



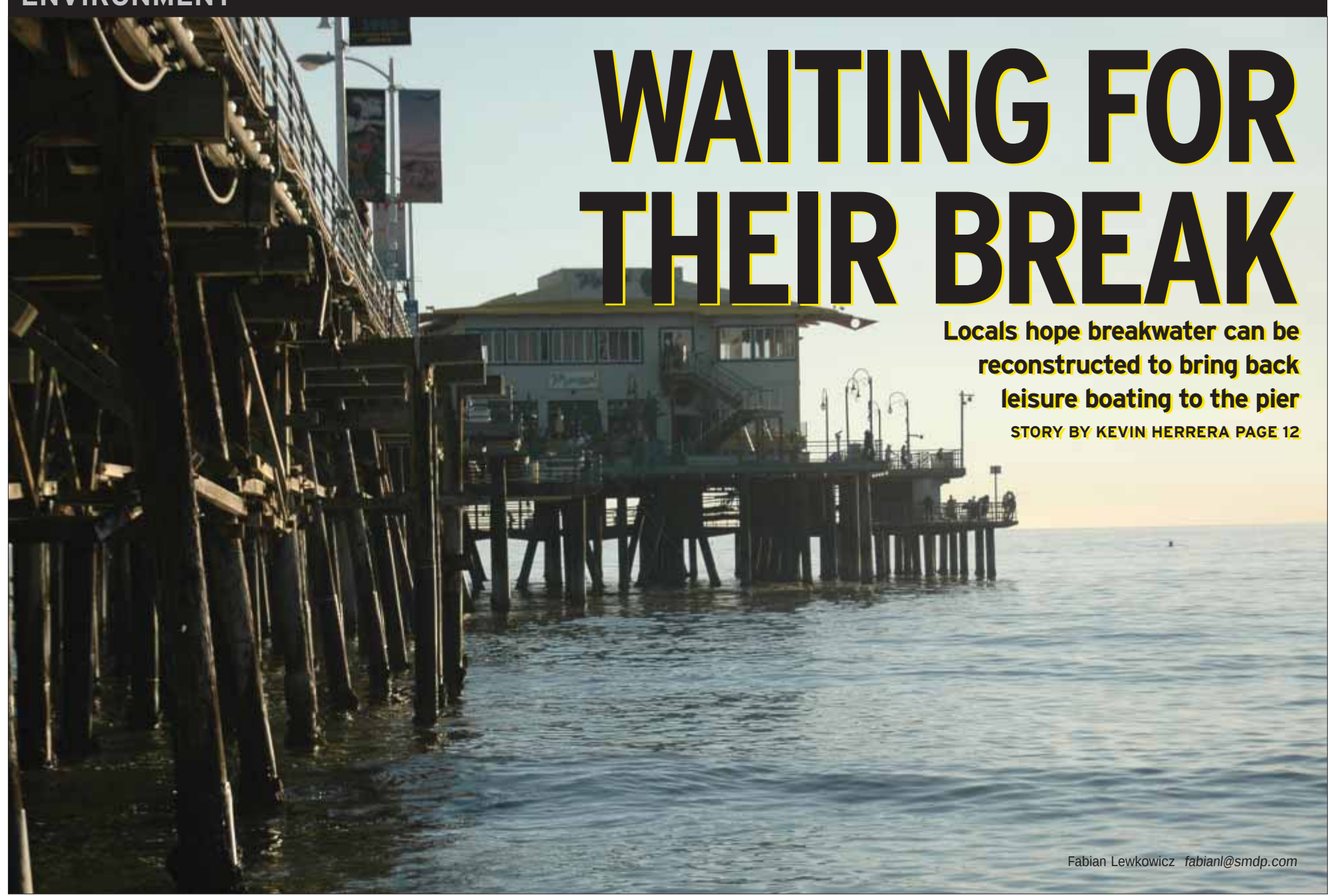
Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE TIME KEEPS ON TICKING ISSUE

SNIFFLES OVER DAD
SEE PAGE 17

ENVIRONMENT



WAITING FOR THEIR BREAK

Locals hope breakwater can be reconstructed to bring back leisure boating to the pier

STORY BY KEVIN HERRERA PAGE 12

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

Feeling the crunch

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE There's a reason why April has been dubbed National Stress Relief Month.

It's the time of year when millions of Americans are pulling their hair out, reaching for that extra cup of coffee and agonizing over a pile of receipts as the deadline to file their tax returns — April 17 — creeps closer and closer.

It's crunch time at tax preparation firms across the country, as last-minute clients come running through the door, eager to

push their tax duties onto a paid professional who will hopefully find deductions to save their customers some money.

That's usually the case at the H&R Block office on the 2900 block of Wilshire Boulevard, whose busiest time of the year is the week before taxes are due, according to Eileen Brown, the district manager for the accounting giant.

On Tuesday afternoon, the small office was surprisingly quiet as a few clients sat huddled around their financial consultants. It was the calm before the storm.

SEE TAXES PAGE 14



Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com
OH MY ACHING HEAD : John Stompanoto, a Venice resident, experiences the typical anguish of filling out tax forms.



Gary Limjap

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Calendar

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Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues



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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Wednesday, April 4, 2007

Thousands of One

1026 Wilshire Blvd., 10 p.m. — 2 a.m.

For more information on ticket prices,
go to www.templebar.com.

For more information on the band, visit
www.myspace.com/thousandsofone.

Trim your waist with a 'Corset' in comfort

3306 Pico Blvd., 7:30 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.

Farthingales L.A. Inc. is hosting an evening with Ann
Grogan of Romantasy in San Francisco. Ann will be at
Farthingales to present her

six-step program for permanent waist and weight reduction
by wearing corsets. Ann's book 'Corset Magic' will be avail-
able for purchase in CD format and she will take names and
measurements for custom corsets and her three month sup-
port program for those who are interested.

Evening fee is \$30. Call (310) 392-1787 to register;
payment must accompany registration.

Screening of 'An Inconvenient Truth'

601 Santa Monica Blvd., 7 p.m. — 9 p.m.

The third in a four-part series of films examining sustain-
able issues. In 'An Inconvenient Truth,' director Davis
Guggenheim weaves the science of global warming with Al
Gore's personal history and lifelong commitment to
reversing the effects of global climate change.

Green living workshops

500 Wilshire Blvd., 7 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

Sustainable Works, a non-profit environmental education
organization sponsored by the City of Santa Monica and
Santa Monica College, presents six-week courses designed
to help residents learn about important environmental
issues, save valuable resources, lower utility bills, eliminate
junk mail and protect their health. Group meets at the Wild
Oats community room.

For more information or to RSVP, call (310) 458-8716, ext. 1.

Kiwanis Club weekly meeting

1332 Sixth St., noon — 1:30 p.m.

The Santa Monica Kiwanis Club holds its weekly luncheon
with guest speakers at the YMCA.

For more information, call (310) 828-1766.

For more information on any of the events listed,
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CORRECTION

In the April 3 story "Envisioning a better Reed Park" (page 12), the firm of Katherine
Spitz Associates should have been identified as an architectural firm.

Security grant is delayed

Los Angeles panel says it wants more time to examine facts

By the Associated Press

LOS ANGELES Questioning the administration costs and its impact on police anti-gang efforts, a city panel delayed accepting its share of a \$64.4 million homeland security grant.

The City Council's Public Safety Committee decided Monday it first wants to examine how police officers are currently being assigned to anti-terrorist efforts and how the money would be spent.

"We all realize the threat of al-Qaida. That's a no-brainer," Councilman Ed Reyes said. "But we also want to know if anyone is doing any thinking about the grip that gangs have on parts of this city because of the international trading in narcotics and guns."

It's the second major grant to the city as part of the Urban Area Security Initiative of the Department of Homeland Security.

More than 250 of the Police Department's 9,400 officers play roles in anti-terrorism activities, including SWAT teams and the bomb squad, but Councilman Jack Weiss estimated only a dozen are involved directly in anti-terror work.

Councilman Dennis Zine said he was concerned about the \$1.1 million needed to administer the grant.

"It just seems to me that \$1 million is a lot of money — money that isn't going into operational expenses or equipment," Zine said.

The grant is designed to supplement law enforcement efforts, including training and planning, and to ensure various public safety agencies can communicate with one another during emergencies.

Los Angeles would receive \$34.7 million of the grant.



Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

FIRE NO MORE: Santa Monica Fire Department would lend a helping hand to county firefighters in case of fire in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Putting out the fire

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS Firefighters here never get a break from brush fire season.

With dry and warm weather year round in Southern California, there seems to be no such thing as a determined season for when brush fires are frequent, especially not with the recent drought, leaving Los Angeles on pace for its driest year ever.

The city of Los Angeles has received less than 3 inches of rain to date this season. The driest rain season on record in Los Angeles was set during the 2001-2002 season when only 4.42 inches of rain fell.

For the Los Angeles County Fire Department, this has meant moving its brush inspection from April to March because of the dry conditions and

extremely dry vegetation in the Santa Monica Mountains.

"We are very aware we haven't received any precipitation in those areas," said Capt. Michael Brown, spokesman for Los Angeles County Fire Department. "Brush season for L.A. County has been year round. We've seen fires during the winter time, during the spring time and basically all throughout the year."

The Santa Monica Mountains have not seen an extreme fire since the Calabasas fire in 1996 which started near the 101 Freeway and burned all the way down to the coastal area, said Chief John Todd of the Forestry Division for LACFD. The most recent fire in the mountains was in January when several homes burned down near Pacific Coast Highway and Malibu Canyon Road.

L.A. County and L.A. City fire departments monitor weather conditions daily

to keep an eye out for conditions favorable to brush fires. County fire officials receive weather forecasts at 4 p.m. for the following day. Depending on the conditions, fire officials will determine whether staffing will need to be augmented for the following day. Augmenting can mean more patrol units and engine companies.

Depending on conditions, L.A. City Fire Department will pre-deploy units to the Santa Monica Mountains in anticipation of a fire. The department operates from a brush burning index (BBI) that runs from zero to greater than 212. When the BBI is greater than 152, which is when the humidity is low and the wind and temperatures are high, the department will pre-deploy resources just in case.

