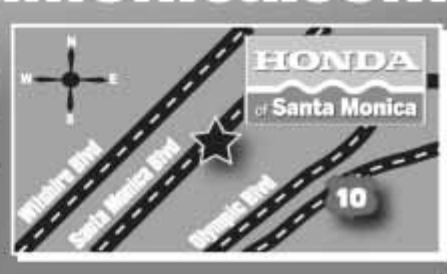
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1720 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD


Nordstrom looking for 60 subcontractors

FROM CONTRACTS PAGE 3

projects, said Kevin Ramsey, the president of the National Association of Minority Contractors — Southern California.

"The people that have the big jobs do business with people they're used to doing business with, which most of the time are not minority contractors," he said. "They think it might be risky and that they don't have the capacity."

Theresa Thomas, owner of NT Thomas Construction in Orange, was one of the contractors who attended the open house, learning about it through an advertisement.

"We have quite a bit of experience in restaurants, a lot in commercial tenant improvement," she said. "It sounded like certainly something we could work with."

Clint Kendall, the project manager for Nordstrom, said that women and minority-owned firms typically tend to be small and therefore don't believe they have a chance to participate in Nordstrom's projects.

"They assume that we have the people lined up that we want to use and we are trying to explain there are opportunities," Kendall said.

Construction for the project is expected to take about a year, breaking ground in July. Nordstrom plans to keep the existing structure in place but make some changes to the exterior, including pulling the recessed entrances out and adding more transparency through glass. The current brick facade is expected to remain the same, Kendall said.

Kendall said the company decided against demolition to keep the project time and cost down.

"To tear it down and start over means the whole hassle of staging steel and having a crane and all of those elements would make it much more difficult," Kendall said. "It's a real advantage to have it there."

melodyh@smdp.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CITYWIDE

Calling all nonprofits

The Rotary Club is accepting applications for capital and equipment funding requests from area nonprofits addressing the needs of the less fortunate in Santa Monica.

Grant applications for the Community Grants Program are due by April 30 for the final cycle of the 2008-09 Rotary term. Grants through the program range from $500 to $2,500.

Organizations may apply annually for funding. Funds must be used for capital, equipment or new program development. Funds are not available for annual operating needs or special events. Nancy Freedman is chair of the Community Grants Committee. She can be reached at nfreedman@levinfreeman.com or (310) 826-1366.

Applications and instructions can be obtained by contacting the Rotary Club at (310) 917.3313 or e-mailing RotaryClubofSantaMonica@Verizon.net, or from the Rotary Club Web site at www.rotaryclubofsantamonica.org. Look under "Our Community – Grants Committee."

Organizations must provide proof of 501(c)(3) status and validate that the funds benefit the community of Santa Monica. DAILY PRESS

SM PIER

No shortage of talent

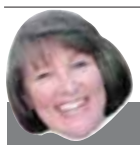
Over 130 artists have submitted their vision for the 25th Annual Twilight Dance Series as part of the Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corp.'s annual poster contest.

The artists include seasoned veterans, talented students and amateurs, all veying for the chance to have their design become the primary communications piece for the 10-week concert series. The winning design will be used in display advertising, posters, flyers, banners and more.

The artist responsible will receive $750 and their design becomes a collector's item and keepsake from the 25-year-old series, PRC representatives said. In addition, the winner will receive a VIP package for the summer including a backstage pass to the series. All designs are on display at the pier's west end Viewing Deck now through April 24 to recognize the hard work of all the entrants.

This year's winner will be chosen via a secure Internet poll on www.santamonicapier.org. Visitors to the site will only be able to vote one time, for one of the 25 finalist posters. Voting will continue through April 24. DP

DO YOU HAVE COMMUNITY NEWS?
Submit news releases to editor@smdp.com
or by fax at (310) 576-9913



Play Time

Cynthia Citron
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Living in a man's world?

QUICK, NAME A FAMOUS FEMALE physicist. OK, besides Marie Curie. Sadly, the name Rosalind Franklin doesn't spring readily to mind. But it should, since Ms. Franklin did the crucial work that led to the discovery of the structure of dioxyribonucleic acid (DNA), the very building blocks of life.

