

FREE

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2003

Volume 2, Issue 117

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

05, 09, 10, 16, 20

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 8, 5, 6

Evening picks: 0, 2, 3

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 07, Eureka

2nd Place: 03, Hot Shot

3rd Place: 09, Winning Spirit

Race time: 1:46:54



NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

■ In Manchester, England, in December, Thomas Clark, 30 (described by his lawyer as "intelligent" and "highly educated" but spiraling into depression), was convicted in the stabbing death of a 71-year-old man. Among the evidence against him was the result of an Internet search he had performed on his computer: "What sentence would I get for stabbing somebody in an unprovoked attack?" (The response, from the "Ask Jeeves" Web site, was not introduced as evidence, but the correct answer, it turns out, is "life in prison.")



THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Nothing spoils a good party like a genius.



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Order in tonight, Sag 2



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Schools' parcel tax campaign heats up

Special election scheduled for June 3

BY JASON AUSLANDER

Daily Press Staff Writer

In a little more than two months, Santa Monica voters will again be asked to give the cash-strapped local school district more money.

This time, however, backers propose a smaller parcel tax, an exemption for senior citizens and will present the question at a June 3 special election called to decide this issue only.

"I think there is a greater willingness now to step up to the plate and provide funding."

— SETH JACOBSON
Consultant

"I think there is a greater willingness now to step up to the plate and provide funding," said Seth Jacobson, a consultant hired by local businesses to help convince voters to pass the proposal.

Measure S, as it's known, would levy a \$225 flat tax on each of the 32,413 parcels of land in

Santa Monica and Malibu. It would run for six years and generate about \$6.5 million annually for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, which is facing a \$13 million budget shortfall this year and next.

Last November, voters narrowly defeated Measure EE, which

would have levied a 12-year parcel tax of up to \$300 on landowners in Santa Monica and Malibu, and would have been adjusted annually for inflation. It did not receive the required two-thirds majority and was voted down 61 percent to 39 percent.

If passed, Measure S will not be adjusted for inflation and senior citizens won't be taxed if they apply for an exemption. It will work out to about \$20 per month for homeowners and about \$4 a month for renters, Jacobson said.

Measure EE failed because

See PARCEL TAX, page 5

Wind damage minor for most

By Daily Press staff

Police and city clean-up crews had their hands full Thursday night and Friday dealing with a lot of minor damage done by gusting winds.

Entire trees, branches and numerous palm fronds were blown down all over Santa Monica, with a few of them falling on top of the cars parked below, said Sgt. Gary Herman, SMPD watch commander.

The most notable incident, he said, was an electrical pole near 23rd and Pearl streets that cracked and dangled over the street. Southern California Edison replaced the pole by 8 a.m., Friday and disruption of service was minimal.

"It wasn't that bad," Herman said of the storm.

To one local man, however, the damage was that bad.

Justin Rubin's Toyota truck, which was parked on Arizona Avenue between 14th and Euclid streets, was one of those unfortunate enough to have been under a falling tree.

That alone would probably have been bad enough.

But, as it turns out, the Toyota was the second vehicle Rubin and his wife have lost in less than two weeks. His wife's car, which was parked in nearly the same spot, was totaled by a hit-and-run driver on March 14.

As he surveyed the damage Thursday night, Rubin scratched the back of his head and good-naturedly wondered what his insurance company was going say this time.



Jason Auslander/Daily Press

Ramiro Rodriguez, standing, and Joe Montez, driving the tractor, clean up the remains of a tree that crushed this car on 9th Street near Pico Blvd.



Jason Auslander/Daily Press

City workers cut up a tree that landed on Justin Rubin's Toyota truck on Arizona Avenue between 14th and Euclid streets on Thursday night.

'Mood swings' by press questioned

BY PAULINE JELINEK
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON

Annoyed by questions about how the war in Iraq is going, Bush administration officials are criticizing press coverage.

At one point Friday, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld complained of "mood swings" in the media.

And one senior official said President Bush thinks it's silly to suggest the war is not going well and right on schedule.

Unlike Rumsfeld, that official would not speak for attribution.

The defense secretary opened a Pentagon news conference saying invading forces had made progress in the first week of the conflict to disarm and overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"And interestingly, in that short period of a week, we have seen mood swings in the media from highs to lows to highs and

See COVERAGE, page 7

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HOROSCOPE

Order in tonight, Sagittarius

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Saturday, March 29, 2003:

You might drive a hard bargain whether you intend to or not. Sometimes others could be taken aback by your innate resourcefulness and unpredictability. Allow more humor in your life, if possible, because it will help take you over the hurdles. You will be in a position of power through August, when you seem like an endless stream of creativity. Listen well to others, because your suggestions could be enhanced by them. After summer, your career and professional life take off. Knowing what you want helps you achieve your goals. Do be careful with a tendency to become a little thick in the middle. PISCES reads you cold.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ New beginnings work with the unexpected, though assuming a low profile might be most efficient. Share your strong feelings with someone you care about without fear. Allow your lively nature to emerge in your dealings. Tonight: Slow down with a favorite person.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ You might not be exactly sure what you need to do in order to help others feel at ease. If you don't work as hard and push less, you will find that the unexpected occurs when dealing with a friend. Get use to this excitement. You're seeing a new pattern arise. Tonight: Where the action is.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ You might not be comfortable with information that comes forward via a parent or child. You might decide to sit back and let others run with their impulsiveness. Experiment with different ideas. Enjoy a key person in your life without being drawn into his or her stuff! Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Ask questions in order to get to the bottom of an issue. However, news or an event could throw you into a tizzy. Think carefully about what is at the center of a personal matter. Take off to a fun happening or event, or take a day trip. Tonight: Follow the music.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Understanding reaches new heights that somehow allow a greater personal exchange between you and a loved one. An intimate relationship could take a startling turn. Don't pull back, even if some intense and tender feelings might be expressed. Tonight: Stay on a one-on-one level.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Examine what might be occurring on a deeper level. A key partner or loved one does a lot of sharing about what might be going on. Though your instinct is to reach out, you could be startled by what occurs. Learn to be less dependent on consistency. Tonight: Let someone else run with the ball.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Question what might be going on within a relationship. You could be overwhelmed by what you're seeing within your immediate circle. Unexpected developments take you in a new direction. Slow down and relax with those in your day-to-day life. Tonight: Don't make extravagant plans.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Realize what might be occurring with a child or loved one you care about. Examine your intentions. You might feel one thing but do the opposite. Examine your long-term desires, as you seem to be in the midst of a most exciting situation. Tonight: What you can count on is change.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Stay more concerned with what is happening on the home front. What someone says to you might be hard to hear at first, but it is well-intended. Experiment with different ideas. Allow your caring to emerge when dealing with a loved one. Tonight: Order in.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Your imagination heads you in a new direction. Express your sensitivity to a changeable circumstance. Someone in your immediate environment expresses more instability than he or she has in the past. Maintain a caring, nurturing stance. Tonight: As it is, don't push it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You might be bewildered by a financial matter. You might not understand exactly what is happening with your dealings. Know that not everything needs to be expensive. Experiment, encouraging others' ingenuity. Tonight: Your treat.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Experiment with different ideas. Allow more playfulness and happiness to come forward. Examine your long-term desires, but don't feel you must act on them right away. Express your caring, helping others feel more at ease. Tonight: Others respond to you.

Santa Monica Daily Press

Published Monday through Saturday
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LOCAL



‘Hedonism’ hurricane not enough for refund

By Daily Press staff

A howling hurricane that ruined a local man’s dream of a singles’ vacation in Jamaica doesn’t entitle him to a refund, a judge ruled earlier this week.

The ruling rebuffed claims by Lewis Wexper, a British man living in West Los Angeles, that he was entitled to a refund of \$2,557 from Marina Del Rey-based Marina Travel and packager Happy Vacations.

In Santa Monica Small Claims Court on Wednesday, Commissioner Roberta Kyman didn’t offer any reasoning behind her decision. But the case included no evidence that a refund would be provided in case of bad weather. Wexper’s bid was apparently doomed because, although he cut the trip short by a couple of days, he took it.

Wexper offered a laundry list of complaints about his ruined vacation, including a bumpy flight, dark room and lack of activities. But his chief complaint was a hurricane — more exactly, a “Caribbean tropical storm system,” which hit the “Hedonism Three” resort three days into his 10-day trip.

“I had a beautiful vacation for two or three days,” Wexper confessed to Kyman. Damaging his case, he said he left the resort early because of food poisoning, as well as the torrential downpour.

Marina Travel’s Lonnie Levine noted

the summer season selected by Wexper for his vacation is well-known as hurricane season in the Caribbean and that the resort did its best, through vouchers, to offer visitors make-up days (not including airfare) for washed-out moments.

Wexper said he would not have used any of the “Return to Paradise” vouchers because he had an unpleasant memory of “Hedonism Three.”

The promotion, wholesaled by Happy Vacations, is designed for singles who like to mingle in resorts such as Jamaica’s, which have some areas reserved for nudity. Wexper selected Jamaica because he wanted to avoid the “screaming kids” he was advised might be hanging around Cancun, another choice resort.

“When it rains over there, it rains very heavily,” Wexper noted, narrating a scene in which sandbags appeared. He said the resort replaced his non-oceanfront room with another with a better view upon his complaint. But there was little the resort could do about the rain.

Absent a refund guarantee, Kyman’s ruling suggests, bad weather is an unfortunate risk of a summer sojourn to the Caribbean. As under airline rules, the ruling also suggests that Wexper’s case was doomed the moment he decided to take the trip, which included a pre-packaged airline ticket and resort stay.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

St. Joseph Center receives small business development grant

By Daily Press staff

A Venice-based non-profit social service agency has been awarded an \$8,000 grant to help low-income clients who want to start or advance a small business.