On days when the wind is greater than 25 mph and humidity is less than

FROM FIRE PAGE 13



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tolerance is a two-way street

Editor:

So, Mr. Ron Lowe is offended again (“Protesters should mind their words”). In his letter on Friday, March 30, he expressed his righteous indignation over the fact that protesters on the promenade were voicing their opinion of Al Gore and the global warming controversy. In the few years that I’ve lived in Santa Monica and the many times I’ve walked the promenade, I’ve been exposed to far more vitriol on the part of the left, with constant vile hatred of President Bush and, well ... anything Republican. I've seen bumper stickers and signs blaming him for everything up to, and including, the weather.

I’ve never felt a need to voice my opinion till now. Mr. Lowe struck a nerve. Need I remind him that freedom of speech works both ways? He describes these protesters as “zealots.” Does he think this way of anyone who doesn’t share his ideology?

Doesn’t sound very tolerant to me.

Anna April-Ross

Santa Monica

DP columnists are on point

Editor:

I just want to thank the people that write the columns for (the Santa Monica Daily Press), especially, Bill Bauer and “My Write.” His articles are always written so well and he spends time doing research to inform the rest of us.

I always look forward to Mondays because of his column.

Cathy Milliken

Santa Monica

We can’t cure the world’s ills

Editor:

Last week, the OPCC (was featured in an) article in the Santa Monica Daily Press (“OPCC helps Israel combat homelessness,” March 27). The article was basically a campaign to show the general readers of the paper how great the OPCC is and all they do for homeless people. The article was about OPCC going to Israel to “combat” homeless issues in that country. I was so upset by this, for many reasons. The main two are the fact that there is a huge homeless program right here in the country, so why go to Israel to help out over there? Isn’t there enough for the OPCC to do here in this country? I mean come on, what was this trip really about? Was it truly about helping homeless people in other countries or was it about funding?

Since (Staff Writer Kevin Herrera)won’t ask this question, I will.

It is very clear that the OPCC doesn’t do that great of a job fixing the homeless situation here in this country, let alone right here in the city of Santa Monica. So why was money spent to take a trip to Israel to help the homeless there? Doesn’t the OPCC, its staff and director see the vast number of homeless people sleeping outside their locked gates every single night? Do they not see the large amount of homeless people lining up for services they say they offer daily? With the huge homeless population right here in Santa Monica, how does the OPCC manage to take time out for what is nothing more then a trick to get people to think they are doing such a great job with the homeless situation right here in Santa Monica. This was nothing more then a way to get people to give money. It is clear that the Santa Monica Daily Press is part of this campaign to hoodwink the public on the homeless issue.

If, in fact, (OPCC is) doing so much for homeless right here in Santa Monica, why then does the homeless population here in Santa Monica say otherwise?

Kengi Kat

Santa Monica

Guest Commentary

Adam B. Summers

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Government should protect, not baby us

THERE IS A DOMESTIC EMERGENCY, OF sorts, in California these days. Unlike the popular television shows, however, the nanny is the problem, not the solution.

No, California’s problem is much worse than a misbehaving toddler; it is the overzealous politician (and those nosy neighbors who support them). Some might call these audacious au pairs petty tyrants, but they are tyrants nonetheless.

Having failed to resolve such serious problems of the day as the state’s structural budget deficit, crumbling infrastructure, declining public education and public pension funding crises, impetuous politicians have taken it upon themselves to decide for us what kind of light bulbs we should buy, what kind of food we should eat, and even that ever-present grocery store conundrum: paper or plastic?

Yes, today the State Legislature is rife with so-called “nanny bills.” The following are just some examples of the nanny measures that are currently working their way through the legislative process in Sacramento:

■ AB 722 — Would “phase out” the sale of incandescent light bulbs in favor of more energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs (despite the fact that harmful levels of mercury from fluorescent bulbs can add up in landfills, contaminating the soil and making their way into the food supply)

■ SB 7 — Would ban smoking in a vehicle — moving or stationary — in which there is a minor

■ AB 86/AB 90/AB 97/SB 490 — Would restrict the use of trans fats in restaurants and school cafeterias

■ SB 120/SB 180 — Would require caloric, trans fat, saturated fat and sodium content information to be printed on restaurant menus

■ AB 1634 — Would require dog and cat owners to spay or neuter their animals by 4 months of age

Then there is the recently-passed San Francisco ordinance that will require the city’s larger grocery stores to use recyclable paper bags (costing 3 to 5 cents apiece) or biodegradable plastic bags (4 to 10 cents apiece) instead of the traditional plastic bags (about 1 cent apiece). Adding insult to injury, Supervisor and ordinance author Ross Mirkarimi said it would be “mean-spirited” for retailers to pass on these higher costs to consumers instead of dutifully licking the hand that beats them and absorbing the losses. At the state level, a new law that takes effect July 1 will require retailers to provide plastic bag recycling containers, print a recycling message on bags and offer reusable bags for sale.

On their own, each of these bills might appear to be merely a minor trespass on our liberty. As such, many might not lift a finger to fight them and instead quietly acquiesce,

but that is what makes them so dangerous. Those small transgressions quickly add up. One day we may realize that all those minor violations of our liberties amounted to a large loss of freedom. By then it will be too late. As philosopher and economist David Hume said, “It is seldom that liberty of any kind is lost all at once.”

In short, government is turning into the homeowners association from Hell. It is time to ask ourselves again what the proper role of government should be. Government, if it must exist at all, should exist to protect the lives and property of its citizens against those who would violate these most basic of individual rights. It is not to make every decision for its citizens and dictate the course of their lives.

GOVERNMENT IS TURNING INTO THE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION FROM HELL. IT IS TIME TO ASK OURSELVES AGAIN WHAT THE PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE.

As Assembly Republican leader Mike Villines has astutely argued, “Could you imagine the Founding Fathers dealing with — I don’t know — wearing a helmet when you’re in the buggy? We all know you can’t mandate behavior; it just does not work. It creates criminals of people for things that are not criminal behavior.”

The point is not that recycling grocery bags or abstaining from smoking in the presence of children or spaying/neutering your pets are bad ideas. It is that we should not have the power to compel everyone else to live their lives the way we think they should. We must be free to make our own decisions (even the bad ones), so long as we do not infringe upon the rights of others. If we turn over all our decision-making power to politicians and bureaucrats, we have become nothing more than a bunch of sheep blindly following our shepherd master.

Then again, perhaps that is what those in power in government ultimately want.

Adam B. Summers is a policy analyst at the Reason Foundation. He holds an M.A. in economics from George Mason University and B.A. degrees in economics and political science from the University of California, Los Angeles.

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WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Earth Talk

By the editors of E Magazine

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Ironie drawbacks to wind farms debated

Dear EarthTalk:

I have heard that wind power turbines kill a lot of birds, including migrating flocks, and that some people oppose wind power for that reason. If this is true, to what degree do they harm birds and what is being done about it?

Ken Lassman
Lawrence, KS

It is ironic that non-polluting, renewable wind energy, long touted as a potential savior in the fight to stop global warming, is getting a bad rap for killing wildlife. High profile examples such as at California's Altamont Pass — where outdated, oversized wind turbines kill some 1,000 birds of prey each year — plague the growing wind power industry; even though more modern, better-sited wind farms kill far fewer birds.

According to a 2002 study of anthropogenic (human-caused) bird mortality conducted by researcher Wallace Erickson, birds face daily threats far more lethal than wind turbines. Erickson's study found that between 500 million and one billion birds are killed annually in the United States alone from collisions with man-made structures including communications towers, buildings and windows, and contact with power lines. Hunting, cat predation, pesticides, commercial fishing operations, oils spills and cars and trucks also take a heavy toll. All this is important to realize, say wind power advocates, in putting the relative impact of windmills on bird populations in perspective: Contact with wind turbines represented less than 1 percent of the total number of human-caused bird deaths in Erickson's study.

There are, however, steps that can be taken when constructing wind power turbines to minimize their impact on birds. The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) advises that lighting on turbines should be minimized, tension wires and lattice supports should be avoided, and wind turbine power lines should be placed underground whenever possible. Also, already more modern wind towers are being designed in ways that prevent birds from perching on them (solving one of the problems with the Altamont



Getty images

BREEZE WAY: Wind farms harm wildlife?

Pass towers) — and the turbine blades rotate much more slowly than earlier designs.

In addition, says ABC, careful reviews of potential wind turbine sites should be conducted. Known bird migration pathways, areas where birds are highly concentrated, and landscapes known for their popularity with birds should be avoided "unless mortality risk has been analyzed and the likelihood of significant mortality has been ruled out." Wind farms should be situated on already disturbed land, such as in agricultural areas, so as not to displace existing bird habitat or travel corridors. Sites should also be reviewed for use by birds listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Ever-growing concerns about global warming and pollution from fossil fuel use demand that we move as quickly as possible toward clean, renewable energy sources, even if they are as yet imperfect. "When you look at a wind turbine," says John Flicker, president of the National Audubon Society, the world's pre-eminent bird advocacy organization, "you can find the bird carcasses and count them."

Indeed, according to Erickson, for every 10,000 birds killed by human activities, less than one death is caused by a wind turbine. And if greenhouse gases are not reduced significantly in the next decade, we could bear witness to a large number of plant and animal extinctions in the coming years.

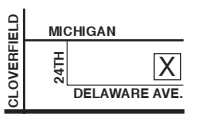
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The Q-Line

We asked and we received
Last week Q-Line asked readers what would they like to ask the general populace. We asked and you responded big-time. Here is the winning question.

This week's Q-Line question asks:
Why do we [the City of Santa Monica] have a \$442.6 million budget? Why do we support all of these expensive and questionable city charities?

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Extradited man says he didn't kill witness

FONTANA A man extradited from Mexico pleaded not guilty to the first-degree murder of his former father-in-law as alleged retaliation for testifying against him in an attempted murder case.

Daniel Perez, 36, entered the plea Monday in the shooting death of Carlos Vara, 47, who was killed in August 1999 after testifying against Perez, who fled to

Mexico after the killing.

Perez was later convicted in absentia of trying to kill his ex-wife, Vara's daughter Anabella. He was sentenced to 33 years to life in prison.