The fascinating story of Ms. Franklin's grueling research, carried out in spite of the carping and ridicule of her male colleagues, is told exquisitely in Anna Ziegler's new play "Photograph 51," currently on stage at one of the very best theatres in Los Angeles: The Fountain. Impeccably directed by The Fountain's Simon Levy, the play stars Aria Alpert as the driven, competitive, and morbidly secretive Rosalind Franklin, whose work, apparently, was all-consuming.

Franklin was born in 1920, in an era when a particularly brilliant girl, if she wanted to be popular, had to be smart enough to pretend to be dumb. Later, when women were struggling to be accepted in a man's world, the axiom was that a woman needed to be twice as competent and twice as clever as a man just to stay in the game.

Franklin's goal was never to be popular. (The fact that she was humorless, socially awkward and Jewish, in addition to her intellectual brilliance, probably didn't help, either.) Rather, as she wrote to her father in 1940, "By doing our best we shall come nearer to success and that success in our aims (the improvement of the lot of mankind, present and future) is worth attaining."

Playwright Ziegler's portrayal seems to reflect some of the disparaging opinions expressed by James Watson in his popular 1968 memoir, "The Double Helix," in which he presented Franklin as a bad-tempered, arrogant bluestocking who jealously guarded her data from colleagues, even though, he claimed, she was not competent to interpret it. This caricature of Franklin was met with the protests of those who had worked with her, including Maurice Wilkins and Watson's collaborator Francis Crick, who admitted that Franklin had been only two steps away from producing the solution that he, Watson, and Wilkins were awarded the Nobel Prize for in 1962. Franklin's friend, Anne Sayre, subsequently (in 1975) published a biography in angry rebuttal to Watson's account, and Franklin's role in the discovery became better known.

In fact, Ziegler's account makes very clear that Watson and Crick built their Nobel Prize-winning model of the structure of DNA only after having seen Franklin's "Photograph 51," one of a series that foreshadowed the construction of their model in the first place. If Franklin had been a little bolder in her hypotheses and taken the risk of building a model based on her hunches, rather than hesitating until she had thoroughly proven the validity of her work, she undoubtedly would have beaten Watson and Crick to the Nobel. And especially her treacherous colleague Wilkins, who was responsible for passing her "Photograph 51" to her professional rivals.

It may be that the self-aggrandizing Watson was still aggrieved at having been rejected when he had applied for a job in Franklin's lab at King's College in London. And Wilkins may still have been smarting from her personal treatment of him: he had anticipated working with her on the DNA photography that he was already engaged in, but apparently this collaboration had never been communicated to her, and so she brushed him off like a buzzing mosquito.

In all fairness to the men involved, however, the ambitious Watson, played with bouncing enthusiasm by Ian Gould, the stolid Crick, played with very British earnestness by Kerby Joe Grubb, and the slightly goofy and awkward Wilkins, played by Daniel Billet, seemed to have cause for their antipathy toward this "uppity" woman. In a time when women were expected to defer to the men around them, Rosalind Franklin lived by her own rules: working unceasingly, but slowly and methodically, seemingly unconcerned about the scientific "race" her male colleagues were engaged in. She was not collegial, or even friendly, did not know how to make small talk or interact with people socially, and even though she was an extremely attractive woman, by the age of 36 she had, admittedly, never been out on a date. She died of ovarian cancer in 1958, shortly before her 38th birthday.

Despite her prickly personality and personal tragedies, director Simon Levy has presented her as a rich and sympathetic character. And the men around her, treacherous as they might have been, are also presented with sympathy and understanding. Further, what might have become a fairly static recitation about a complex and barely comprehensible scientific subject is rendered enthrallingly exciting with the help of Travis Gale Lewis' innovative set design and Kathi O'Donohue's dramatic lighting.

You may not understand every nuance of their work, but you can't help but be caught up in their passions and their drama. "Photograph 51" is an important slice of history, beautifully acted and intriguingly presented. An exciting adventure all around.

"Photograph 51" will continue at the Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave. (at Normandie) in Los Angeles Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. through May 3. Call (323) 663-1525 for tickets.

CYNTHIA CITRON can be reached at ccitron@socal.rr.com.