The grant — given by the Allstate Foundation — will fund an 11-week class where those interested will learn about defining business goals, conducting a marketing analysis and creating a financial plan, including pricing, sales forecasts and use of general ledgers.

“We are grateful to the Allstate Foundation for this grant,” said Rhonda Meister, St. Joseph Center executive director.

St. Joseph Center, a nonprofit social service agency founded in 1976, serves 7,500 adults and children through 11 programs that include emergency services, case management, educational activities, job training, child care and housing assistance. Last year, St. Joseph Center’s Family Center Program served 953 families by providing supplemental groceries, mentoring and tutoring for youth, adult education classes, and case management. For more information on St. Joseph Center, call 310-396-6468 ext. 328.

Founded in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent corporation funded by contributions from Allstate Insurance Company. Through a corporate committee and field office grant committees, the foundation funds more than 1,000 programs each year and, in 2001, contributed \$7.1 million to communities across the country.



Surf looks promising today. Northwest ground swell will be peaking this afternoon as northwest wind swell picks up. Surf should have good size and consistency at most breaks.

South Bay spots will see overhead sets, chest- to shoulder-high on average. Northern breaks are smaller, more in the waist to chest range. Yesterday saw strong winds and bad blowout throughout the day, but conditions look calmer this morning. Forecasts show energy decreasing Saturday and becoming even weaker Sunday.

By the end of the weekend, surf will probably sink below waist-high. Long-range forecasts are tracking a major swell off New Zealand, due in SoCal by the middle of next week. It’s going to be huge. By Wednesday, reports say surf could be double-overhead at L.A.’s best southwest spots.

**Today's Tides:**

Low-	12:43 a.m.	1.86'
High-	6:26 a.m.	4.97'
Low-	1:28 p.m.	-0.59'
High-	7:51 p.m.	4.22'

Location	Saturday	Sunday	Water Quality
County	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Zuma	3-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Surf	1-3'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	D
Topanga	2-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	B
Break	2-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Porto	3-5'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A

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Public education supporters invited to Pink Slip Parade

By Daily Press staff

A parade to support public education in the wake of severe budget cuts will be held in Santa Monica on April 5.

Dubbed the Pink Slip Parade in honor of the 207 teachers, administrators, nurses, librarians, custodians, and service workers are receiving “pink slips” telling them they will be let go, the event will begin at 10 a.m., at Palisades Park at Wilshire Boulevard and Ocean Avenue.

The parade will march south through Palisades Park to Santa Monica Boulevard, then turn east to the Third Street Promenade, then south to culminate at Broadway Boulevard and Third Street for a brief assembly with speakers and music. Allow plenty of time to park and bring the whole family, neighbors and friends.

The Pink Slip Parade is a way for the community to come together and stress that, even in difficult and uncertain times, it believes that public education must be preserved and supported, according to a press release.

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District is facing cuts of \$13 million during this year and next.

The Pink Slip Parade is sponsored by the Santa Monica Malibu Council of PTAs, the Community for Excellent Public Schools, the Classroom Teachers Association, and SEIU.

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OPINION

LETTERS

‘The Other Greg Thomas’ states his piece

Editor:

In (the March 27, SMDP), you ran a letter regarding the Promenade homeless attributed to Greg Thomas of Santa Monica. Depending on which phone call I answered I was either a hero or Saddam. Same name/city, wrong guy.

Although I do not believe in the other Mr. Thomas’ tone of voice and referring to the homeless as “miserable SOBs,” I do in some way support a toned down version of his concern. What Mr. Thomas did not cover is that Santa Monica, for years, had a city attorney (now gone) who made it impossible for law enforcement to do their job.

The city, in its liberal approach, offered free food programs in front of City Hall. At one time there was an estimated 5,000 homeless in Santa Monica alone. Ironically the city resulted in hiring a consultant to understand why there were so many homeless in the city. No arrest, free food and warm climate. Who could pass on that?

As the city became “capitalistic” and realized they could actually make money from the death of Westwood, they began to build a tunnel with trains entering from both ends. The homeless were on the Promenade before it was the Promenade.

If Mr. Thomas (again, no relation) wants to go somewhere else for dinner, it is easier for him to do so than the many who cannot and must revert to the trash cans. As far as the people “ranting, and yelling,” it could well be coming from over 100 outlets for liquor along the Promenade or the circus of street performers that are able make any kind of sound as long as they buy a permit.

There is a “different” kind of homeless on the streets today who have changed the attitude of many people like Mr. Thomas. There are, however, some good people who are down in their luck who the city needs to help with the incredible revenue they are enjoying from the Promenade taxes and the overbuilding of Water Garden.

The Other Greg Thomas
Santa Monica

English fluency is key to better jobs

Editor:

Once again we read about the plight of the hotel workers in Santa Monica. Once again we read about the mistreatment of the hotel workers at the hands of the corporate owners.

Once again we read about a specific worker (in this case, Maria Mena, 18-year veteran of the hotel) who “through a translator” says, “We want to be heard. It’s unjust

what they are doing.”

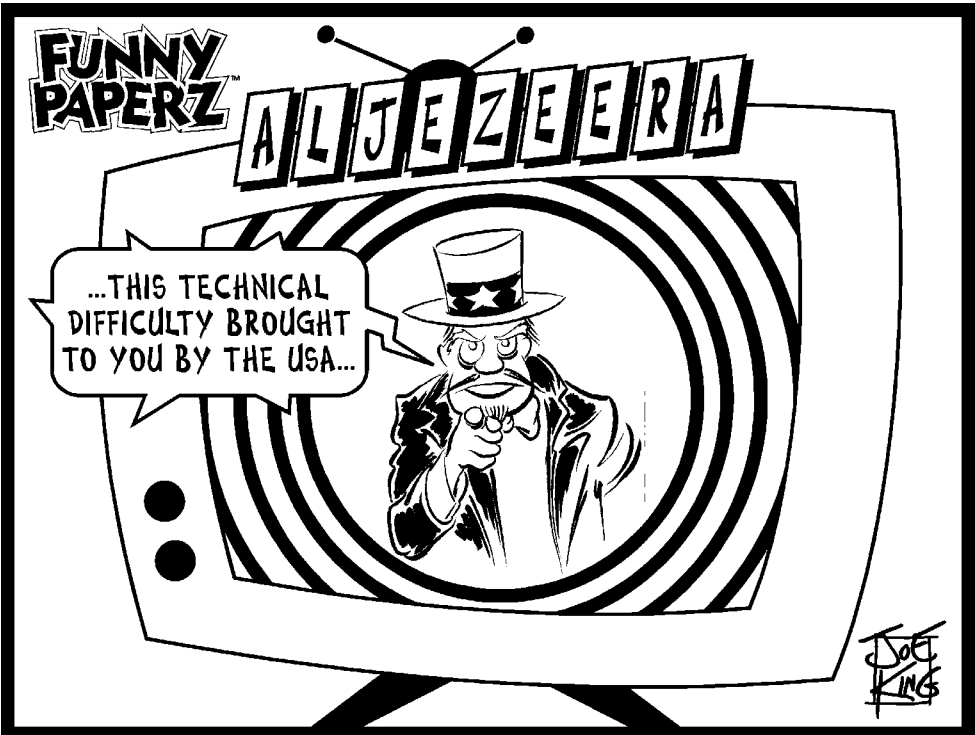
And once again I say, what the hell has Maria been doing for the last 18 years in America that she must use a translator to make her point?

And once again I say, if the Santa Monica Hotels are so “unjust” why do you continue to work (or in Maria's case, return to work) for them?

And once again, I say, the only way to make it out of low-wage jobs in this country is to become fluent in English.

And once again I say, if you want to hate the messenger — go ahead, but don't hate the message.

Tony Street
Santa Monica



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Save marriages, abolish the furniture swatch



MODERN
TIMES
By Lloyd Garver

Many of us feel strange these days, going about our daily lives, knowing that so many people are risking their lives in Iraq. Some of us have vague feelings of guilt if we do anything that’s fun or frivolous.

Experts urge us to go ahead and try to live life normally anyway, but it’s not always easy. Last Sunday’s Oscars went on with a shortened red carpet. The people in charge said this was out of respect for the seriousness of the war and it was part of what they called a more “muted” celebration.

I believe them. But I also believe that if the Academy Awards people are like the rest of us, they probably bought the red carpet after just seeing a swatch and then they weren’t happy with it.

My wife and I recently went through one of the most difficult ordeals for any couple — furniture shopping. Usually, I bridle at male-female stereotypes, so let

me just say that for many men, there’s nothing scarier than a woman approaching him, carrying that evil invention — the fabric swatch. How can anyone decide on a major purchase based on a tiny square of fabric that’s not much bigger than a stamp?

And there is no defense against the swatch coming before your eyes — not putting your fingers in the shape of a cross, not wielding a wooden stake and definitely not pretending that you’re asleep on the comfortable, old couch that you foolishly think is still okay.

Once you get to the furniture showroom, you’ll notice right away that there are no television sets. How can anyone tell if a couch is good if they can’t sit on it and watch TV? (Another reason that you’ll notice the absence of television sets is that whenever you shop for furniture, there will be an extremely important sporting event on television that you’ll be missing. That’s just the way things are.)

Regardless of gender, whichever one of you is least enthusiastic about furniture shopping will probably be asked if you like a certain chair or couch. If you say, “I don’t like that color,” you’ll be told to forget about color. It can be ordered in any color.

If you say, “I’m not that crazy about that fabric,” you’ll be told that it can be ordered in any fabric. If you want to be perceived as cooperative, don’t ask the obvious question — “If color and fabric don’t matter, why are we here looking at this furniture?”

They’ll let you touch a bunch of swatches and even suggest that you place them on chairs and couches so you can squint and try to imagine what they’d look like fully grown.

Eventually you’ll make a decision. After you finally make that choice, they’ll tell you that the furniture won’t be ready for between six weeks and three months. The reason they’ll give you for the delay is that these custom-made pieces take a long time to make.