He's just an evil person," Anabella Vara said after Monday's brief arraignment hearing.

During his 1999 trial, his wife and her father both testified against him. The next

day, Perez allegedly broke into Carlos Vara's Fontana home and shot him seven times, police said.

His whereabouts were unknown until April 2005 when an informant who saw the Web site www.escapingjustice.com told authorities he was living in Mexico with a new wife and child.

Superior Court Commissioner Michael

Knish entered the not guilty plea on Perez's behalf and appointed the public defender's office to represent him. Perez was ordered back to court April 10 for a hearing. Perez faces life in prison.

AP

✉ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send letters to editor@smdp.com

Environmentalist who gave up talking finally gets heard

BY MARCUS WOHLSEN

Associated Press Writer

POINT REYES STATION For someone who didn't speak for 17 years, John Francis knows how to make himself heard.

The 61-year-old environmentalist, whose long vow of silence to protest pollution gained him a nationwide following, now makes his living giving speeches around the world.

Like many of his generation, Francis' approach to activism, which also included a 22-year boycott of cars and other motorized transportation, has mellowed. But his commitment to raising awareness remains.

"I started speaking because I wanted to

speak for the environment. And the environment for me had changed," he said. "It's about trees and pollution and loss of species. But also it's a crisis of mind and spirit."

In the 1970s, before Al Gore won an Oscar and movie stars drove hybrid cars, Francis became one of the country's first eco-celebrities.

With his banjo and his backpack, he wandered across the country on foot and bicycle to demonstrate his belief that a lone individual following his conscience could inspire change.

"Because I didn't speak, everyone paid attention," Francis said.

Along the way, he earned a degree from Southern Oregon State College, a master's

degree from the University of Montana and a doctorate in environmental studies from the University of Wisconsin, all without uttering a word.

Today, Francis flies more than 100,000 miles a year for speaking engagements and environmental consulting. While the irony of making his living doing exactly what he once eschewed is not lost on Francis, he sees it as evolution, not contradiction.

Francis arrived in the hippie hot zone of Marin County in 1969 after growing up in northern Philadelphia, where a counselor at his Catholic high school identified him as a possible candidate for the clergy.

After two oil tankers collided beneath the

Golden Gate Bridge in 1971, spilling black crude across San Francisco Bay, Francis decided to give up cars.

In 1973, he stopped talking. At first, the silence was only supposed to last a day.

"That one day was sort of a gift for myself and to give the town a rest. Because I talked so much," he said.

The day became a week, then a month. After that, Francis would revisit his vow once a year and decide whether to continue.

Shunning the internal combustion engine was a more obvious way to protest an oil spill than shutting his mouth. But in the tumult of the Bay Area counterculture, Francis' silence stood out.

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STATE BRIEFS

ONTARIO
Inland Southern California urged to cut water use

A million inland Southern California residents are being urged to conserve water while a major supply pipeline undergoes repairs this month.

The Rialto Feeder pipeline, which provides Northern California water to nine cities, will be shut down from April 16 to 24. The shutdown will affect customers in Chino, Chino Hills, Claremont, Fontana, La Verne, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga and Upland.

The announcement comes less than a week after another shutdown led to a serious water shortage in Orange County. Residents did not comply with pleas to cut water use until the Robert B. Diemer plant in Yorba Linda, which was closed for upgrades, was reopened. Instead water use was 30 percent above normal in some areas.

In the inland region, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which oversees the Rialto pipeline is making similar pleas. Officials are telling customers to suspend outdoor watering and cut back on other uses.

Water officials said they are very concerned about the condition of the pipe, which showed no signs of damage when it was tested two years ago. The damaged section of the 8-foot-diameter pipeline had breaks in 85 stress wires, which are part of the pipe's support structure.

The damage may have been caused by utility workers hitting the pipe during a recent dig, officials said.

"We are perplexed that over the course of two years it can disintegrate to a point that it needs serious repairs," said Bob Muir, water district spokesman.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES
City panel questions strings attached to anti-terror grant

Questioning the administration costs and its impact on police anti-gang efforts, a city panel delayed accepting its share of a \$64.4 million homeland security grant.

The City Council's Public Safety Committee decided Monday it first wants to examine how police officers are currently being assigned to anti-terrorist efforts and how the money would be spent.

"We all realize the threat of al-Qaida. That's a no-brainer," Councilman Ed Reyes said. "But we also want to know if anyone is doing any thinking about the grip that gangs have on parts of this city because of the international trading in narcotics and guns."

It's the second major grant to the city as part of the Urban Area Security Initiative of the Department of Homeland Security.

More than 250 of the Police Department's 9,400 officers play roles in anti-terrorism activities, including SWAT teams and the bomb squad, but Councilman Jack Weiss estimated only a dozen are involved directly in anti-terror work.

Councilman Dennis Zine said he was concerned about the \$1.1 million needed to administer the grant.

"It just seems to me that \$1 million is a lot of money – money that isn't going into operational expenses or equipment," Zine said.

The grant is designed to supplement law enforcement efforts, including training and planning, and to ensure various public safety agencies can communicate with one another during emergencies.

Los Angeles would receive \$34.7 million of the grant.

AP

SANTA ANA
OC transportation panel wants easier carpool access

An Orange County transportation panel wants motorists to have easier carpool lane access.

An experimental program allowing drivers to pull in and out of carpool lanes at will – rather than waiting for breaks in double-yellow lines – was a success and should be allowed on all county freeways, the panel said Monday.

The planning committee recommendation will be considered Monday by the Orange County Transportation Authority, chairwoman Carolyn Cavecche said. It must also be approved by the California Department of Transportation.

"I want you to know that I'm very, very serious about this," Cavecche told Caltrans and transportation authority officials who appeared before the committee.

Motorists carrying at least one passenger have been permitted to enter and exit carpool lanes without restriction since late last year on a renovated stretch of the Garden Grove Freeway.

Open carpool lanes are already in use in the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento.

AP

HIGHLAND
Tribe trains casino workers to spot compulsive gamblers

Nearly 3,000 employees at the San Manuel Indian Bingo and Casino are being trained to spot compulsive gamblers and, in some cases, intervene to help addicts.

Nearly 4 million Californians have gambling problems.

"It's got the highest suicide rate of any addiction," said Marc Lefkowitz, director of training for the nonprofit California Council on Problem Gaming.

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians began training managers to spot compulsive gamblers in 2003, but last month the awareness training was expanded to all 2,800 employees, tribal spokesman Kenneth Shoji said.

Lefkowitz began training San Manuel employees a month ago.

Brochures are available for problem gamblers who wish to seek help, but a specialist called an "ambassador" will approach a desperate gambler and offer assistance as a last resort, Lefkowitz said.

"Generally what's going to happen, say if an employee hears someone saying 'I can't stop gambling' or 'I'm going to kill myself,' they would report that information to the supervisor, and the supervisor would report it to the ambassador," Lefkowitz said. The ambassador could provide the gambler with literature and a hot line number but must be careful not to make it look too much like an intervention.

AP

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Between Wilshire & Montana	= \$ 2,335,700	\$ 904,944
South of Wilshire	= \$ 960,000	\$ 653,038
Sunset Park	= \$ 1,291,100	\$ 694,359
Ocean Park	= \$ 1,461,857	\$ 1,070,179

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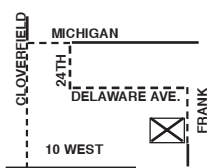
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Simon Says

Simon Salloom

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

What a problem: To rent or to own?

SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK SOMEONE tells me, "My friends say wait to buy because the market is going to go down this year." I am sure these same people were saying the same thing last year when the median sales price in Los Angeles went up 7.3 percent. The not so great news was that the number of sales went down from 8,269 in 2005 to 6,888 in 2006 in Los Angeles County. In 2006 the average days on market went up from 41 to 57 days. However, 2005 was a record year for real estate sales. The fact that the pace of sales decreased in 2006 means the market shifted from going a metaphorical 100 miles per hour — a pace that is impossible to maintain — to a more sustainable 70 miles per hour. Real estate values are still going up and the market is still strong

For an example, let's focus on Santa Monica condominium sales. Last year, when the "bubble" was bursting, median sales prices went up 12.3 percent. Let's say for example that you didn't listen to your friends or the media and purchased a home last year for \$700,000. At the median increase in value of 7.3 percent, you would have enjoyed about .6 percent or \$4,200 a month increase in value. If you owned in the right part of Santa Monica, you would have experienced an even greater gain.

Today, many people have the misconception that it is better to rent than to own. It may be better to rent if you don't plan on being in the same place for more than a year or two. Additionally, if you just moved to Los Angeles or Santa Monica and don't know what neighborhood will work best for you, renting is a good idea. There are also some people who can't come up with the money every month for the mortgage, taxes and other home expenses. For all the rest of you, households making a combined income of about \$90,000 a year or more, it is a good business decision to buy.

Thanks to the media-created "bubble" hype, and an ever-increasing demand for shelter in Los Angeles, rents have increased about 12 percent citywide in the past year. Many rental seekers have said they see closer to a 15 to 20 percent gain in Santa Monica. You can buy a very nice 2 bedroom condo in a great Santa Monica neighborhood for around \$700,000. This same condo will now rent for around \$2,800 to 3,200 a month. To own it, with a 6.25 percent interest rate, 1.25 percent taxes on an annual basis and \$300 a month in dues, it will cost you approximately \$4,900 a month. However, after taxes at 30 percent (many people pay more), your effective cost is about \$3,100 a month.

If you hold onto this same property for the next five years and enjoy a modest 3 percent or \$21,000 increase in value per year, you will make over \$100,000 in equity. If you sold and paid about 6 percent in closing costs, clearing \$40,000, your effective cost of homeownership is only about \$2,400, less than renting and a steal of a deal if you consider that rents will also be going up over the five years that you own the property. It may also be notable to you that a 3 percent increase in value is very conservative. The average increase in property values nationwide since the 1950s is about 6 percent and even higher in California.

So, barring any great economic calamity that no one can predict, it is less expensive to own than to rent. The sky is not going to fall, and people will continue to enjoy the pleasure of owning their own home. I hope that this column has given you some solid numbers on what will work best for you.