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Saturday, 28 March 2009, 10:45 – 12:00
Santa Monica Public Library,
Montana Avenue Branch
1704 Montana Ave, Santa Monica, CA 90402



Photo courtesy Liberation Entertainment

COMING UP FOR AIR: **Denis Lavant portrays the sewer-dweller in 'Tokyo!'**



SEND US YOUR ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS!
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Santa Monica Daily Press
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MOVIE REVIEW

Japanese disconnect

BY VINCE VITALE
Special to the Daily Press

Far from a travel guide, "Tokyo!" is a trio of short films set in the Japanese city, created by three directors known for being on the edge of their genres. Michel Gondry ("The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"), Leos Carax ("The Lovers on the Bridge") and Bong Joon-Ho ("The Host") bring their individual sensitivities to geographic space and the human soul.

The first segment is Gondry's "Interior Design," which follows a young couple, Hiroko and Akira (Ayako Fujitani and Ryo Kase) in their move to Tokyo so the young man can advance his film career. In the process, the girl loses her sense of self. A surprising metamorphosis shows the descent of her self-esteem and redefinition of the supportive person she is.

The second segment is "Merde" by Carax, which introduces us to a sewer-dweller (Denis Levant) who is at once a Rasputin-like and Chaplanesque grotesque who emerges from the ground to wreak havoc on Tokyo citizens. He becomes represented by a French attorney whose facial traits are the mirror-image of his own, indicating a relationship by alienation.

Finally, the Bong segment titled "Shaking Tokyo" invites us into the ruminations of a shut-in man (a "hikikimori" in Japanese), portrayed by Teruyuki Kagawa, in his obsessional traits at home and his connection with a pizza delivery girl (Yu Aoi), who is slipping into becoming a hikikimori, whom he tries to save by reaching out to her, and in the process redeeming himself. Two earthquakes mark and define their points of connection.

The three films (none of which is directed by a Japanese director) share a sensibility for a specifically Japanese sense of alienation and isolation, investigated in the 2004 film "Tony Takitani" by director Jun Ichikawa (from the novel by Haruki Murakami). In "Interior Design," the girl has to literally re-define herself so she makes sense in her new urban home. In "Merde," the sewer-dweller defiantly kills and maims citizens in total detachment and isolation from society, like a human Godzilla who is always separate. He sneers, "I don't like innocent people."

In "Shaking Tokyo," a man who holds his isolation from society up as almost an artform, shatters through his self-enforced chrysallis of a home in order to connect with another, with so much internal intensity as to "cause" earthquakes. It is this upbeat connection in "Shaking Tokyo" which made it necessary to place it last in the sequence. More than the other shorts, it leaves the audience feeling hopeful.

The conventions the directors use are at once viscerally compelling and touching. Whether wooden legs or flaming hair or shaking ground, "Tokyo!" speaks to how we are formed, or form ourselves, or just disappear, in the urban setting. Hiding behind some of the absurdities of the films ("Interior Design" alludes to ghosts between the buildings) are dramatic statements of longing, aloneness and human need. In "Merde," a Japanese judge says "we don't like racist foreigners in Japan," which makes one wonder how contributory the Japanese are to this void in its own as well.

Through it all, the film is kept bouyant and light via its quirkiness and odd sensibilities. After all, it's difficult to fully identify with characters this strange. There is a cartoonishness about their personalities which matches the cartoon image of the Tokyo skyline in the title sequence at the beginning and end of the film.

It is currently screening at the Nuart Theatre on Santa Monica Boulevard through March 27.

news@smdp.com

NCAA BASKETBALL

Last week basketball, this week saving a town

TIM DAHLBERG
AP Sports Columnist

A week ago they were on the big stage at the Metrodome in Minneapolis, playing the defending national champions in a game they were supposed to have no chance of winning.

No one from North Dakota State believed that. Neither did any of the 10,000 fans who drove down I-94 from Fargo to cheer the Bison on in their first NCAA tournament appearance.

"My last memory of college basketball was walking off the court to their cheers," senior Brett Winkelman said. "They've given us so much over the last few years."

Now the Bison are giving back. They're trying to save their town.

Once again, the odds are against them.

Snow was falling Wednesday in Fargo, just more bad news in the city's fight against the swelling Red River. The bad weather was hampering efforts to fill a staggering 2 million sandbags to protect the city amid new projections that the river would crest at levels never before seen by the weekend.

Thousands of people from all walks of life, many of them with vivid memories of the disastrous 1997 floods, are racing around the clock to keep the city dry. With school canceled, students are stacking sandbags, while others are taking time off from work to do what they can to help.