There is another more sinister reason. While you’re waiting for your furniture to arrive, you will forget exactly what it’s supposed to look like. So, when it finally shows up and doesn’t even resemble how you’ve been picturing it, you figure it must be the fault of your poor memory rather than a mistake made by the furniture company.

Experts usually list money and sex as the top two things that cause couples prob-

lems. I think they have been underestimating home furnishings. In order to help preserve relationships, it’s time we consumers stood up to the furniture industry and insisted that they abolish that Weapon of Marital Destruction — the swatch.

It’s absurd that we’ve let them get away with using it for so long. Would you buy a car after just seeing a little square piece of metal? Would you fork over a down payment after just seeing a swatch of a house? Of course not. And I don’t think you’d want to commit to saying that you’d like a future column of mine based solely on the following:

sex may be t
your childre
dieting will

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from “Sesame Street” to “Family Ties” to “Frasier.” He has also read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the “Modern Times” column for CBSnews.com’s opinion page and can be reached at smdp@lloydgarvermoderntimes.com.)

YOUR OPINION MATTERS! Send your letters to Santa Monica Daily Press Attn. Editor:
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LOCAL □ STATE

Parcel tax fund-raiser scheduled for next week

PARCEL TAX, from page 1

there were so many other issues on the November ballot that polarized voters, there was no exemption for homeowners aged 65 and older and because the depth of the state's budget crisis wasn't know then, Jacobson said.

However, Matt Millen, an attorney and Santa Monica resident, called the tax "regressive" and said it was unfair because it put too much of the burden on homeowners.

"They basically left big developers and big businesses off the hook," Millen said, adding that the tax would be fairer if it was based on square footage or done by dwelling.

He also blamed the city for not adequately funding the school district.

"The city has a lot of money and they're basically refusing to pay," Millen said. "They decide they want to push their pet projects."

Those projects include "too many non-resident" programs, such as those that benefit the homeless or provide low-income housing, he said.

Another Measure S selling point, sup-

porters said, is that the business community was included this time in designing the tax.

"That is a first," Jacobson said of business owners' participation in and acceptance of Measure S, "because it's basically for an issue that won't directly affect their business."

Dr. Michael Gruning, a member of Save Our Schools and chairman-elect of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, said there is much more cooperation between the business community and the school district this time around.

"We in the business community are behind this measure," he said. "It's perceived as a big deal because of the budget crisis."

He said he thinks the "state has abdicated its responsibility" on education issues more than the city, though he questioned some of the city's recent expenditures, including the \$72 million it will spend on a new Main Library.

Supporters are planning a fund-raiser for Measure S on April 1 at 7:30 a.m. at the Casa Del Mar Hotel. Millen said he and others are still considering whether to form a "No On S" campaign.

Students protest proposed community college cuts

BY GAIL SCHILLER

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Thousands of students marched through downtown on Friday to protest proposed fee increases and state budget cuts that would slash funding for California community colleges by \$520 million next year.

Chanting and waving signs, protesters rallied in Pershing Square and marched to Gov. Gray Davis' Los Angeles office. Demonstrators delivered thousands of postcards protesting the fee hikes and budget cuts.

Police Lt. William Guerrero estimated there were about 3,500 protesters. There were no arrests.

Combined with the proposed budget cuts, a fee increase to \$24 per college unit from the current \$11 per unit would deny some 200,000 community college students across the state a higher education, politicians and college officials said.

"The only way to ensure that all of the current students get to continue with their college education ... is to rejuvenate the community college system with more funding, not cuts, not a dime," said state Sen. Richard Alarcon, D-San Fernando.

A spokeswoman for the governor denied that any students will be unable to afford community college because of the cuts.

"Needy students in California do not and will not pay fees. There is a rich menu of financial aid programs," Hilary McLean said.

Patty Garrido, a student at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, told the Pershing Square rally that she was the first person in her family to ever step foot on a college campus.

"These proposed budget cuts will endanger my dream of becoming a successful registered nurse," she shouted.

A record statewide budget deficit has forced cuts to all levels of public education, but California's community colleges and its 2.9 million students will be hit the hardest.

Under a plan approved by lawmakers in Sacramento earlier this month, the system of 108 community colleges will take a \$141 million cut this year and could face a \$520 million cut next year. The system has a \$4.9 billion budget.

McLean said the cuts are necessary to help balance the state budget since university and community college funding accounts for 14 percent of the state's general fund.

"Even with the fee increases, California's community colleges remain the most affordable in the country," she added.

Organizers said the rally signaled a budding movement. Last week, thousands of students gathered at the Capitol in Sacramento in a similar protest.

Protesters interrupted speaker after speaker with cheers and shouts of "No more cuts!"

Los Angeles Community Colleges Chancellor Mark Drummond said in an interview that the nine colleges in his district had already eliminated about 30,000 students this year due to a sharp reduction in staff, faculty and classes. The district would probably have to close the doors on another 25,000 to 30,000 students next year if the budget cuts and fee hikes take effect, he said.

"I believe we'd have to go to bankruptcy court if the governor's cuts go through," Drummond said.

He said community colleges currently receive about \$5,000 per student in state funding compared to \$12,000 per student for California State University and more than \$20,000 per student for the University of California.



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Santa Monica Daily Press



STATE

New technology could push aside electric cars

BY BRIAN MELLEY
 Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — California’s trail-blazing effort to put drivers behind the wheels of battery-powered cars is nearly out of juice.

The Air Resources Board is considering whether to abandon the electric car in support of promising low-pollution gas-powered autos, as well as the fuel cell vehicle, a move that would lend strong regulatory support to a technology that’s being touted as the engine of the future.

The vote, expected Friday, comes after a fervent fight from environmentalists, electric car drivers, engineers and observers who supported the state’s 1990 landmark regulation that has driven technological changes in the auto world.

California Power Authority Chairman David Freeman, who said he has followed the progress of alternative-fuel cars for 25 years, thinks the air board staff has been swayed by automakers to ditch the quest for the pollution-free vehicle. He said it was time to “catch the falling flag.”

“We are now worshipping at the altar of the craven image of the fuel cell,” Freeman said. “Y’all are smarter and better than you think you are. You’ve just had too much time with the auto industry.”

Nearly two-thirds of the 79 speakers signed up to testify about the rule were expected to oppose the rewritten regulation, while only five were in favor. Automakers, who are opposed to any regulation and want innovation to be driven by consumer demand and competition, were among the roughly one-third that remained neutral on the proposal.

Representing Honda, Ben Knight said technology not envisioned when the rule was passed in 1990 had produced startling results approaching 100 percent control of emissions in gas-powered cars.

“This is the most effective path in improving air quality,” Knight said.

While the state has continuously weakened the regulation that would have required automakers to sell 10 percent, or about 100,000, pollution-free cars in the state this year, the proposed rule would

abandon that goal for 250 fuel cells vehicles by 2008. It would replace that quota with higher numbers of low emission gasoline-powered cars and increasingly popular hybrids that run on a combination of gas and electricity.

One of the chief concerns is that the proposed new requirements do not require any nonpolluting vehicles to be produced after 2009, leaving that number to be set later. In the past, the board set quotas and then whittled them down as the industry fought back.

“I am very interested in the numbers in the end game here,” said board member Matthew McKinnon. “I think we’re asking for worse than the trouble we’ve had here along the way.”

Automakers resisted building a quota of battery-powered cars that were expensive and generally didn’t travel more than 100 miles without a three- to six-hour charge. But critics claim the auto industry never made a serious attempt to make the cars attractive to buyers or to improve the technology.

Last year, a federal judge in Fresno put the quota on hold, prompting the board to rewrite the rule.

Air board staffers said the revisions were aimed at reflecting the limits of battery-powered cars and the promise of the fuel cell, which has been hailed by both car makers and the White House. Fuel cells produce electric power from a chemical reaction between oxygen and hydrogen that only emits clean water from tailpipes.

“We are not backing down,” board Chairman Alan Lloyd said about the quest for requiring the so-called zero-emission vehicles. “It is important to get to zero as fast as possible.”

Still, a group of die-hard electric car supporters were not convinced that the rewritten rule would achieve that goal.

A caravan of electric cars left Vacaville in the morning and ringed the parking spaces around the state’s Environmental Protection Agency building.

They applauded when board members spoke in favor of the technology that powers their silent, purring engines.

Convicted drug dealer not allowed to keep lottery funds

By The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A convicted drug dealer must forfeit \$1 million he won in the state lottery even though he had signed a document transferring the money to his wife, a federal appeals court ruled Friday.

Lorena Chavez of Fresno claimed she was entitled to a \$1 million California “Big Spin” lottery prize won by her husband, Rafael Quiroz, in 1989. Shortly after Quiroz married Chavez in 1997, he signed a document naming her the beneficiary of the prize in case of his death or “any other legal impediment.”

In September 2002, Quiroz was convicted of selling methamphetamine over a period of six years, beginning in 1992. In 2000, before he was convicted of the crime, a federal court issued a preliminary order requiring Quiroz to forfeit the lot-

tery winnings in lieu of some \$4.3 million the court estimated were the proceeds of his criminal activity.

Chavez tried to claim the lottery money shortly after the court filed the final order of forfeiture, in November 2001. She argued that the order of forfeiture had created the kind of “legal impediment” described in her husband’s 1997 letter.

But the court denied her claim, saying she was entitled to the money only if it had been transferred to her before Quiroz committed the criminal acts that resulted in the forfeiture. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that decision.

Messages left for prosecutors were not returned. When reached for comment Friday, Suzanne Luban, Chavez’s attorney, had not yet seen the ruling and said she was not yet prepared to discuss it.

NATIONAL



Television viewers starting to exhibit some combat fatigue

BY DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK — Television viewers are showing their first signs of war fatigue, according to a poll released Friday.