Simon Salloom is a Realtor who specializes in Santa Monica Real Estate with Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate Brokerage, Brentwood Court Office.

BUSINESS

Denver Newspaper Agency profits down sharply in '06

By the Associated Press

DENVER A drop in advertising revenue led to a sharp fall in net income at the Denver Newspaper Agency, which handles business operations of the two biggest newspaper dailies in Denver.

Net income was \$18.5 million in 2006, a fraction of the \$47.2 million in net income reported in 2005 and \$71.1 million reported in 2004, according to a filing MediaNews Group made with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Monday.

MediaNews, the parent of The Denver Post, is a partner in the Denver Newspaper Agency with Rocky Mountain News owner E.W. Scripps Co.

Total operating revenue was \$409 million in 2006, down 5.3 percent from \$431.7

million in 2005, according to the SEC filing.

Circulation revenue rose 1.7 percent to \$48.5 million from 2005 to 2006, but advertising revenue dropped 7.1 percent to \$339.5 million in that time.

Cash distributions to agency partners fell from \$98 million in 2004 to \$79 million in 2005 and \$64.4 million in 2006.

The Denver Newspaper Agency, like many in the newspaper industry, has watched classified advertising revenues fall.

The agency and The Post have cut staff in the past year, and the News said last month it was offering voluntary buyouts to trim about 9 percent of its newsroom staff.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send letters to editor@smdp.com



Real Estate 101

Mike Heayn

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Dealing with the coming subprime loan aftermath

WITH THE CURRENT NEGATIVE NEWS about the subprime market and predatory lending practices, it was only a matter of time until Congress got involved. Last week I talked about the subprime market and why borrowers are failing to make their mortgage payments. Now I will discuss the beginning of the aftermath.

Last week the Senate Housing, Banking and Urban Affairs Committee summoned federal regulators and top executives from the mortgage industry to testify regarding the recent subprime debacle. The committee also listened to borrowers who claimed they had been victimized by predatory lending. The committee wanted to know why the subprime meltdown has taken place, who is to blame, and how to keep it from happening again.

As a refresher, subprime loans are those given to borrowers who usually have some type of credit issue and a lower credit score ranging, typically in the low 600s. Predatory lending, which is typically more prevalent in the subprime sector, and is defined as lending activities that involve charging a higher interest rate, fees, penalties and/or other costs that cannot be justified by the lenders' risk or exposure. For example, if the prime interest rate was 8.50 percent and the standard loan fee was one point with about \$500 in other fees, a predatory loan could be defined as a loan that charges an interest rate of 1 percent for the first 3 months than adjusts to the 6 month LIBOR with a margin of 6 percent (6 month LIBOR which is currently 5.320 plus 6 percent equals 11.320 percent interest rate) with loan fees of 5 points and \$5,000 of "other" fees. This example may seem extreme, but you would be surprised at the types of loans certain lenders were offering to borrowers.

The subprime meltdown and predatory lending issues are becoming top priorities on Capitol Hill. The Senate Housing, Banking and Urban Affairs Committee needs to find a better solution to help stop predatory lending, but also needs to write legislation that does not inhibit the market.

Sandra Braustein, director of the Federal Reserve Division of Consumer and Community Affairs, warned that there are many issues at hand that make it hard to put rules in place to protect borrowers. She said, "It is not an easy process. We need to make sure whatever rules are written... are done in such a way to take care of the bad actors but not overly [constrain] the markets. We don't want to end up with a situation where people won't get loans." Braustein went on to say, "Existing subprime borrowers will continue to face problems. Especially those who recently took out adjustable-rate mortgages and will see their interest rates and payments climb." A lot of people will argue that people should read loan documents before they are signed, but what people do not realize is that some lenders were flat-out lying to borrowers and in some cases, completely fabricating loan applications.

The issue is whether Congress will pass additional regulations for lenders. The problem is not necessarily with the large trusted lenders, but with the rogue banks and brokers who accepted anything without verification or documentation. In general, if you place restrictions on lenders, especially banks, money becomes harder to get. When there is a decrease in available money, or liquidity, in the real estate markets, values begin to drop since fewer people are able to afford new loans. It becomes an ugly cycle, which would have different implications on different parts of the country since real estate markets are regional in nature.

It will be interesting to see what, if anything, Congress does about predatory lending practices and the subprime sector. Many people believe that since predatory lending affects many democratic-leaning voters, the democratic controlled congress will have to take some actions to keep voters happy. Either way, it is unacceptable for any lender to target borrowers who they know cannot pay back a loan.

MIKE HEAYN is a Washington Mutual multi-family loan consultant. He can be reached at (310) 428-1342, or e-mailed at michael.heayn@wamu.net

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Moving the living room outside

BY DEAN FOSDICK

Associated Press Writer

One of the latest trends in garden-room design serves to demonstrate that property owners can't get enough of a good thing. If one room is good, then more are better.

Multiple garden rooms are being developed with different themes to satisfy different members of the family, said Emily Nolting, an ornamental-plant and landscaping specialist with Kansas State University Research and Extension in Manhattan.

Over the last three years, said Nolting, who teaches outdoor-room design and landscaping, "I'm seeing a lot of expansion here — people growing into multiples. The rooms are becoming like coordinated wallpaper. Each is a little different but they all work together."

Basically, a garden room is a defined outdoor space with a general theme,

much like indoor rooms: dining room/kitchen, for example, entertainment center, or reading/knitting retreat.

"Garden rooms started by being very basic. They were private sanctuaries for the most part. Now they're extensions of our indoor living space," Nolting said.

"They're more sophisticated in the use of accessories and plant varieties. Because they're so close (to the house) they can be monitored more carefully. People are more interested in trying uncommon plants and finding things that are more difficult to grow."

It isn't unusual to see garden rooms set aside specifically as children's play areas, as outdoor kitchens equipped with stainless-steel barbecue sets running into the thousands of dollars, or as dining and entertainment centers with space for tables large enough to seat 10 or more, Nolting said.

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BUSINESS

Entrepreneurs get a helping hand

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN One of the oldest and most respected business brokerage firms in the country has come to Santa Monica to focus on a variety of industries, including film and entertainment, as well as selling franchises and promoting individual outlets and boutiques that dot the region's popular shopping districts.

Referred to as the "entrepreneur's best friend" by industry observers, Tannenbaum & Aalok, founded in 1946, has opened its west coast office at Fifth Street and Broadway. Representatives are currently working with a restaurant on Montana Avenue, said Sharad Mehta, president and broker of record for Tannenbaum & Aalok.

"We are here to offer people the American dream, which for many is owning their own businesses," Mehta said. "Santa Monica has always been a town that I love. From the first visit 10 or 12

years ago, it attracted me.

"It's a fun place to be and also to do business."

The firm has sold more than 4,500 businesses on behalf of its clients, ranging from local "Main Street" businesses to national manufacturing, service and distribution companies. In addition to serving as the middle man during sales, the firm provides marketing, franchising, and coming soon, mortgage financing for smaller, mom-and-pop stores looking to expand.

Tannenbaum & Aalok's staff of brokers have experience in fields ranging from law and technology to accounting and entrepreneurship. All of them hold real estate licenses, and their knowledge from across the business spectrum helps make the firm unique in its field, according to Mehta.

California, and Santa Monica in particular, has always been a leader in innovative franchising. That, along with the warm weather and the large number of start-ups attracted Mehta, who is particu-

larly interested in catering to new arrivals to the U.S., who have shown a higher propensity to start their own businesses.

pany interested in doing business with them because they see Santa Monica on the firm's Web Site. A client in

WE ARE HERE TO OFFER PEOPLE THE AMERICAN DREAM, WHICH FOR MANY IS OWNING THEIR OWN BUSINESSES."

Sharad Mehta, President and Broker of Record for Tannenbaum & Aalok.

"L.A. has a large immigrant population and they tend to want to go into business for themselves instead of following the standard career ladder," Mehta said. "We can be a great resource for them, especially if they are looking to franchise, which is often the best option for many people because of the name recognition that comes with a popular brand."

Santa Monica, a popular brand in and of itself, has already been a plus for the firm. People have started calling the com-

Philadelphia is interested in using the firm to open up a night club in L.A. and a man from Venice inquired about helping his son get a business off the ground.

"Santa Monica is just a dynamite address," Mehta said. "You can make contacts without having to get on the expressway, jog on the beach during your lunch hour and dine at a number of fine restaurants. It's just unbelievable."

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REAL ESTATE

Developers target Latinos

BY AMY GREEN
Associated Press Writer

Ferman Gonzales grew up on San Antonio's south side, part of a large Hispanic community where developers used to be reluctant to invest. Not so anymore.

Five years ago Gonzales, 34, and his wife bought a 2,429-square-foot, three-bedroom home there in a neighborhood called Lago Vista. The couple fell in love with their home for its open floor plan and large front porch -- design features developers put in place with the goal of attracting Hispanic Americans.

Hispanics like Gonzales are helping to transform the U.S. housing market. Their surging numbers and high regard for homeownership are nudging builders and lenders to appeal directly to them with new designs, marketing and financing options.

By 2010 the country's total of Hispanic households is projected to grow from today's 10 million to 13.5 million. The overall rate of homeownership climbed in the 1990s to its highest ever at 68 percent, and Latino homeownership during that time rose faster than that of any other group, by 6 percent to 48 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Immigration is not driving the growth, said Henry G. Cisneros, secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development during the Clinton administration, and now founder and chairman of CityView, a real-estate development company in San Antonio.

Hispanic-American families tend to be younger and larger, Cisneros said, and their numbers are growing not only in states such as Florida, Texas and California but across the Midwest and elsewhere. They include the first generation of middle-class Hispanics to enter the U.S. housing market on a widespread scale, he said.

"It is no longer an adjunct to the housing market. It is core business strategy for almost anyone in the home-building business," said Cisneros, editor of the book, "Casa Y Comunidad: Latino Home and Neighborhood Design." "In some markets they're going to sustain (the) momentum of the markets. They're going to be the principle reason for growth."