Working right alongside them, shovel for shovel, are coach Saul Phillips and the Bison basketball team.

Had a few more bounces gone their way they might be in Indianapolis right now, practicing for a third-round game against Michigan State. Instead they're working on something a little more urgent — saving people's homes.

"It's just the way of life around here," Winkelman said. "It's obvious that if anyone needs a helping hand, they can expect to get help."

People in Fargo first began worrying about a possible flood about the same time the Bison were eliminated by Kansas in the first round, a game they were in until the final minutes. The Red River is bloated from heavy winter snows made even worse by spring rains, and has risen some 20 feet in the last week alone.

The prognosis isn't good, which makes the sandbagging even more critical. Every able body is needed, including the big bodies of the Bison.

Phillips began calling his players during the weekend when it became apparent how bad things might get. He hoped to have the entire team working together, filling and stacking the sandbags.

His players beat him to it. Half of them were already on the front lines.

"You go from a terrific diversion like the NCAA tournament to everybody literally walking down streets asking if anyone needs help," Phillips said. "It's a really weird dynamic. I don't think you could find two more opposite deals."

The team has worked together the last few days, going house-to-house near the river to offer help. Like all volunteers, they're braving freezing temperatures and muddy lawns that quickly give way to size 17 boots.

The people being helped are not only grateful, but eager to talk some hoops.

"They want to talk about the Kansas game and how much fun it was to watch," senior center Lucas Moormann said.

The basketball players are just a small part of an army of thousands of volunteers, some from other towns, who have been working long hours to protect homes and businesses along the river that separates the city from Moorhead, Minn. They work in shifts as dump trucks loaded with sand rumble by on a continuous loop.

NBA

Former housekeeper sues Bryant family

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANTA ANA Kobe Bryant's former housekeeper is suing the NBA star and his wife, contending she was "harassed and humiliated," denied health insurance and forced to quit because of "intolerable" working conditions.

In one instance, Maria Jimenez says Bryant's wife ordered her to put her hand in a container of dog waste to retrieve the price tag of a blouse.

Jimenez filed suit Friday in Orange County Superior Court. She says in court papers that Vanessa Bryant "badgered, harassed and humiliated" her in front of Bryant, the couple's children and others. She said the couple failed to provide health coverage, as promised when she was hired. She said she didn't learn she didn't have it until she became ill and sought medical attention.

The action seeks unspecified general, punitive and special damages, as well as back pay and overtime Jimenez says she is owed. The lawsuit was first reported by tmz.com.

Rob Pelinka, agent for the Los Angeles Lakers star, did not immediately return a call.

The 48-year-old Jimenez said in court papers she is owed more than $20,000 in earnings that were wrongly withheld, as well as unpaid overtime and penalties for not being paid properly.

After she left Bryant's employ, Jimenez said she asked again about the medical insurance, which she said had not been purchased as promised. She said she subsequently incurred more than $127,000 in medical bills for a back injury and surgery to remove an ovarian cyst.

Jimenez wasn't fired but her lawyer said she was wrongly discharged because Bryant's wife made it impossible for her to continue working at the couple's Orange County home.

"She quit but because the working conditions were intolerable," attorney William Vogeler said Wednesday. "We allege it was a violation of labor laws that protect people from working in unhealthy situations."

In court papers, Jimenez says she went to work for the Bryants in September 2007 and left in March 2008. Almost immediately upon starting work, "Vanessa began a continuing pattern of verbally abusing and demeaning her." Jimenez said she was called lazy, slow, dumb, a liar and was cursed and screamed at.



SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 54°

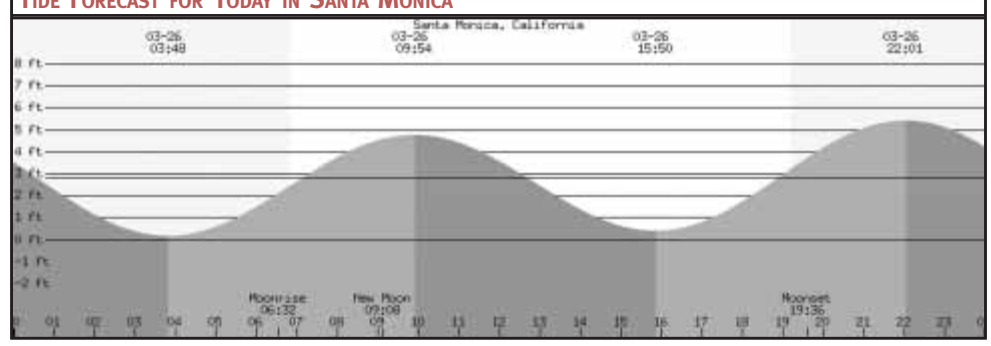
Swell Forecast (5-7 FT)