The number of people who say it tires them out to watch war coverage was 42 percent from Tuesday to Thursday this week. Less than a third of poll respondents said that on Sunday and Monday, according to the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

Pew's surveys also found a steady increase in viewers who found the coverage "frightening to watch." Fifty-eight percent of respondents agreed with that statement in the most recent poll, versus 51 percent earlier in the week.

The conflict is unplowed ground for the media: the first war covered full time by three cable news networks in the United States.

"The issue is how will (viewers) cope?" said Pew's director, Andrew Kohut. "Will they stop watching? Will it lead to less support for the war?"

The war's television appeal has faded since the first bombs fell, but it's still a potent draw. Roughly 7 million people watched Fox News Channel, CNN and MSNBC on Wednesday, compared to the 2 million who watch those networks on a typical day, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Broadcast networks aren't giving the war the same intense attention, but break

in for special reports and often put on one-hour prime-time specials.

"CNN's mission is not going to change," spokeswoman Christa Robinson said. "We're obviously committed to covering this story completely."

The constant television airing of the war has already led to questions about whether TV is distorting the event's reality, or causing unrealistic expectations. The Bush administration expressed frustration Friday with some press reports questioning why the military operation isn't already over.

MSNBC is trying to take frequent steps back in its coverage so viewers get a sense of the big picture instead of bits and pieces provided by individual reporters, said Erik Sorenson, the network's president.

MSNBC also hopes to leaven the constant stories from the front by interviewing families of soldiers in the United States and collecting pictures of those fighting.

Ultimately, though, it's not on the top of his agenda to worry about the anxieties of his viewers.

"It's really not my job to be a therapist or psychologist," Sorenson said. "It's my job to provide the news."

Pew's study is based on nationwide telephone interviews of 2,034 adults conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates from March 20-27. The margin of error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

Press arrangement has lacked overall picture

COVERAGE, from page 1

back again, sometimes in a single 24-hour period," he said.

"For some, the massive volume of television — and it is massive and the breathless reports can seem to be somewhat disorienting," he continued. "Fortunately, my sense is that the American people have a very good center of gravity and can absorb and balance what they see and hear."

The comments came after a week of some tough questions.

Some coverage has focused on statements by defense officials that the administration or its war planners had underestimated the power of Iraqi militias to head off surrenders among the military or uprisings among civilians.

An often-talked about hope of officials was that the campaign would deliver such an early punch — to "shock and awe" the government, they said — that it would be clear to Iraqi leaders they could not win. Officials had hoped for a huge number of surrenders, which they did not get.

Officials also have been sensitive to problems with the system they set up for coverage of the war by journalists traveling with troops — called "embeds" because they are embedded with units.

The arrangement has allowed rare access to the fighting, but also is blamed by many for giving a skewed view of what is happening. Each reporter only sees what his unit is doing and journalists have complained that no overview or perspective is

given as expected at daily briefings at the war's command center in Qatar.

Often, reports of deaths, captures, advances and so on come from an individual reporter who has seen it or been told it in the field. Then, it can takes hours or even days before officials at the command center of the Pentagon can confirm the development.

Rumsfeld alluded to the problem Friday during the press conference with Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"Often when General Myers and I go from the building up to (Capitol) Hill to brief ... questions are posed about columns of things flying down someplace and something having happened which is reported by a person who saw it on the ground, which has not even been reported back yet to the Pentagon," he said.

He apparently referred to reports earlier in the week of columns of Saddam's Republican Guard on the move. He didn't say if he thought there was a solution to the problem.

During his daily briefing with reporters on Friday, White House press secretary Ari Fleischer expressed frustration with reports about whether progress was being made as fast as expected in the war.

"From the president's point of view, any questions about how long it will last are, of course, entirely legitimate questions. He's answered them. He has said it will last as long as it needs to last," Fleischer said.

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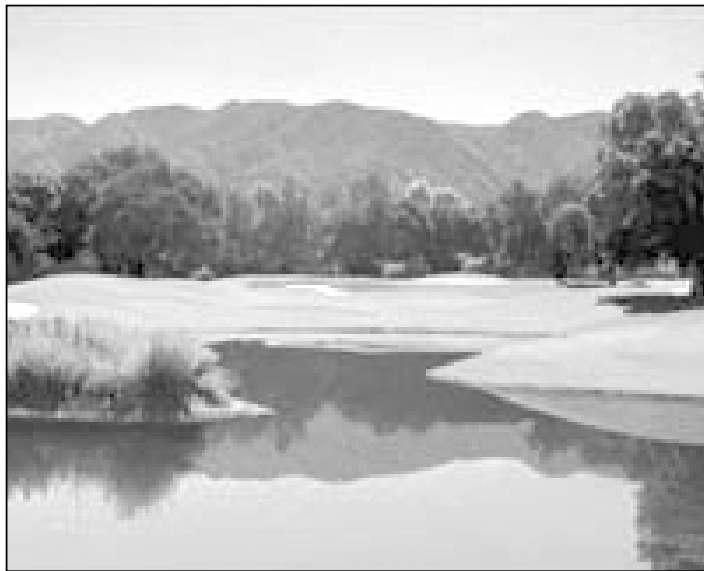
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NATIONAL

Presidential hopefuls make a last dash for cash

BY SHARON THEIMER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean was on track Friday to make his goal of \$1.5 million while two rivals who got early starts were expected to raise \$4 million or more in the first quarter of the 2004 campaign season.

Dean, who has relied heavily on the Internet to raise money, sent an e-mail urging prospective donors to give before Monday, when the first fund-raising period ends and candidates must report their totals to the Federal Election Commission.

“We’re only \$83,000 short of our target for the first quarter FEC deadline!” the former Vermont governor wrote in the Thursday night e-mail.

Dean’s Web site has been drawing more than 200 donations a day, campaign spokeswoman Sue Allen said.

“We are feeling really good about what our final report will show on Monday,” Allen said. “We had an internal goal of about \$1.5 million, and we’re comfortable that we’re going to meet that goal.”

Dean planned fund-raisers in New

York on Sunday and Washington, D.C., on Monday. Allen declined to say how much they were expected to raise.

Although he was nearing his goal, Dean did not expect to be near the top in the first leg of what is currently a money race with nine competitors.

Tony Coelho, who helped manage Al Gore’s 2000 presidential campaign, said he was impressed by how much Dean raised in a short time. Meeting expectations and showing momentum are as important — and maybe more important — than having the highest total right now, he said.

“It’s not only what you have in the bank, it’s what can you do next,” Coelho said. “The issue is do you have an organization to raise money and do you have the credibility to go longer.”

Several members of Congress in the race were expected to exceed \$1.5 million. It remained to be seen whether any would outpace the 2000 Democratic nominee, then-Vice President Al Gore, who raised nearly \$9 million in his campaign’s first quarter.

Democratic strategists said they expect North Carolina Sen. John Edwards to

report \$4 million to \$5 million in the first quarter, and Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry to exceed that. Both were early arrivals on the presidential money trail, laying the groundwork in the last election cycle by starting to organize broad fund-raising networks.

Kerry spokesman Robert Gibbs declined to comment on any fund-raising totals, but said that Kerry is happy with his first-quarter effort. His big-ticket events this month included a \$2 million fund-raiser in Boston and a \$900,000 reception in San Francisco.

Kerry held several fund-raisers this past week, including events in Washington, D.C.; New Jersey, Rhode Island and Philadelphia. He planned to raise money in New York City on Monday.

Edwards planned several fund-raising stops through the weekend, including events in New York City, South Carolina and Louisiana.

Campaign spokeswoman Jennifer Palmieri declined to give an estimate but said Edwards, too, was pleased with his early efforts.

“We think we will do well and be com-

petitive but don’t necessarily expect this will be our best quarter,” Palmieri said. “Being relatively new to the national fund-raising scene, a lot of our work this quarter has been prospecting as opposed to raising.”

Missouri Rep. Dick Gephardt was raising \$1.5 million at a Friday event in St. Louis and planned fund-raisers Monday in Washington, spokesman Erik Smith said.

Smith would not say how much the former House minority leader expected to raise for the quarter; the Friday event combined with \$2.4 million Gephardt was tapping from his House campaign guaranteed his first presidential report would show at least \$4 million in receipts, however. Gephardt also ran for president in 1988.

Smith said that while the first-quarter campaign finance reports offer signs of early strength, the second and third quarters were more important.

“At the end of this quarter, all the low-hanging fruit’s gone,” Smith said. “Campaigns need to actually start building up the depth of their support, some staying power.”

Panel: Vegas should cancel contract for French transit vehicles

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Complaining about French opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq, a southern Nevada transit panel wants to cancel plans to buy 10 French-

built buses for use in southern Nevada.

“The committee feels like any other American citizen that they don’t want to be involved with France,” said Gerald Ernst, a member of the Regional Transportation Commission’s Older

Americans with Disabilities Transportation Advisory Committee.

“We believe it’s not good business to be giving millions of our dollars, Clark County taxpayers’ money ... to a country who doesn’t want to give us one iota of respect,” said committee member Joseph Bifano.

The panel voted unanimously Wednesday to recommend the commission cancel a \$10 million contract for 10 French-built Cavis buses. It also recommended abandoning plans for future Cavis buys.

The optically guided vehicles provide rail-like bus service by following a painted line on the road, with stops at fixed boarding stations. The first Cavis route is scheduled to begin running on a northern stretch of Las Vegas Boulevard by the end of the year.

The vote was advisory only. The Transportation Commission could consider the issue at its next meeting, April 10.

But officials said they’re already committed to the Cavis system, and there isn’t a U.S.-built alternative.

“This the only product of it’s kind,” said County Commissioner Bruce Woodbury, chairman of the Regional Transportation Commission board.

Curtis Myles, transportation commission assistant general manager, said a contract could be canceled if the board directed.

“But I don’t think that’s a likely occurrence,” he said. “We’re not taking a position on whether the French are good or bad people. We’ve selected a product that we think fits the project that we’re going to undertake.”