Builders are responding with designs they

believe will appeal to this new diversity in buyers, Cisneros said. There are, for example, designs meant for multigenerational families who want more bedrooms, with bathrooms in hallways that everyone can share.

HISPANICS HAVE A HOMEOWNERSHIP CULTURE. HOME IS IMPORTANT.

Henry G. Cisneros
Editor of the book, "Casa Y Comunidad: Latino Home and Neighborhood Design"

Some homes may include finished garages that can be converted into bedrooms in future years. Others may include bedrooms both upstairs and downstairs, for elderly grandparents.

These homes may place kitchens at the center of the social space and include gas stoves suitable for open-flame cooking of traditional recipes. Home plans emphasize gathering spaces in front of the homes, allowing neighbors to socialize more easily, said Fernando Pages Ruiz, a builder specializing in affordable housing for minorities in Lincoln, Neb.

He is the author of the book "Building an Affordable House: Trade Secrets for High-Value, Low-Cost Construction." Some builders are constructing entire developments targeting Hispanics with common courtyards, he said.

"It's a different mentality," he said. "This is not one of seeking privacy in the outdoors. It's seeking companionship."

Builders are hiring bilingual staffers and distributing marketing materials in English and Spanish. Pages Ruiz said Hispanic buyers are attractive to builders partly because they often have close family ties, making it less likely they will default on loans.

"If you're going to default within the context of a Hispanic society, your family and friends are going to help you."

Many Hispanics tend to avoid debt and deal in cash, and so some may have little or no credit history, said Frances Martinez Myers.

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photos: Wayne McCall

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SANTA BARBARA CONTEMPORARY ARTS FORUM

No breakwater a deal breaker

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

SM PIER John Volaski has spent nearly his entire life here, and if there's one thing he'd like to see, it would be boats docked alongside the Santa Monica Pier waiting for passengers to board and set sail on the ocean.

As the owner of the Santa Monica Pier Bait & Tackle Co., Volaski would love for commercial boating activity to return to the pier, and bring with it more customers to his shop. But he also holds sentimental reasons. As a kid, Volaski worked on many of the boats docked just north of the pier, protected from the harsh waves by a breakwater that was destroyed by winter storms in the early 1980s.

"In the summertime, people would come and fish for halibut, sea bass and barracuda. There was a variety of fish," Volaski said. "We had barges out there where people would have big parties. It was quite a sight. I wish they'd bring it back."

City officials are working on it. However, it could prove to be as difficult as navigating through a white squall, given the absence of the breakwater. In addition, the rising cost of fuel and an anticipated increase in marine fishing regulations have caused some boating companies to proceed with caution.

"The concern that has been articulated to me on more than one occasion, and we've reached out to several entities in Southern California, is the issue of liability and insurance," said Ben Franz-Knight, chief executive officer of the Pier Restoration Corp., a non-profit established in 1983 to manage and promote the pier.

"It is just the point between the dock and the boat and how you safely transfer people from the dock to the boat without a completely protected landing — like you have in the Marina," Franz-Knight added. "We don't have completely clam seas."

"Personally, I'm confident we can find a creative way to engineer a solution that is workable. These take time."

City Hall constructed the existing breakwater in 1934 to provide protection to the pier and create a protected harbor area for mooring commercial and recreational boats. The original breakwater was 2,000 feet long, located about 1,300 feet offshore and rose approximately 10 feet above the water, according to a city staff report.

Since its construction, the breakwater has continuously deteriorated and was severely damaged during the 1982-83 winter storms which destroyed the seaward section of the pier, causing \$8 million in damages to the pier and its facilities as well as facilities on adjacent beaches.

The storms also resulted in the loss of all 45 moorings, which had been used by commercial and recreational boats.

The council considered rebuilding the breakwater in 1999, but it never came to fruition, much of which had to

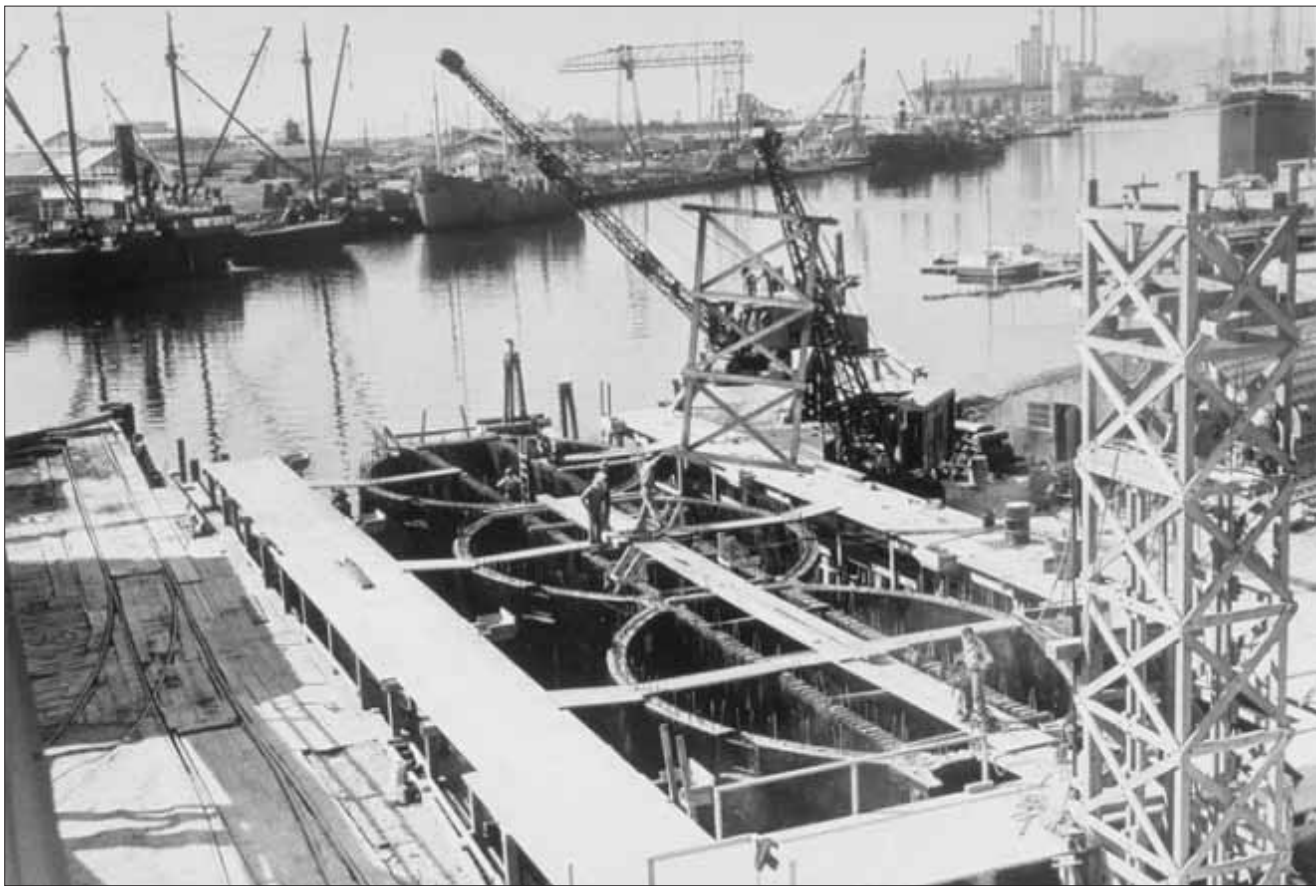


Photo Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library's Photo Collection

BACK IN THE DAY: Caissons that became the core of the old Santa Monica Bay breakwater were first built in the 1930s.

deal with cost and some environmental concerns. A report by the Army Corps of Engineers found that in 1995, a plan to restore the breakwater would have created a temporary (1 to 5 years) loss of up to 50 feet of sand from the beach south of the pier. A second impact that could occur over 30 to 50 years would be a wider beach up coast and adjacent to the pier where it could impact fishing from the Newcomb Pier fishing decks. Dredging would need to be done to maintain fishing at the pier deck.

Based on 1994 price levels, the total estimated construction cost for the breakwater would have been \$7,110,000. At that time, the federal government was willing to throw in \$4.6 million.

"Without the breakwater, it's pretty dangerous," Rick Carbajal of Marina del Rey Sportsfishing said about boarding at the pier. "That's why they don't do it. I'm sure you would have to have a load of insurance ... You'd really have

to build a landing or a new breakwater."

Franz-Knight said there has been no discussion about restoring the breakwater in recent years because of concerns about the environment.

"And I think if you talk with the folks in the community, there is no overwhelming desire for a huge yacht harbor operation like in the 40s and 50s, but more of a desire for some boating activity to restore balance," Franz-Knight said. "It's been 23 years since we lost the last remaining portion of the breakwater, and only a year and half since we have been working on restoring boating activity."

The PRC has issued a request for qualifications, or RFQ, about restoring boating activity and despite some of the concerns, there have been a few bites on the line, particularly from the In Seine Bait Co. out of the Marina. In Seine could not be reached for comment, but Franz-Knight said they have expressed interest for the last two years in operating a fishing outfit at the pier out of a fondness for it.

Even if no one wants to restore sportsfishing at the pier, there's a host of other options, including a water taxi to Malibu, sightseeing tours of the bay, whale watching expeditions and historic and environmental tours.

"The root of the idea is to restore boating activity to the pier, and many people feel sports fishing is important," Franz-Knight said. "But I think overall, the desire is to have the direct connection with the pier and ocean renewed."

Volaski is one of them.

"It is going to be difficult without a breakwater," Volaski said, "But it can be done."

kevinh@smdp.com



Photo Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library's Photo Collection
BACK IN THE DAY: Old photo of the Santa Monica Bay.

First Baptist Church of Venice

685 Westminister Ave, Venice

PASSION WEEK SERVICES

Monday to Thursday April 2-5; 7pm

SUNRISE SERVICE Sunday, April 8, 6 am	RESSURECTION SERVICE Sunday, April 8, 11 am	EASTER CONVOCATION (ENTATIVE) Friday, April 6, 7pm
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Local advocate praises stem cell patent ruling by federal regulators

BY PAUL ELIAS

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO Federal regulators said they are preparing to toss out three key patents related to human embryonic stem cells, an action that could ease concerns over commercial control of the nascent work.