Thursday the 26th should see continued light southern hemi, but we should also see a decent dose of NW wind swell. West facing breaks are looking at chest high wind swell coming in from 310 degrees.

Long Range Synopsis

Friday the 27th should still see some NW wind swell, possibly up to chest high around west facing breaks that can work a 310-degree angle.

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **March 17, 2009**

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

QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 1
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 5
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 37 / 6
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 8 / 38

The Beach Report Card is made possible by simplehuman, The Goldhirsh Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, Ford

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

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

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

LEGEND

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

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

Heal the Bay

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

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

MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(323) 466-FILM

The Hidden Fortress (1958) (NR)
7:30

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Confessions of a Shopaholic (PG) 1hr 52min
4:00, 9:25

Fuel (NR) 1hr 55min
1:40, 4:25, 7:05, 9:50

The Reader (R) 2hrs 02min
1:45, 7:00

Gran Torino (R) 1hr 56min
1:30, 6:45

Miss March (R) 1hr 30min
4:35, 9:45

Super Capers (PG) 1hr 30min
2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:00

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

Coraline 3d (PG) 1hr 40min
1:50, 4:15, 7:10, 9:35

Duplicity (PG-13)
1:15, 4:05, 7:00, 10:00

Sunshine Cleaning (R) 1hr 42min
2:00, 2:40, 4:25, 5:10, 6:50, 7:40, 9:20, 10:05

The Last House on the Left (R) 1hr 49min
1:55, 4:30, 7:05, 9:45

Race to Witch Mountain (PG) 1hr 39min
1:30, 2:30, 4:00, 5:00, 6:30, 7:30, 9:00, 9:55

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

Slumdog Millionare (R) 2hr 1min
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00

Moscow, Belgium (Aanrijding in Moscou) (NR) 1hr 42min
1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:55

Gomorrah (Gomorra) (NR) 2hrs 17min
1:40, 4:50, 8:00

Sin Nombre (R) 1hr 36min
1:45, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30

Cherry Blossoms (NR) 2hr 4 min
11a.m.

Man on Wire (PG-13) 1hr 34min
11 a.m.

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

Taken (PG-13) 1hr 33min
12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:40, 10:00

He's Just Not That Into You (PG-13) 2hrs 09min
1:00, 6:30

I Love You, Man (R) 1hr 50min
12:30, 1:30, 3:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30, 10:20

Knowing (PG-13)
11:30 a.m., 2:20, 4:10, 5:10, 7:00, 8:00, 9:50, 10:45

Watchmen (R) 2hrs 43min
12:10, 3:40, 7:10, 10:30

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

Don't be alone, Libra

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ Allow yourself to be spontaneous. You'll discover the many different paths available. Test before you hop down any trail. Realize that many options lie ahead. You are capable of motivating many. Tonight: Fun times await you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Know when to back off and get some space. The issue might not be others, as much as you need to center and rethink a decision. Allow yourself to do what you need to do. Schedule a dentist or doctor appointment very soon. Tonight: Get some extra sleep.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Zero in on what is going on behind the scenes. Be clear and direct when dealing with a partner, even if he or she is controlling. Listen to news that beams in from out of left field. Tonight: Where the action is.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Take a stand and be willing to follow through. When you open up and brainstorm with a respected associate, you could be delighted by the ideas. Try out different concepts in your imagination. Tonight: Could be late.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ If you are not comfortable with what you are hearing, seek out different opinions and solutions. Consider that you might be quite selective about what you hear, and might not hear everything that is said. Take off your blinders. Tonight: Think "different."