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NATIONAL



Bush's \$74.7B bill for war getting flak on Capitol Hill

BY ALAN FRAM

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Lawmakers have pledged to rush to passage President Bush's \$74.7 billion proposal for paying for the war with Iraq.

Members of both parties are eager to support funds for troops in the field, but many are complaining that Bush is proposing to retain an unusual amount of control over most of the funds, limiting congressional strings.

They are also clamoring to add funds for items including state and local police and other emergency responders and for the independent commission examining the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. And many say the bill falls far short of the many billions expected to be needed for a postwar U.S. role in Iraq, including reconstruction, humanitarian aid and peacekeeping.

"I have to tell you I've been handed a lot of requests from members to add" projects to the bill, said House Appropriations Committee Chairman Bill Young, R-Fla., who will be one of the bill's chief authors.

Young and his Senate counterpart, Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, both say they will try to keep the package's price tag close to Bush's figure. As leaders try pushing it through Congress by April 11, the date the president requested, many expect its cost to rise.

House Democrats said the \$4.2 billion portion of Bush's request for domestic security neglected \$6.7 billion in needed spending. Extra funds should be provided to help states administer smallpox vaccinations, protect nuclear materials and other efforts, they said.

In a letter to Young, Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin, the House panel's top Democrat, said Bush's request left "many pressing needs unmet at a time in which threats against the American people seem to be rising."

Underscoring the non-confrontational tone that has surrounded the bill so far, Obey's letter acknowledged that "constraints on the overall size" of the bill might mean some items would have to wait for future legislation.

Also weighing in Thursday were a group of senators including Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., and Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y. They asked the Senate Appropriations Committee to include \$11 million so the Sept. 11 commission could complete its report by June 2004. The commission's leaders have said its current \$3 million budget will be depleted this August.

The extraordinary leeway Bush wants in spending much of the bill's money also

faces bipartisan resistance.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told the Senate Appropriations Committee Thursday that the unpredictable course of warfare meant "our budget plan must also have flexibility to deal with changing circumstances on the ground."

"The separation of powers has worked well for 215 years. Count me out when you ask for these additional flexibilities."

— SEN. ROBERT BYRD
D-W.Va.

Rumsfeld would be able to transfer \$59.9 billion of the \$62.6 billion the bill has for the Pentagon among various accounts without the usual sign-offs from Congress. The bill would also create several smaller funds the administration could use for emergencies with little input from lawmakers.

"The separation of powers has worked well for 215 years," Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., told Rumsfeld. "Count me out when you ask for these additional flexibilities."

And Obey told Rumsfeld at a House Appropriations Committee session that while some spending leeway in wartime is understandable, "Flexibility is one thing, but being able to turn the Constitution into a pretzel is another thing."

In interviews, the Republican chairmen of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, Young and Stevens, both said they would favor some limits on the flexibility Bush would get.

Members of both parties also said the \$2.45 billion the measure includes for relief and reconstruction for Iraq was too low. Some private estimates have been many multiples of that amount over a long period of time, though U.S. officials say they are counting on contributions from other countries.

Rep. Jim Kolbe, R-Ariz., chairman of the House Appropriations Foreign Operations subcommittee, said it was "hard to imagine" that figure being sufficient.

"Clearly it will take more," said the panel's senior Democrat, Rep. Nita Lowey of New York.

Even Rumsfeld didn't rule out the need for more money this year. Many lawmakers say they think a second such bill is likely in a few months.

The government's budget year runs through Sept. 30.



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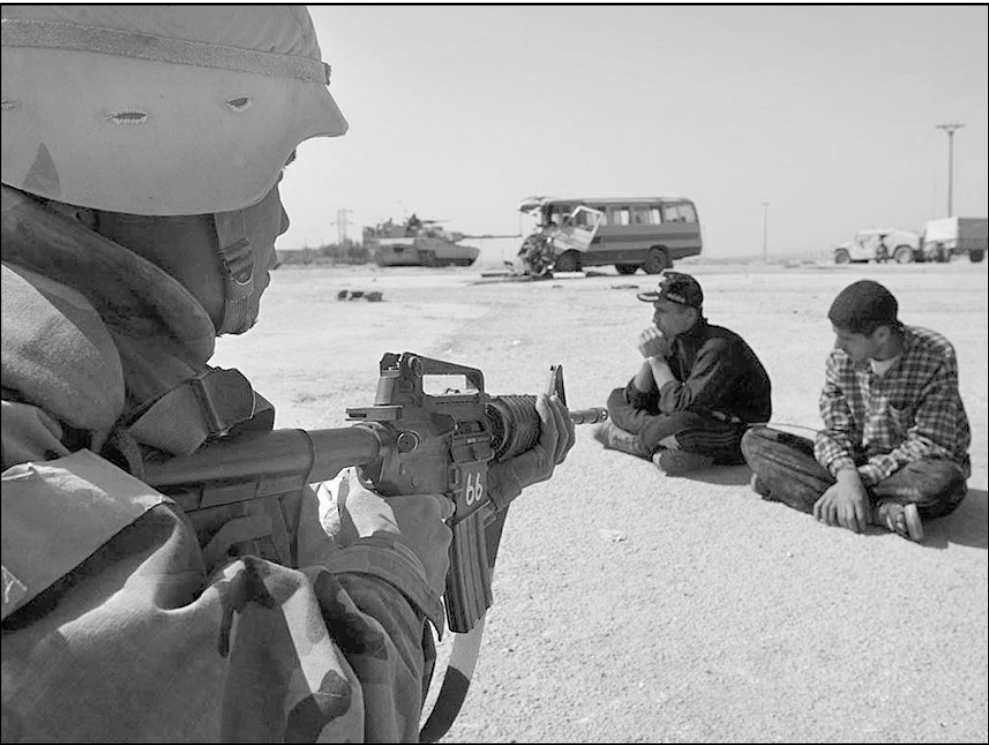
Newsha Tavakolian/Associated Press

A tractor tries to demolish a mural Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in the town of Qhara Anjir, northern Iraq on Friday. Kurdish soldiers on Thursday took the town which is 12 miles, 20 kilometers into Iraqi government area.



Itsuo Inouye/Associated Press

A CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter flies over to deliver supplies for the U.S. 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, at a secret Marine base in the southern Iraq desert on Friday.



Brant Sanderlin/Associated Press

Spc. Paul Helgenberger, of Micronesia, left, stands guard over two Iraqi POWs at an intersection in Iraq on Friday, held by members of Charlie Company 1-64 Task Force 3rd ID.

Fierce fight encountered on road to Iraqi capital

BY DAVID ESPO
AP Special Correspondent

American-led forces dropped 1,000-pound bombs on Iraqi Republican Guard units ringing Baghdad on Friday and battled for control of the strategic city of Nasiriyah. President Bush warned of “further sacrifice” ahead in the face of unexpectedly fierce fighting.

In anticipation of a push on Baghdad, F/A-18s attacked a Republican Guard fuel depot and missile facility south of the Iraqi capital, officials said. Hornets dropped 500-pound satellite-guided bombs on the fuel facility, while other planes hit the missile site with four, 1000-pound bunker-penetrating bombs.

Iraq said at least 58 civilians were killed when a bomb struck a crowded, open-air market in the capital and blamed the deaths on American and British invaders.

The first wounded American service members to return to the United States were being treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. At least four were brought back, two of them carried into the hospital on stretchers.

On the 10th day of Operation Iraqi Freedom, a British supply ship docked in the southern port city of Umm Qasr bearing tons of humanitarian supplies, and officials said fires at three of seven oil wells in the south had been extinguished.

At the same time, American officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Saddam Hussein’s troops have been spotted between U.S. and Iraqi lines wearing full chemical protection gear and unloading 50 gallon drums from trucks. The report reinforced concern that American and British troops might face chemical weapons.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld sternly warned the Syrian government to cut off alleged shipments of night vision goggles and other military equipment to Iraq. “We consider such trafficking as hostile acts and will hold the Syrian government accountable,” he said. Syrian and Iraqi officials both ridiculed the charge.

In Iran, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated, denouncing both “Bush’s barbarism” and “Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship.”

As the number of Americans inside Iraq continued to swell, the 101st Airborne Division raided Republican Guard units south of Baghdad in the first such attack by the division in the war. Two Apache helicopter gunships crashed on their return, but all crew members escaped injury.

A missile exploded in the sea near an empty shopping mall in Kuwait City in the middle of the night, the closest a missile has come to the city since the war started in neighboring Iraq. U.S. officials said it appeared to be a Silkworm missile launched from southern Iraq. The Chinese-made Silkworm is an anti-ship missile with a range of about 50 miles.

Buoyed by a second day of good weather, American and British warplanes bombed at will. Many warplanes took aim at the Medina Republican Guard division, defending the capital against American advance units. “They are continuing to soften up targets,” said Capt. Dick Corpus aboard the USS Kitty Hawk. “We are very satisfied with the progress so far.”

There was fresh bombing as well in cities near northern Iraqi oil fields that are a major objective of American forces.

French government insists it wants U.S. to win war

BY JOSEPH COLEMAN
Associated Press Writer

PARIS — France’s government angrily insisted on Friday that it hopes U.S.-led forces win the war in Iraq, signaling fear in Paris that its image as an untrustworthy friend could seriously damage long-term relations with Washington.

In an extraordinary statement for a major U.S. ally, the Foreign Ministry said it was “indignant” at media suggestions that French support for the United States was ambiguous, and quoted Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin as saying he hoped for an American victory.

“I will remind you that the minister said on March 24 ... ‘The United States, we hope, will win this war quickly,’” ministry spokesman Francois Rivasseau said in the statement.

The ministry was protesting media coverage of Villepin’s comments on Wednesday at the International Institute of Strategic Studies in London, where he reiterated his high-profile opposition to the war.