The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, an arm of the University of Wisconsin that controls the school's patents, owns the patents and has 60 days to respond and seek to change the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's ruling, issued Friday. The ruling was made public Monday by the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights and the Public Patent Foundation, which challenged the validity of the patents.

"This is a great day for scientific research," said John Simpson of the Santa Monica-based taxpayers foundation.

University of Wisconsin researcher Jamie Thomson was the first to isolate human embryonic stem cells in 1997 and the university patented his discovery and has been collecting fees from researchers since.

The university said it would fight the USPTO's preliminary decision.

"It is inconceivable to us that Dr. Thomson's discovery, which Science

Magazine heralded as one of the greatest scientific discoveries in history, would be found to not be worthy of a patent," said Carl Gulbrandsen, director of Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. "This discovery captured the imagination of people all over the globe from every discipline."

In January, the university waived some of those fees after widespread complaints that its patent policies were stifling research and driving some stem cell investment overseas.

At the time, the university also said it would not require the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine to obtain a commercial license or negotiate royalties on products brought to market through its grants. The California group is overseeing \$3 billion in stem cell research funds.

Still, the school required companies to purchase licenses for research in their own labs and pay royalties if they bring products to the market. No human embryonic stem cell product is close to market, but if the patents are ultimately rejected, stem cell companies may no longer have to pay the school.

Scientists believe embryonic stem cells may help them unlock cures to diseases because they can grow into any part of the body. But the field is still developing and faces opposition from social conservatives because days-old human embryos are destroyed to extract cells.

It's always fire season

FROM FIRE PAGE 3

15 percent, the L.A. City Fire Department will post a red flag warning and prohibit parking in certain areas, said Ron Myers, spokesman for the department.

There are approximately four to seven red flag days each year.

When fires in the Santa Monica Mountains are getting too wild, the Santa Monica Fire Department (SMFD) is called in for assistance.

Santa Monica Fire Department is part of a mutual aid group, called Region A, which includes L.A. City, L.A. County, Culver City and Beverly Hills. When additional help is needed, the agencies form a strike team, which usually includes two engines each from Santa Monica, Culver City, Beverly Hills and a rotating battalion chief from one of the agencies.

"As soon as those engines leave the jurisdiction, we have reserve rigs... so that the man power in the city is always up to the level citizens expect it should be," said Capt. Scott Ziegert of SMFD.

Though the Santa Monica Mountains are not in its jurisdiction, new firefighters

in the Santa Monica Fire Department receive training from L.A. County Fire Department on fire brush awareness.



BRUSH SEASON FOR L.A. COUNTY HAS BEEN YEAR ROUND."

Capt. Scott Ziegert,
Santa Monica, Fire Department

Ziegert recalls when brush fire season used to be defined as a period of time between Memorial Day and Labor Day. With the drought in recent years, fire departments have to be on constant alert.

"We used to put the hose on our assigned rigs during certain times of the year," he said. "Now we have to leave them on at all times because it's so dry and we don't know when it [fire] will be."

melodyh@smdp.com

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April 6, 12 noon

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Conservator for disabled vets is guilty

Chavis, 73, admits to lying to the court in order to steal

By the Associated Press

LOS ANGELES A court-appointed conservator for disabled military veterans faces up to two years in prison for stealing.

Anne Chavis, 73, pleaded guilty Monday to forging documents and lying to the court in order to steal from one of her clients, a veteran suffering from psychosis and seizures.

Charges involving seven other veterans will be dismissed as part of the plea deal with prosecutors, but all the victims in the 15-count complaint must be reimbursed.

Chavis will undergo a 90-day prison evaluation, starting in July, before she is sentenced. The plea agreement calls for up to two years in prison or a year in county jail, depending on the California Department of Corrections recommendation.

There was no comment from Chavis or Deputy Public Defender John Powers.

Chavis, entrusted by judges and federal officials to manage the affairs of disabled veterans, had failed for years to file mandatory financial reports on how she spent the assets of the vulnerable adults in her care.

A Los Angeles Times investigation found Chavis bought the home of one of her elderly clients at a discount, then lied to the court saying someone else purchased the home.

Chavis also helped caretaker Verlene Cameron write a will for senile, nearly blind World War II veteran Louis Williams. The will left his \$60,000 estate to Cameron, the newspaper said.

Chavis was charged with allegedly writing four checks totaling \$11,000 from Williams' account to herself and her lawyer, but she didn't report the checks to the court and misstated his bank balance to cover it up.

Chavis' former attorney C. Brian Smith was convicted of perjury, grand theft and conspiracy in connection with thefts from Chavis' clients and his own.

The Veteran's Administration and judges in San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties trusted Chavis to manage the affairs of more than 30 adults, nearly all of them veterans suffering from mental illnesses.

CHAVIS WILL UNDERGO A 90-DAY PRISON EVALUATION, STARTING IN JULY.



KICKING IT UP

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

SMPD Morning Watch Officer Robert D'Andrea puts his driving skills to the test Tuesday, making his way through an obstacle course on Santa Monica Beach via an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) during the department's yearly Beach Vehicle Operation Training. D'Andrea is this year's recipient of the American Legion's 2006-07 Law Officer of the Year Award.

Tax deadline is quickly becoming a reality

FROM TAXES PAGE 1

"Millions of people wait until it's too late," Brown said.

Waiting until the last minute can mean that taxpayers miss out on different ways they could save money, methods that are often overlooked such as deductions for medical expenses, which can include writing off gas mileage, Brown said.

The H&R Blocks around the country provide assistance on 17 million tax returns every year.

Tax season has been known to be one of the most stressful times of the year because it reminds many people that a considerable portion of their income goes directly to the government, and for many people who have been affected by the recent sluggish economy, that can be very painful, said Dr. Janeen Locker, a therapist in Downtown Santa Monica specializing in stress management.

The time it takes to fill out tax return forms doesn't help the stress either.

"Taking the time to either do your own taxes or to travel to an accountant and make it to an appointment can be stressful for people," Locker said. "Especially for those working full-time."

A recent survey by H&R Block, released on March 29, showed that most people wait until March and April to file their returns. More than 1,000 taxpayers between the ages of 22 and 64 were interviewed for the survey.

Approximately one in five respondents said they had

not filed early because they were compiling their paperwork, while another 10 percent said they were waiting for needed paperwork in order to file. About 42 percent of respondents incorrectly identified April 15 as the deadline to file taxes, even though the date falls on a Sunday this year.

"We've been prepared for over a year," Brown said of the deadline. "Our goal is to help [last minute clients] get the biggest refund and lowest tax [liability] possible."

Things have been a bit quieter at Hargrave & Hargrave in Downtown Santa Monica, where husband and wife team Greg and Terry Hargrave have prepared about 350 income tax returns this year.

"Most of them come before March 15 and give us time to do a good job on their tax return," Greg Hargrave said.

The turnaround time at Hargrave & Hargrave is about two weeks.

The scene gets hectic around April 15 at Hargrave & Hargrave when the "last-minute" clients come through the door.

Appointments for free tax services for low-income residents and senior citizens offered at Santa Monica's WISE Senior Services through the AARP Tax Aid have been booked solid since it started on Feb. 1. Four trained volunteers offer assistance three days a week from February until the deadline.

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CONTACT ASSOCIATE EDITOR **DANIEL ARCHULETA AT DANIELA@SMDP.COM**.

LIGHTS CAMERA ACTION

NCAA BASKETBALL

Fate of hoops champs a story still in progress

BY MARK LONG
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA Coach Billy Donovan spent several hours after the national championship game mingling with family and friends, and socializing with school officials.

Sorry Florida fans, he didn't agree to a new contract.

He didn't talk to Kentucky, either. But it could happen soon.

Donovan's future — along with those of stars Corey Brewer, Taurean Green, Al Horford and Joakim Noah — took center stage Tuesday, just a few hours after the Gators etched their names on another national championship trophy and secured a spot in NCAA history with an 84-75 victory against Ohio State.

"I haven't talked to anybody, and everybody's looking for answers from me like I'm having all these behind-the-scenes conversations and I'm working these angles," Donovan said Tuesday. "None of that is going on."

At least not yet.

Donovan acknowledged that his agent could have talked to the Wildcats, and he expressed admiration for the storied program in the Bluegrass State.

But he also said he intends to stay at Florida. He talked about his loyalty to the Gators and athletic director Jeremy Foley and his desire to "build tradition over a period of time" in Gainesville.

In short, he gave fans in Florida and Kentucky hope.

"It's hard for me to comment about anything," Donovan said. "I think people maybe feel like I'm being coy or trying to move around the questions. I'm not doing that. There's nothing for me to say at all. I haven't spoken to anybody, so my intentions are to be at the University of Florida and coach their basketball team, and I'm happy there."

The Gators, behind a barrage of 3-pointers and Donovan's astute game plan, became the first team to win consecutive championships since Duke in 1992.

Normally, it would mean a contract extension for Donovan.

This time, though, it could result in a change of scenery.

Since Tubby Smith left Kentucky to take the head job at Minnesota, speculation has grown that Donovan is the Wildcats' top choice to replace him.

Donovan spent five years as an assistant under Rick Pitino in Lexington, quickly learning about Kentucky's unrivaled fan base and unrealistic expectations.

"There's a feeling in my heart that's very strong about Kentucky because I had my first opportunity to coach there through coach Pitino, and my time there was very, very enjoyable," Donovan said.

"For me, I obviously know Tubby and I know some of the people that are still there, but a lot over 13 years has changed that I'm not familiar with."

SPORTS BRIEFS

NCAA BASKETBALL

Michigan hires Beilein, according to source

Michigan hired John Beilein to coach its men's basketball team, a person close to the Wolverines program told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the school wants Beilein to have the opportunity to inform his Mountaineer players that he's leaving before Michigan publicly announces the hiring.

West Virginia player Darris Nichols said Beilein planned to meet with his players Tuesday.

Beilein will be introduced at a news conference on Wednesday in Ann Arbor, the person close to the program said.