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ A partner wants to take charge. Why not let this person do just that? Often, you need to feel involved. Be willing to pull back and see what happens when you are not. Someone lets you know the depth of his or her caring. Tonight: Opt for privacy during a conversation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Others come on strong, and you know what to do — back off. Relationships, perhaps, are your highest priority in general. With that in mind, back off and let what needs to happen evolve. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Get into work or a project. The more you get done the better, as the weekend is coming around the corner. An associate or acquaintance is in an inordinately cheerful mood. Enjoy. Take time for a walk or go to the gym. Tonight: Romp away.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Your imagination goes haywire too easily. You could be wondering why you are thinking such weird things. Don't demean your ideas; rather, just note the thoughts that go past your mind. Somewhere there is a gem. Tonight: Start the weekend early.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Once more, consider a home office, or at least work from home today. You'll feel much more centered and together in this environment. You might be tired as well and need some time to yourself. Tonight: You don't have to go far.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ You have a lot to say, and it is quite apparent that you will demand an audience. Choose your words with care, also being aware of your intonation, gestures and facial characteristics. Your words could melt another person's resistance. Tonight: Swap news and a joke or two!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Your sense of direction makes a big difference. Realize how much you have to offer and where you are going. An innate talent or artistic bent could become financially beneficial. Don't forget to get that birthday card. Tonight: Your treat.

Happy birthday

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

This year, you make a big impression. Wherever you go, others inevitably seem drawn to you. Express your authenticity, and you will succeed way beyond your expectations. This birthday, focus and make a list of resolutions. More than many years, you could achieve most of this list, if not all. If you are single, you will have your choice of sweeties. Choose with care. If you are attached, allow your significant other to play a larger role. He or she needs the limelight as well. A fellow ARIES plays devil's advocate.

Girls and Sports
By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



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



Garfield
By Jim Davis



Strange Brew
By John Deering



Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

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

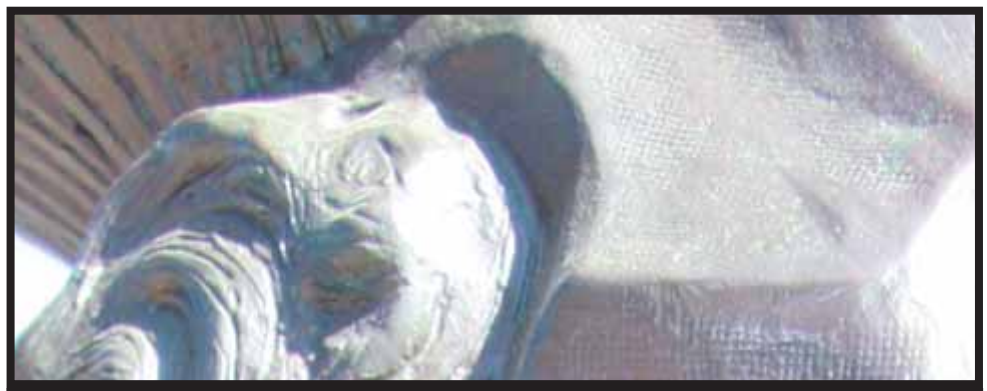
SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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Soraya Danesh news@smdp.com

The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to *editor@smdp.com*.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Radiator sound
5 "Beat it!"
10 Tied
11 — Tuesday (Lent preceder)
12 Baby's call
13 Asian nation
14 Barbers, at times
16 Bedroom pair
20 Get
23 Gettysburg loser
24 Penned
25 Oven feature
27 Actor Cariou
28 Fled
29 Boat captains
32 Van companies
36 Stay
39 Do copy work
40 Ring islands
41 Refer to
42 Beta follower
43 League unit
3 Big rig
4 Is short with
5 Keen
6 Like fresh celery
7 Tier
8 Gardner of "Mogambo"
9 Stag party invitees
11 Beer mug
15 Ballet bend
17 Sesame Street youngster
18 Sailing hazard
19 Lowly worker
20 Saddler's tools
21 Arduous journey
22 Writer Morrison
25 Field cover
26 Look over
28 Rider's straps
30 Sacred song
31 Penna. city
33 Entertainer Adams
34 Meter maid of song
35 Flower part
36 Tabloid
37 Greek vowel
38 Apple pie baker

DOWN

1 Skirt edges
2 Infamous czar

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

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

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

3-26

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SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 3 7 23 31 36
Meganumber: 16
Jackpot: $28M