The statement did not specify which publications it was referring to, but at least two English-language newspapers reported that Villepin refused to say

explicitly who he hoped would win the war.

“It is not acceptable that the positions of France be distorted in this way,” Rivasseau said, declaring that France’s stand on who should win the war was “totally devoid of ambiguity.”

Villepin began his speech in London by calling for “a renewed close and trusting friendship with the United States.” But later, he said U.S. policy could lead to instability and uncertainty.

When a reporter asked him after the speech if he wanted U.S.-led forces to win the war, he did not say “yes.” Instead, he refused to answer, admonished reporters for not listening carefully and referred them to earlier remarks.

Villepin’s speech made no clear statement about which side he wanted to win. The Foreign Ministry on Friday said he was referring to statements he had made in the past, including the one on March 24.

In Washington on Friday, Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer said: “We certainly would not imagine that any nation, even those who did not support our actions in the United Nations Security Council, could express anything other than that they hope that the coalition would be successful.”

SPORTS



Padraig Harrington leads after a strange day

BY DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — Padraig Harrington had a sore hip caused by a bum ankle, couldn't hit the ball straight and wound up leading The Players Championship.

Craig Perks woke up to learn that his caddie was in jail, asked a chaplain to carry his bag until he could find a replacement and wound up in contention.

About the only normalcy on a long, strange day at Sawgrass was Tiger Woods. On the verge of missing the cut, he answered with three quick birdies and remains a factor.

"You can never be surprised," Harrington said after making 10 birdies in 26 holes, giving him rounds of 67-68 and a two-stroke lead in golf's first big event of the year.

Harrington was on the practice range when darkness suspended the second round, with 27 players unable to finish.

He was at 9-under 135 and had a two-stroke lead over Perks (69), Davis Love III (67) and Skip Kendall (69), who has yet to make bogey on the TPC at Sawgrass.

Woods had an 8-foot par putt on his 10th hole and was in jeopardy of falling below the cut line. He made that, plus three birdies in the next four holes, for a 70 to finish seven strokes back going into the weekend.

The cut likely will be even par when the second round is completed Saturday morning, the lowest since it was 2 under in 1996.

"I didn't know what the cut was," Woods said. "We thought it would be about 1 or 2 (over). Evidently, it dropped, which is kind of remarkable on this golf course."

Indeed, it was a remarkable day. Fred Couples woke up early and turned back the clock, polishing off a 5-under 67 in the morning to share the first-round lead with Harrington.

Couples, a two-time winner at The Players Championship and still the crowd favorite, had a 71 in the second round and was at 6-under 138, along with 22-year-old Adam Scott (69) and 49-year-old Jay Haas (70).

"I know not everyone and his brother is worried about what I'm shooting, but I'm worried about it," Couples said. "I'm playing well right now."

The biggest worry belonged to Perks, the longshot winner at Sawgrass last year who has been hearing all week how he has no chance to repeat.

He had to finish five holes Friday morning because of the rain delay. The problem was finding someone to carry his bag.

His caddie, Rodney Erb, was stopped for speeding Thursday night and police discovered an outstanding warrant for worthless checks. A Duval County jail

spokesman said Erb spent the night in jail before posting bond for \$513.

Meantime, Perks summoned The Rev. George Woods, a chaplain for the caddies, to tote his bag in the morning, then used veteran caddie Tony Lingard in the afternoon.

"My voice must have sounded like that of a crazed woman," said wife Maureen Perks, who called Lingard at home. "I wouldn't call it an exciting day. Until Craig went birdie-eagle, I don't think I relaxed."

Perks didn't have much to say about Erb, only that he would have a long talk with him Friday night and that his caddie would be back to work on Saturday.

For Woods — the chaplain, not the world's No. 1 player — it was an exciting opportunity.

"I told him, 'I'll clean your clubs and stay out of the way,'" he said.

The more famous Woods was spinning his wheels over nine holes. A two-putt birdie on the par-5 16th was followed by a three-putt birdie on the island-green 17th, and he was getting dangerously close to missing the cut.

Woods started hitting it close, making three birdie putts from inside 10 feet and having two others horseshoe around the cup.

"I'm not going to analyze it," Woods said of his round. "You just move on."

Harrington is in position to become only the second European — joining



Peter Cosgrove/Associated Press
Padraig Harrington, of Ireland, chips onto the 18th green finishing up the rain delayed first round of The Players Championship in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. on Friday. Harrington finished the round five under par.

Sandy Lyle of Scotland in 1987 — to win The Players Championship.

Texas loses lead, holds on to beat Connecticut Huskies

By The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Texas was in trouble. T.J. Ford was on the bench and the Longhorns' lead had slipped away.

No matter, the little guy was there at the end and top-seeded Texas is on to its first regional final since 1990 as the Longhorns prevailed over Connecticut 82-78.

Brian Boddicker also made a big play, blocking Marcus White's layup attempt that would have tied it with 35 seconds left. The ball got wedged between the rim and the backboard, and the possession arrow went Texas' way.

So did the rest of the game. Texas had watched a 14-point second-half lead evaporate, with UConn taking the lead with just over five minutes left.

Ford, the Longhorns' stellar point guard,

returned with four fouls and once again worked his magic, assisting on the final plays down the stretch that made the difference.

Ford's two free throws with 11.8 seconds left provided the final points and he stripped Emeka Okafor at the other end before sprinting up court as the final seconds ticked off.

Brandon Mouton scored a career-high 27 points and Ford had 13 points and nine assists for the Longhorns (25-6).

Okafor had 21 points and 17 rebounds for UConn (23-10).

■ East

OKLAHOMA 65, BUTLER 54

ALBANY, N.Y. — Ebi Ere was Oklahoma's forgotten man. Not anymore.

Ere, playing with a broken bone in his left wrist, scored 25 points as the top-seeded Sooners ended Butler's surprising run with a 65-54 win Friday night in the semifinals of the East Regional.

Oklahoma (27-6), Big 12 champion for the third straight year, is one step from its second consecutive Final Four. The Sooners will meet either Syracuse or Auburn on Sunday for a berth in New Orleans.

Butler (27-6), regular-season champions of the Horizon League, was the lowest-seeded team left in the tournament after pulling off two big upsets. The 12th-seeded Bulldogs edged fifth-seeded Mississippi State 47-46, then beat fourth-

seeded Louisville 79-71.

The only 12th seed ever to advance to a regional final was Missouri, which beat No. 8 UCLA in the round of 16 last year before losing to No. 2 Oklahoma in the West Regional final.

Butler lost because it never got its perimeter game going against the active Oklahoma defense, which held the Bulldogs to 4-of-13 shooting from beyond the 3-point arc.

Senior center Joel Cornette led the Bulldogs with 21 points and eight rebounds. Darnell Archey, who hit eight 3-pointers in the win over Louisville, scored six points and attempted only three 3s.

‘God Bless America’ to be sung at baseball home openers

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Major league baseball teams will pay tribute to the U.S. armed forces and the nation by having "God Bless America" sung during the seventh-inning stretch of all home openers.

While the song had been part of all games since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, it will be sung this season only at the homer openers, Sunday games and holidays, the commissioner's office said Friday.

To celebrate the start of the season, an opening-day logo will be on the field and on top of the three bases during each team's initial homestand.

Six teams will wear commemorative patches: the Chicago White Sox (All-Star game host), Cincinnati (first season at Great American Ball Park), Florida (10th anniversary), the New York Yankees (100th anniversary), Philadelphia (final season in Veterans Stadium) and San Francisco (NL champions).

The Yankees also will wear the patches on their caps and use commemorative balls at all home games. Special balls also will be used at Monday's opener of the Great American Ball Park, all games at Veterans Stadium and all Montreal Expos' games in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Baseball also announced an agreement with Armed Forces Radio and Television Service to carry eight to 10 games each week during the season, starting with Sunday night's opener between Texas and Anaheim.

Reachin'



Alan Diaz/Associated Press
Jennifer Capriati returns a volley to Chanda Rubin on Friday, at the NASDAQ-100 Open in Key Biscayne, Fla. Capriati won the match, 6-2, 6-4.

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



by TERRY & PATTY LABAN



By Dave Whammond

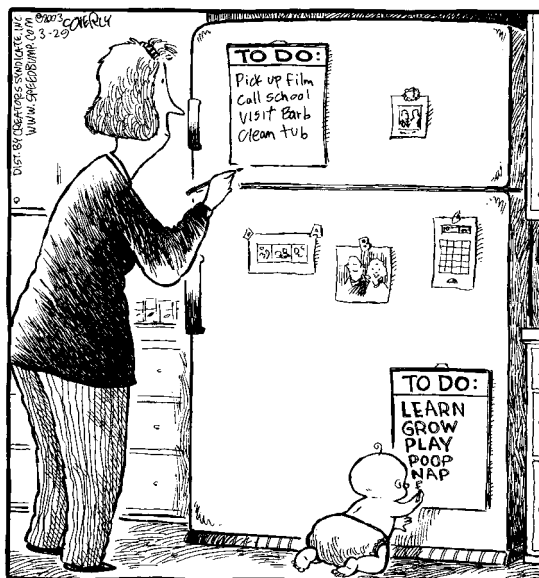


By Russ Wallace



"Estelle ... does this give you ANY insight into the shrillness of your screeching at me?"