Media reports linked Beilein with the Wolverines just days after he led the Mountaineers to the National Invitation Tournament championship. It will cost Michigan \$2.5 million to buy out Beilein at West Virginia, plus perhaps about \$1 million a season in a multiyear contract.

Beilein's West Virginia teams made deep runs in the NCAA tournament the previous two seasons. Despite graduating their top four scorers from a year ago, the Mountaineers went 27-9, including a 78-73 win over Clemson in the NIT title game on Thursday.

The 54-year-old Beilein, under contract through the 2011-12 season, earns at least \$740,000 per season with annual increases of \$20,000.

He takes over for Tommy Amaker, who was fired last month following six seasons without an NCAA tournament appearance.

Wherever he's coached, Beilein has been a success, taking teams without great talent to five NCAA tournaments and six NIT appearances in 29 seasons. His 1-3-1 defense gives opponents fits and his offense ranked second in the country with 10 3-pointers made per game this season.

BASEBALL

Selig earned \$14.5 million in fiscal 2005

Selig received \$14.5 million in the 12 months ending Oct. 31, according to Major League Baseball's tax return, which was obtained by the Sports Business Journal.

Bob DuPuy, baseball's chief operating officer, received \$4,875,000, the publication reported in this week's issue. Pay for executive vice presidents included \$1.92 million for Rob Manfred (labor relations), \$1.3 million for John McHale Jr. (administration) and \$1,245,000 for Jonathan Mariner (finance).

Sandy Alderson, who quit as executive vice president of baseball operations in 2005 to become chief executive officer of the San Diego Padres, made \$875,000. Jimmie Lee Solomon, who replaced Alderson in June 2005, made \$543,583.

The publication, citing unidentified sources, said Selig received a \$6 million base salary, an equal amount in a bonus and the remainder in expenses and personal fees.

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SURF CONDITIONS

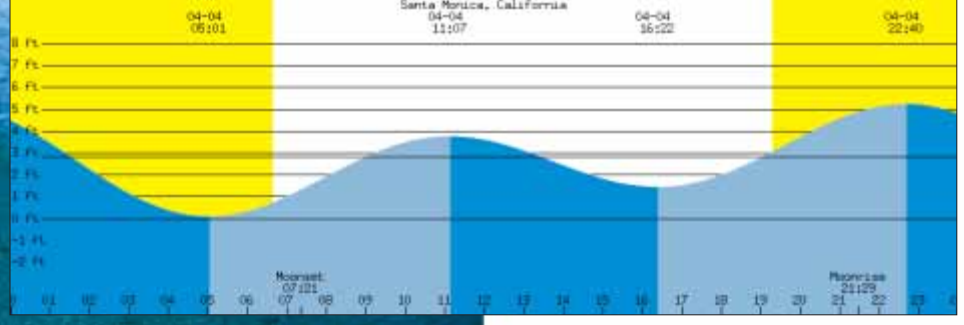


WATER TEMP: 58°

SWELL FORECAST (1-2 FT)
Today the second southern hemi system we've been talking about since last week from New Zealand makes its presence known. Still, this one packed seas exceeding 40 feet, so we're looking at face heights running head high to possibly 1-2 feet overhead around south facing breaks.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS
TRACKING NW FOR WEEKEND...
STRONG SOUTH SWELL FOR BY THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK...

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 27, 2007

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 -- 3
Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
Number of wet days -- 0
Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 36/ ns
Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 10/ ns

The Beach Report Card is made possible by a grant from



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

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

LEGEND

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



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

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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.

Kick up your heels, Cancer

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

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

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Work with others more directly. One-on-one relating will top the day in priorities. Extremes take you in a new direction. Listen to news and act inspired. Enthusiasm is contagious. You have style and follow-through. Creativity helps pave your way. Tonight: Hang with a favorite person.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Others dominate. You have very little say. Understand your limits; be gracious and back out. Why have a battle that you cannot win? Understanding evolves to a new level. Work with partners and allow them to have their head. Tonight: Go along for the ride.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Listen to what is being said. The unexpected does occur. You hear and express a lot about your feelings. Investigate new beginnings. Express your high energy and a sense of direction. Others want a different perspective. Tonight: Easy does it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Creativity moves forward. Your understanding of what makes a loved one tick could be quite different from what you originally thought. Your efforts make a difference. Easy does it. Tonight: Kick up your heels.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ A take-charge attitude goes far. Understand what might be happening within your immediate circle before you make any final decisions. You might not have all the answers. Listen to your sixth sense with a family member. Tonight: Happy at home.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ You speak your mind, and other people hear you loud and clear. Somehow you make an impact in a manner that makes a difference. Your ability to communicate comes through one more time. Your creativity emerges. Tonight: Talk up a storm.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Think in terms of gains. You might want to reevaluate your financial strength and prowess. How you see a situation could change dramatically because of a talk and how you start feeling. Ask yourself if you are ready to take a strong action. Tonight: Gather your bills first.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ You smile, and others cannot resist. How you deal with someone could change radically once you feel your desirability. Do you feel that someone is trying to pull the wool over your eyes? You come from a centered point. Tonight: Smile your way through a problem.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You revise your ideas. You might even consider reinventing yourself. You might be overly sensitive, reacting to those around you. Take needed downtime, and you might gain a new perspective. Tonight: Some extra sleep.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Speak your mind. Aim for more of what you want. Consider options more carefully that surround friends and/or a long-term goal. Know when confusion is overwhelming. A situation involving a loved one could be less than clear. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Take charge of a personal matter. You might want to revise your thinking involving a child or loved one as more information comes forward. A strong stance goes far and has an impact. Think in terms of gains and growth. Tonight: A must appearance.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

HHHH You might want to take a stab and move in another direction. Your vision of what might be possible could be very different from many others' vision. Test your ideas on a trusted adviser. Think positively. Tonight: A must appearance.

Born Today

Blues musician Muddy Waters (1915)

Actor Anthony Perkins (1932)

Magician David Blaine (1973)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>

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Happy Birthday!

You see events a lot differently this year because you are willing to depart from the status quo. Often, you will kick back and do some heavy thinking. Your life will work if you get to the very bottom of the issue. Your imagination takes you to a new level; let your mind wander. If you are single, a very deep, meaningful bond could knock on your door. Are you ready for this type of intensity? If you are attached, your relationship will ground itself in deep, common values and issues. If there is a disagreement, you might want to accept the difference and not fight it out. SCORPIO points to deeper insights.

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Family lines

Rolling Stones Keith Richards snorted his father's ashes

KEITH RICHARDS has acknowledged consuming a raft of illegal substances in his time, but this may top them all. In comments published Tuesday, the 63-year-old Rolling Stones guitarist said he had snorted his father's ashes

mixed with cocaine. "The strangest thing I've tried to snort? My father. I snorted my father," Richards was quoted as saying by British music magazine NME. "He was cremated and I couldn't resist grinding him up with a little bit of

blow. My dad wouldn't have cared," he said. "... It went down pretty well, and I'm still alive." Richards' father, Bert, died in 2002, at 84. Richards, one of rock's legendary wild men, told the magazine that his survival was the result of

luck, and advised young musicians against trying to emulate him. "I did it because that was the way I did it. Now people think it's a way of life," he was quoted as saying. "I've no pretensions about immortality," he

added. "I'm the same as everyone ... just kind of lucky. "I was No. 1 on the 'who's likely to die' list for 10 years. I mean, I was really disappointed when I fell off the list," Richards said.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILLS IS NO GOLD DIGGER



HEATHER MILLS says her love don't cost a thing.

"All I did was to fall in love with someone madly, and I'm constantly being vilified in the press for it," Mills tells E! Entertainment Television's "E! News" in an interview that was to air Tuesday night.

The 39-year-old activist has frequently complained of being knocked down by the media since she and former Beatle Paul McCartney, 64, separated last May after four years of marriage. The couple, who have a 3-year-old daughter, Beatrice, began divorce proceedings in July.

"People label me a gold digger and, if I was, I would've been a very wealthy woman when I met Paul, and that wasn't the case at all," she says.

Mills is the first contestant with an artificial limb to compete on ABC's "Dancing With the Stars." She lost the leg in a motorcycle accident in 1993.

"Starting in a few weeks, I will start flying back and forth to England every week to be with my daughter as she goes back to school," says Mills, who is in Los Angeles for the dance competition.

"My husband and I share 50/50 custody because I've always felt the father is just as important as the mother," she adds.

While Mills remains on the show – a celebrity is voted off each week – she will fly home Tuesday and return to Los Angeles on Sunday evening – "mostly practicing in the aisles on the plane," she jokes.

AP

Ebert plans to attend his own film fest

ROGER EBERT'S recovery from cancer surgery has been a "long and unexpected ordeal" but he plans to attend his annual festival for overlooked movies.

"I think of the festival as the first step on my return to action," Ebert wrote in a column celebrating his 40th anniversary as film critic at the Chicago Sun-Times. The column was posted Tuesday on his Web site.

Ebert said he'll watch the ninth annual Overlooked Film Festival, which begins April 25 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, from the audience, with colleagues taking over onstage duties. He cannot speak due to a tracheostomy, a procedure that opens an airway

through an incision in the windpipe.

"Because I'll be under scrutiny there, I'll tell you what to expect: a sick guy, getting better, who still loves the movies and the festival," said Ebert, 64, co-host of the "Ebert & Roeper" television show.

The festival, popularly known as "Ebertfest," wouldn't be the same without Ebert there, said Mary Susan Britt, assistant festival director.

"It's just fantastic, we're so thrilled," Britt said.

Ebert had surgery June 16 to remove a cancerous growth on his salivary gland. He also had emergency surgery July 1 after a blood vessel burst near the site of the operation.

He had undergone cancer surgery three times

before the June operation – once in 2002 to remove a malignant tumor on his thyroid gland and twice on his salivary gland the next year.

"I was planning to be back in action in a few weeks, but unfortunately, there were complications, and more medical procedures resulted," said Ebert, whose hospitalization was followed by a stay at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and the Pritikin Center in Florida, where he remains.

Ebert said he won't be able to speak until "upcoming completion surgery." He also thanked his wife, doctors and nurses.