FANTASY 5: 5 8 9 21 22

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 0 8 2
EVENING: 2 4 6

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 12 Lucky Chamrs
2nd: 07 Eureka
3rd: 09 Winning Spirit
RACE TIME: 1.40.74

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ **Recurring Themes:** Once again, a man was found to have climbed into the waste tank of an outdoor toilet, but according to a March report in the Twin Falls (Idaho) Times-News, the emergency crew seemed to accept his story that it was all a mistake and not a manifestation of perversion. Rescuers from the town of Filer, Idaho, said the man told them he was just looking for his keys that he had accidentally dropped and had been in the tank for 15 minutes before help arrived. The man declined to identify himself, and no official report was required, but after the man was hosed off by a fire truck, he "discovered" that his keys had been in his pocket all along, and he drove away.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1892 poet Walt Whitman died in Camden, N.J.

1917 the Seattle Metropolitans became the first U.S. team to win the Stanley Cup, defeating the Montreal Canadiens.

1958 the U.S. Army launched America's third successful satellite, Explorer 3.

1959 American author Raymond Chandler died in La Jolla, Calif., at age 70.

1971 East Pakistan proclaimed its independence, taking the name Bangladesh.

1982 groundbreaking ceremonies took place in Washington for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

1997 the bodies of 39 members of the Heaven's Gate techno-religious cult who'd committed suicide were found inside a rented mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.

WORD UP!

tumult \TOO-mult; TYOO-mult\, *noun*:
1. The commotion or agitation of a crowd, usually accompanied with great noise, uproar, and confusion of voices; hurly-burly; noisy confusion.
2. Violent commotion or agitation, with confusion of sounds; as, "the tumult of the elements."
3. Irregular or confused motion; agitation; high excitement; as, "the tumult of the spirits or passions."
--tumultuous, adjective

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The 14 users currently in the teen chat room.

good2hug:	14, female, Daytona, FL
joey16:	16, male, Hackensack, NJ
robbieW:	38, male, Daytona, FL
b-ball_tommy:	15, male, Pocatello, ID
tu_tu:	16, female, Burlington, VT
duffme:	44, male, Minneapolis, MN
QTpie:	30, male, Chicago, IL
ty1989:	15, female, Naperville, IL
harrys_grl:	12, female, Appleton, MN
slugger20:	17, male, Jackson, MS
qtrback21:	26, male, Brooklyn, NY
suzie14:	14, female, Portland, OR
hiphopper:	13, female, Plano, TX
paperboy:	41, male, Beaverton, OR

Every day, children are sexually solicited online.

Ad Council

You don't know what your kids are saying online. Or who they are saying it to. A lot of times neither do they. So get involved. To protect your kid's online life or report an incident, call 1-800-THE LOST or visit cybertipline.com. HDOP: help delete online predators

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN



Kate Bransfield

Estates Director
Society of Excellence
Previews Properties Specialist
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1608 Montana Avenue
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720 17th Street
1 Bed, 1 Bath
REDUCED $1,649,000
Lowest Priced SFH
North of Montana!
Open Saturday & Sunday
March 28th & 29th
From 2:00 to 5:00 pm



2721 Washington Avenue
Charming 2 Bed, 1 Bath
Or
Build Your Dream Home!
Approved Plans & Permits
Included in Purchase Price!
$1,499,000



1118 3rd Street #506
2 Bed, 2 Bath
Fabulous City & Ocean Views
Beautifully Remodeled 2008
$1,299,000
Easy to Show
Call for Appointment



632 16th Street
4 Bed, 4.5 Bath
North of Montana
Home
$3,249,000
Easy to Show
Call for Appointment





1135 Berkeley Street
5 Bed, 2.5 Bath
Single Family Home
$1,500,000
Easy to Show
Call for Appointment



11479 Rose Avenue
5 Bed, 3.5 Bath
Craftsman
$1,349,000
Open Sunday,
March 29th
From 2:00 to 5:00 pm

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Median Price of ALL Santa Monica Properties Listed for Sale As of Late March 2009

	Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
Santa Monica Canyon	$2,295,000	$1,695,000
North of Montana	$3,130,000	$1,198,000
Between Wilshire & Montana	$1,995,000	$779,000
South of Wilshire	$899,500	$759,000
Sunset Park	$1,161,500	$699,000
Ocean Park	$1,282,000	$836,500

Statistics Updated Every Monday

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