By Dave Coverly



By THOMAS JOSEPH

DOWN

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6 Fishing boot
11 Slaves
12 Skater
13 Like
14 Irritable
15 Whole
17 Expert
18 Golf's
19 Former celeb
22 Put in
23 Puff
24 Spanish send-off
25 Evergreen tree
27 Busy one in Apr.
30 Everest experts
31 Half a Heston title
32 Campaigner, for short
33 Old antacid
35 Wee hooter
38 Hero with a sword
39 Last letter
40 Rarin' to go
41 Admit
42 Winter transports

1 Roman Empire invader
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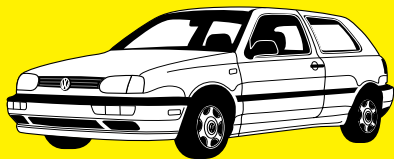
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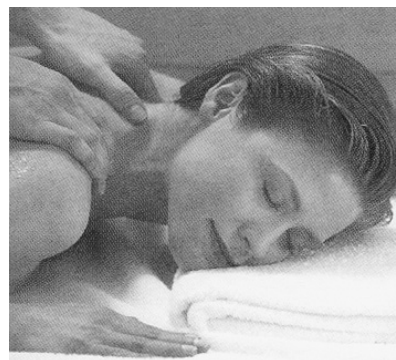
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CLASSIFIEDS

For Rent

PASADENA \$700.00 Tranquil 1bdrm/1ba, new carpet and kitchen flooring, laundry facilities on premises, air conditioning, balcony, carpets, refrig., stove.

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For Rent

SANTA MONICA \$1550.00 N. of Wilshire. Contemporary, spacious, 2bdrm/2ba, stove, dishwasher, parking, pet OK, W/D in unit, mini-blinds, fridge.

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For Rent

SM 1BDRM \$1200 Walk to beach & Main St. Stove/fridge, carpets, no pets. (310)399-2578 After 6pm.

STUDIO CITY \$1000.00 1bdrm/1ba New w/d in each unit, new bbq and sun patio w/ fountain, central air & heat, mirrored wardrobe doors.

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For Rent

W. HOLLYWOOD \$1450.00 Townhouse 2bdrm/1.5ba. Front unit, new paint, new blinds, lots of kitchen cabinets. Off street parking, laundry facilities on premises, dishwasher, hardwood floors, refrigerator, stove.

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Houses For Rent

SANTA MONICA Guest House \$780 Studio, R/S, pool, quiet, yard, utilities included.

(310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA Triplex \$1250 1bdrm/1ba, R/S, patio, hardwood floors, W/D, quiet, bright, parking.

(310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

Commercial Lease

VENICE BEACH \$850 per month. Great office space located 1 block from beach and 1/2 block from Windward Avenue. Included are all utilities, T1 line, cleaning. 1 room with common area bathroom, concrete floors, exposed beamed ceilings. 1 year lease. (310)466-9778 ext. 102.

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933 3rd St. \$1650
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624 Lincoln \$1700
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SANTA MONICA \$1100 2bdrm/1ba, pet ok, R/S, yard, hardwood floors, yard, garage. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA \$1300.00 2BDRM/1.5BA. Upper, stove, refrigerator, carpets, blinds, laundry room, parking. No Pets! 9th N. of Wilshire (310)456-5659

SANTA MONICA \$1540 2bdrm/1ba, hardwood floors, covered parking, very large kitchen, refrigerator, stove. (818)292-3158

VENICE \$900 1bdrm/1ba Bungalow w/grassy area. Newly renovated w/lots of charm. 1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)396-4443 x102.

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SANTA MONICA \$1950-\$2400 3bdrm/1.5ba, R/S, dishwasher, new decor, covered parking, near Ocean Park/Lincoln. Call Woody. (310)559-1213

SANTA MONICA \$2700.00 Spacious 3 Bdrm/3 full bath. Top floor, high ceilings, sunny, bright, double patio, views of Santa Monica Mountains. Quiet neighborhood, North of Wilshire. Security parking available. (310)451-2178

SANTA MONICA \$650 Studio, pet ok, patio, laundry, quiet, parking, flex lease, utilities included. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

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SANTA MONICA \$875 1bdrm/1ba, pet ok, R/S, patio, pool, laundry, close to SMC, parking. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA \$875/mo. Single North of Wilshire. (310)395-4779

SANTA MONICA Studio \$575 R/S, quiet, parking, utilities & cable included. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA Studio \$700 R/S, laundry, parking, utilities included. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA, N. of Wilshire. Refurbished building for rent. 1,2,&3 bdrms from \$1500.00-\$3800.00. OBO. By appointment only. 1214 Idaho (310)869-0468. Open House Sunday 1pm-4pm. Howard Management Group

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STUDIO CITY \$850.00 Contemporary lower 1bdrm/1ba cat ok, D/W, gorgeous building, gated parking, patio, A/C, tiled kitchen, new linoleum bath.

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VALLEY VILLAGE \$750.00 1bdrm/1ba, super quiet bldg, BBQ, vertical blinds, new carpet very clean, parking laundry, gated entrance, stove, swimming pool.

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VENICE 2BDRM/1BA Bungalow, walk to beach. Hardwood/flrs. 1 car garage. All new fixtures. \$1500 (310)663-7640.

VENICE BEACH \$1,125 Large 1bdrm/1ba w/parking. Upper unit with lots of sunlight. 1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)396-4443 ext.102.

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VENICE BEACH \$2,400 Residential loft, completely renovated. 1bdrm/2ba, oak wood floors, high ceilings, rooftop patio, balcony, 2 car parking, lots of windows, lots of storage. Great looking unit. Ask about lease incentives.1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)466-7896.

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VENICE BEACH \$925.00 Single in historic brick building on the beach. Recently remodeled w/new kitchen and bathroom, exposed brick walls, new carpet and paint. 1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)396-4443 ext. 102.

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VENICE DUPLEX \$1395 2bdrm/1.5ba upper w/courtyard views, 2 car parking, W/D hook-ups, hardwood floors and lots of charm. 1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)396-4443 ext. 102.

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WeHo \$750.00 Character, gas stove, fridge, carport, laundry, secure entry, new carpet new linoleum floors. Close to the Grove.

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WeHo \$795.00 Spanish 1bdrm/1ba, high ceilings, stove, fridge, crown moldings, w/c, cat, carpet.

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WeHo \$750.00 Classic New York style brick building hardwood floors, pet ok, stove, ceiling fan, crown molding. Close to shops and restaurants. Parking available.

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SANTA MONICA \$795.00 Lower Unit, Part. Furn., safe neighborhood, bright, full kitchen, off of Wilshire Blvd., utils. inc., amenities include Street parking, Indry facilities, crpts, furnished, refrig., stv, storage.

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Houses For Rent

MALIBU WEST pool home. Private beach. Large 4bdrm/3ba plus extra large bonus room. Large kitchen. Yard, pets ok. Newer pool and spa. Clubhouse, tennis membership, water, gardener, pool maintenance and warranty insurance all paid. \$5,300/mo. Long or short-term. (714)847-4468 owner. Available April.

SANTA MONICA Guest House \$1050 Studio, pet ok, R/S, W/D, close to beach, parking. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

VENICE \$2499 Walk to beach, 2bdrm/1ba. House w/fireplace, private garden, artist studio available. Hardwood floors, appliances. (323)394-6034

Roommates

SANTA MONICA House \$560 Private room, furnished, R/S, W/D, DSL, month to month, utilities included. (310)395-7368 Westside Rentals

SM UPSCALE 2002 Front townhouse, N. O'Wilshire, 2bdrms w/bath, \$2000 both, \$1000 each. Non-smoking. Female(s), share w/owner. (310)454-6395

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ESTATE SALE: Kitchen, furniture, antiques. 2709 Broadway. Cross Princeton. March 29, 30. 8am to 9pm.

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SANTA MONICA SCENE your guide to dining, entertainment and events SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2003

EVENTS

ORGANIC FARMER'S MARKET every Saturday. 8:30am to 1pm, Arizona and Third Street. (310)458-8712

SHOTS FOR TOTS & TEENS will provide FREE immunizations and TB skin tests to all infants, adolescents and teenagers under the age of 18 at the Saint John's Health Center cafeteria on the Ground Floor. The immunizations will protect against diphtheria, hepatitis B, measles, rubella, hemophilus influenza, mumps, polio, tetanus and whooping cough-diseases. FREE Valet parking is available off Santa Monica Blvd. March 29 - 10am to Noon. Saint John's Health Center, Cafeteria - Ground Floor. Arizona and 22nd St. (310)829-8234.

THE RED RIBBON SQUARES. Santa Monica's official square dance club, invites you to enjoy an evening of plus level square dancing, alternating with round dancing, with an A-1 tip during break time. We dance every Saturday at Marine Park from 7:45pm to 10:30pm. Pre-rounds begin at 7:15pm. Admission is \$5 for dancers, including refreshments. Spectators are free. For more information, please call (310)395-3383.

KNIT AN EASTER BUNNY (or other cute animal!) with Mel. 1pm to 5pm. Cost is \$85. Includes afternoon tea. Wildfiber, 1453-e 14th St., Santa Monica. (310)458-2748.

CELEBRITY MAKEUP ARTIST CAROL SHAW at Sephora! Call to reserve an appointment with Carol Shaw for your Lorac one-on-one color consultation. Thre registration fee is \$35, redeemable in Lorac product purchases. Sephora, Santa Monica, 1349 Third St. (310)395-3460.

FARMER'S MARKET every Sunday. 9:30am to 1pm, Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Come and enjoy one of the largest and best farmer's markets in California! (310)458-8712.

THE SANTA MONICA PIER presents Sunday Concert Series with "The Girls". Three Southern California women with a great pop and folk sound. Concert starts at 2pm. Admission is FREE. Parking is available in most beach lots and the Tide Shuttle runs from Downtown Santa Monica to the Pier for only 25¢. For

more information call (310)458-8900 or visit www.santamonicapi-er.org.

SANTA MONICA FAMILY YMCA presents, "A Day of Inspiration" with Rudy Ruettiger, the real-life Rudy from the movie "Rudy". The purpose of the afternoon is an opportunity to bring families together and motivate and inspire the parents of tomorrow's leaders and the youth of our community.

THE SANTA MONICA FAMILY YMCA is located at 1332 Sixth St. in Santa Monica. Tickets are \$5 with all proceeds going to YMCA youth programs. Starts at 2pm. Boys and girls, 10 years of age and older are encouraged to attend with their parents. Space is limited. Information (310) 393-2721.

CAT & KITTEN ADOPTION FAIR: Every Sat & Sun, 12pm to 4pm @ Centinella Feed, 1448 Lincoln Blvd in Santa Monica. Donations include spay/neuter, 1st vaccines, flea/worm treatment as needed. Knowledgeable support for new adopters. Rescue Me Pet Foundation. (310)452-9568.

DINING

EL CHOLO - Famous for award-winning margaritas & green corn tamales. Enjoy our lively bar, comfy dining rooms or sunny patio for lunch and dinner daily. 1025 Wilshire Blvd., 310.889.1106

LIBRARY ALEHOUSE - A gathering place for great food, hand crafted beer and friendly service. Beautiful garden patio. Daily specials. 2911 Main St., 310.314.4855

THE LOBSTER - A legend redefined! A local favorite serving classic American seafood, specializing in live Main Lobster. Open 7 days serving lunch & dinner. 1602 Ocean Ave., Reservations recommended. 310.458.9294

DK DONUTS - Best fresh baked donuts in Santa Monica. Also serving excellent breakfast sandwiches & muffins. Classic favorites include: refreshing ice blended mochas, smoothies and bobas. New sub sandwiches & more. Open 24hrs. a day, 7 days a week. 1614

Santa Monica Blvd., 310.829.2512
OMELETTE PARLOR - Best breakfast in LA. This is where the locals go! 2732 Main St., 310.399.7892

PANINI GARDEN - "The Locals Favorite" for gourmet European breakfast, lunch & dinner. Featuring fresh crepe, panini grilled sandwiches and delightful salads. dine on our charming patio, or call for delivery. 2715 Main St., 310.399.9939

THE SLICE - New York style pizzeria also serving pasta, salads, subs and wings. Voted best pizza in Los Angeles by AOL. Sit on our beautiful patio for great pizza and movie star sightings. 915 Wilshire Blvd, for fast delivery call 310.351.7542

WOLFGANG PUCK CAFE - Enjoy Wolfgang's favorite entrees, famous wood-fired pizzas, pastas, fresh salads, sandwiches, and of course, unforgettable desserts! Fun Happy Hour: 1323 Montana Ave., 310.393.0290

SONNY MCLEAN'S - A perfect Irish pub that attracts a variety of people. It's the hotspot to kick back, enjoy a beer and watch a ball game. Good Happy Hour specials. 2615 Wilshire Blvd., 310.828.9839

ORIGINAL THAI DISHES - Best Thai food in Santa Monica! Family owned restaurant since 1980. A local favorite serving classic Pad Thai noodles, pineapple fried rice and seafood specialties. All dishes can be made vegetarian. 1910 Wilshire Blvd., 310.828.5634

EARTH, WIND & FLOUR - "Great Italian cooking. Just slightly west of Italy." This restaurant celebrates 22 years in the neighborhood for its friendliness and freshness. Pizza, pastas, salads, subs and more. Lunch and dinner specials and happy hour. 2222 Wilshire Blvd., 310.829.7829

ACADIE'S - Voila! Fresh from the south of France, Homemade Crepes have just arrived in Santa Monica! Located right off the 3rd St. Promenade, this authentic French storefront radiates charm and ambience with indoor seating and a quaint side patio for an outdoor experience. The menu offers a range of options to suit your individual mood. 213 Arizona Ave. (310)395-1120

MOVIE GUIDE

LOEWS CINIPLEX BROADWAY CINEMA

1441 Third St. at Broadway
View From the Top (PG-13) 12:15, 2:35, 4:55, 7:15, 9:45, 12:05. The Hours (PG-13) 10:30, 1:15, 4:00, 6:45, 9:30, 12:15. The Core (PG-13) 11:05, 12:40, 2:15, 3:50, 5:25, 7:00, 8:35, 10:10, 11:45.

MANN CRITERION

1313 Third St.
Bringing down the House (PG-13) 11:30, 2:05, 4:50, 7:25, 10:15. Basic (R) 11:15, 11:45, 1:45, 2:15, 4:20, 5:00, 7:10, 7:45, 9:45, 10:30, 12:15. Dreamcatcher (R) 12:30, 1:00, 4:15, 7:30, 10:45. Old School (R) 12:15, 2:30, 5:05, 7:40, 10:00. Tears of the Sun (R) 3:45, 10:10. What a Girl Wants (NR) 7:00.

AMC THEATRE SM 7

1310 3rd Street
Piglet's Big Movie (G) 12:30, 2:40, 4:55, 7:00. Agent Cody Banks (PG) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 9:55. Chicago (PG-13) 1:15, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00. The Hitman (2003) (R) 1:40, 4:45, 8:00, 10:20. The Life of David Gale (R) 4:00, 10:10. Boat Trip (R) 1:30, 4:20, 7:20, 9:40. Gangs of New York (R) 12:45, 6:50. Head of State (PG-13) 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 9:20, 10:20.

LANDMARK NU-WILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd.
The Pianist (R) 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:15.

LAEMMLE MONICA

1332 2nd St.
Irreversible (NR) 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50. Bend it Like Beckham (PG-13) 12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:20. Talk to Her (R) 2:00, 4:40, 7:15, 9:55. Assassination Tango (R) 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45.

AERO THEATRE

1328 Montana Ave.
Frida (R) 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00.



BACK PAGE



Penny in throat equals poor health

By the Associated Press

FALLON, Nev. — It took eight trips to the doctor, but a couple have finally learned the source of their infant daughter’s health problems over the last four months: a penny lodged in her throat.

On previous visits, doctors diagnosed 15-month-old Erin Spaletta’s breathing problems and persistent coughing as a respiratory infection and prescribed antibiotics.

Last week, physician’s assistant Cameron Byers of Banner Churchill County Hospital suggested a chest X-ray and the culprit clearly showed.

“I thought it was a quarter,” said her mother, Lynn Spaletta.

Erin was taken to Washoe Medical Center’s emergency room in Reno, where a doctor used an instrument to remove the penny.

She’s had no health problems since.

“She’s doing absolutely fabulous,” Lynn Spaletta said. “She was pretty cranky for a long time, but she’s smiling and energetic again.”

Lynn and her husband, Cliff, have put the penny on display on a fireplace mantle at home.

Man’s tricycle now legal

By the Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. — Donald Bertrand is free to use his motorized tricycle on Mackinac Island and he’s got the court opinion to prove it.

The state Court of Appeals ruled Wednesday that Bertrand can use the motorized device to navigate island streets. Bertrand has multiple sclerosis.

Mackinac Island officials argued that the use of an electric-assisted tricycle could open the floodgates to motorized vehicles and destroy the island’s renowned 19th-century charm.

Mackinac Island has permitted the use of electric wheelchairs and three-wheeled scooters since 1995. City officials contended that Bertrand was welcome to use those forms of transportation.

Bertrand, who owns a home on the island, didn’t want to be confined to either. He peddles his bike and uses the electric motor when he’s fatigued. The exercise helps in his battle against the disease, he said.

The court said the electric-assist tricycle is not a motor vehicle as it is commonly understood and not unlike the three-wheeled scooters that are allowed.

Child abuse bikers must ditch leather

By the Associated Press

PROVO, Utah — A judge has ordered a group of bikers to leave their leather at home if they’re going to sit in his courtroom.

The motorcycle enthusiasts belong to a group called Bikers Against Child Abuse. They often show up in Utah courtrooms when child abuse suspects are on trial to show support for the victims.

They won’t be able to wear their leather jackets with the group’s logo — a red and white fist with the letters “BACA” on the knuckles — in Judge Anthony Schofield’s courtroom.

Schofield ruled Thursday after the attorney for a man set to go on trial on sex-abuse charges asked the judge to exclude the bikers.

Schofield agreed, saying: “This is not a forum for conveying a message. This is a courtroom.”

He’s backing up his order, too, ruling that anyone who enters court wearing logos or demonstrating support for either side in the case will spend a month in jail for contempt of court.

Outside court, BACA members said they weren’t happy with Schofield’s ruling but would obey it. “We’re not vigilantes; we are here to support kids,” said Todd “Skulls” Bailey.

Council may outlaw lying

By the Associated Press

MOUNT STERLING, Iowa — Lying could be perceived as more than just a character flaw in this south-east Iowa town. It could become a crime.

Four City Council members have proposed an ordinance against fibbing.

Acting Mayor Jo Hamlet said he’s tired of the exaggerating that comes with stories in the town of 40 residents famous for its hunting and fishing.

“We wanted to slow down on this lying,” Hamlet said this week. “Plus, I’m bored. ... It’s been a long winter.”

Hamlet said the ordinance has a chance of passing.

“We’re going to beat it around,” he said. “You never know with the City Council around here what’s going to happen.”

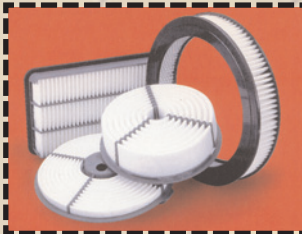
DID YOU KNOW?: Four times as many people die from infections picked up in a hospital than are killed in auto accidents?

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We know a few things that can help. It starts with an air filter.



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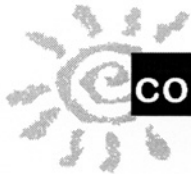


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connections for children

Helping families receive quality child care for over 27 years.

Your Family Can Receive Child Care Assistance NOW!!!

CALL NOW TO SEE IF YOU QUALIFY!!! Connections For Children is currently Enrolling families in our child care assistance programs!!!

Many parents don’t know they are eligible for subsidized child care, or that child care assistance even exists.

Take advantage of the child care opportunities available for families and providers in the West L.A. area.

To qualify for child care assistance, you must:

1. Have a history with AFDC (within the past two years).
2. Be working or attending school.
3. Earn below the state median income level (example: \$3250 monthly for a family of four).



connections for children