"This has been a long and unexpected ordeal," he said. "I am feeling better every day and my wife Chaz

says we can see the light at the end of the tunnel."

In Tuesday's column, titled "40 Years Is Not Enough," Ebert said he'll gradually increase his duties in upcoming months.

"I still love writing about the movies," Ebert said.

Ebert has been a film critic at the Chicago Sun-Times since 1967. He won the Pulitzer Prize for criticism in 1975, the same year he teamed up with Gene Siskel of the rival Chicago Tribune to launch their movie-review show. Siskel died in 1999.

He has co-hosted the show with fellow Sun-Times columnist Richard Roeper since 2000. Film critics and filmmakers have been subbing for Ebert during his recovery.

AP

Bon Jovi, Def Leppard book concerts

It will be country with a little bit of rock 'n' roll when **BON JOVI** and **DEF LEPPARD** perform at this summer's Cheyenne Frontier Days.

Bon Jovi will perform July 20, the first night act of the 10-day Western celebration and rodeo,

also known as the Daddy of 'em All.

"Who Says You Can't Go Home," Bon Jovi's duet with Jennifer Nettles, won a Grammy Award in February for best country collaboration with vocals.

Def Leppard will perform July 28.

Introducing more rock music to a traditionally Western event is good business, Joe Lopez, CFD contract arts chairman, said recently.

"The request has always been there to mix it up," Lopez said. "I think down the road we're

going to see some different entertainers come to Cheyenne Frontier Days."

The concert series will also feature Big & Rich, Cowboy Troy, Reba McEntire, Trisha Yearwood, LeAnn Rimes, Gretchen Wilson and Los Lonely Boys.

AP

Scary Spice gives birth to baby girl in SM

Former Spice Girl **MELANIE BROWN** has given birth to a daughter in California, her publicist said Tuesday.

The baby, who weighs 5 pounds, 4 ounces, was born just after midnight Tuesday at St. John's hospital in Santa Monica, said Nadine Bibi in an e-mail.

"Baby is completely healthy with a good head

of hair. Mother and baby are now resting," the statement said. "No name has been decided on as yet, and (she) is purely known as Baby Brown!"

Brown has said ex-boyfriend Eddie Murphy is the father. The 46-year-old "Dreamgirls" star has said he's not sure. Brown has said there's

"absolutely no question that Eddie is the father."

The 31-year-old Brown, known as Scary Spice when she was in the megahit group of the '90s, has an 8-year-old daughter, Phoenix Chi, from her marriage to Jimmy Gulzar.

Gulzar married Brown in 1998 after he

had performed on a Spice Girls tour. Their 15-month marriage ended in divorce in 2000.

Murphy's wife, Nicole, filed for divorce in 2005, citing irreconcilable differences. The couple were married in 1993 and have five children.

AP

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I think I love My Wife (R)

11:40a.m., 4:35, 9:40

The Lookout (R)

11:55a.m., 2:15, 4:45, 7:20, 10:05

Premonition (PG-13)

11:50a.m., 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:00

Pride (PG)

2:00, 7:10

Zodiac (R)

12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:15

AMC 7 SANTA MONICA

1310 3rd Street
(310) 289-4262

300 (R)

11:00a.m., 1:45, 4:35, 7:25, 10:10

Blades of Glory (PG-13)

11:35a.m., 12:30, 1:50, 3:00, 4:25, 5:35, 7:00, 8:00, 9:30, 10:20

The Last Mimzy (PG)

11:50a.m., 2:20, 5:00, 7:30, 9:50

Reign Over Me (R)

11:10a.m., 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30

TMNT (PG)

11:15a.m., 1:20, 3:35, 5:45, 7:50, 10:00

Wild Hogs (PG-13)

11:55a.m., 2:25, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

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Amazing Grace (PG)

2:00, 7:10

First Snow (R)

11:30a.m., 4:30, 10:00

The Wind That Shakes the Barley (NR)

12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 9:55

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(Fauteuils d'orchestre) (PG-13)

1:45, 4:30, 7:10

G.I. Jesus (R)

1:55, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

The Host (Gwoemul) (R)

9:45

The Lives of Others (Das Leben der Anderen) (R)

1:10, 4:20, 8:00

The Namesake (PG-13)

1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:55

MANN'S CRITERION THEATRE

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The Hills Have Eyes 2 (R)

12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Meet the Robinsons (G)

11:40a.m., 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40

Meet the Robinsons in Disney Digital (G)

11:00a.m., 1:30, 4:30, 6:30, 9:00

Shooter (R)

11:10a.m., 12:50, 2:00, 3:40, 4:50, 6:40, 7:40, 9:30, 10:30

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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 Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

Difficulty
GOLD

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

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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

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

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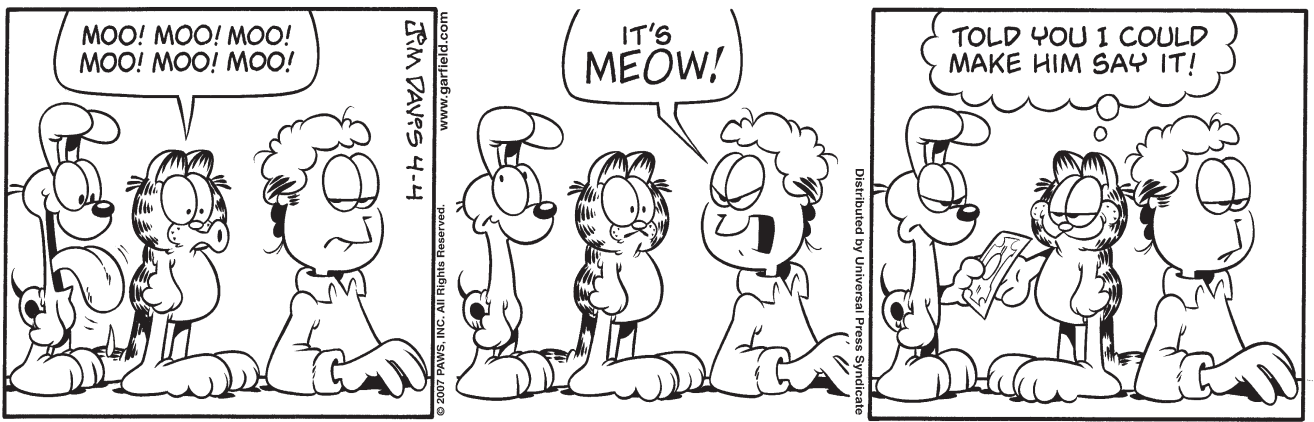
The Other Coast

By Adrian Raeside



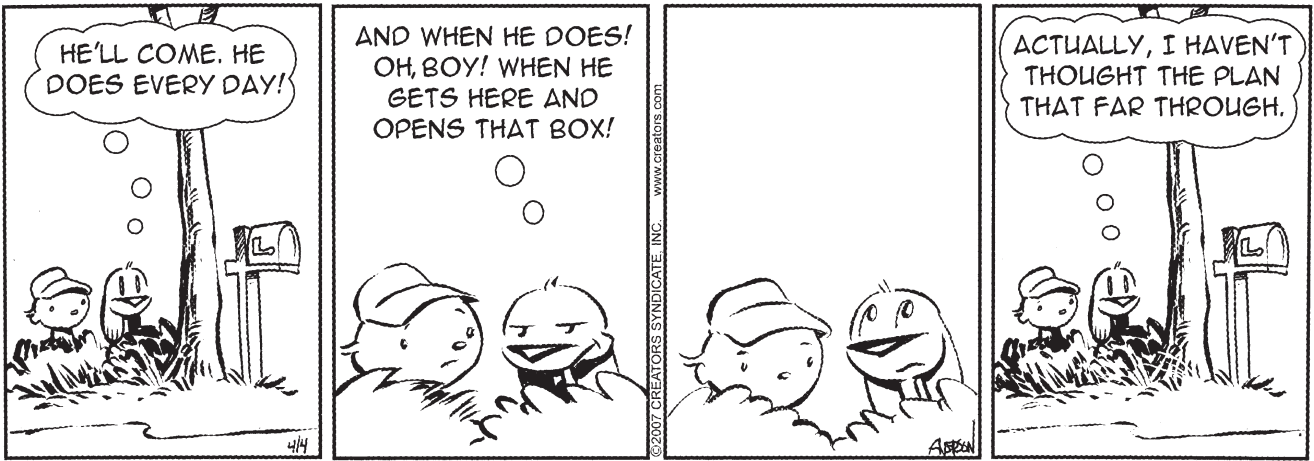
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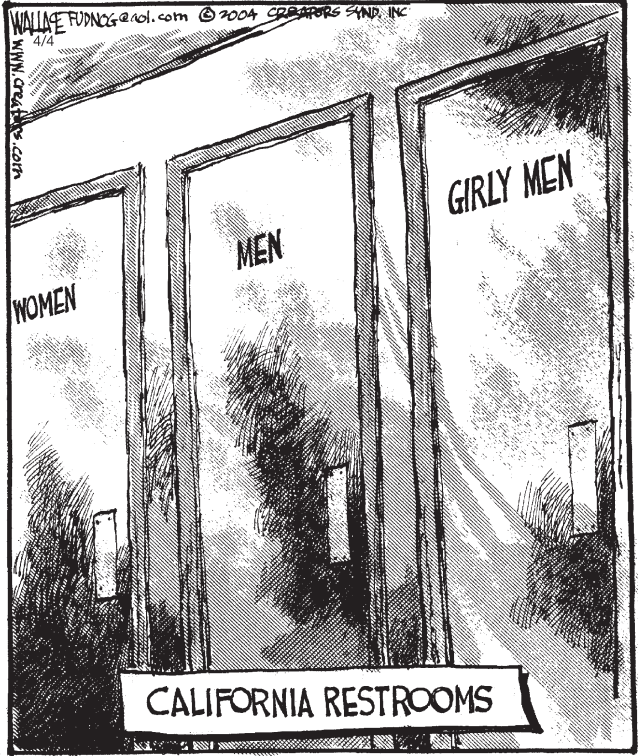
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Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Stiff drink
- 7 Practice boxing
- 11 Interact
- 12 Thus
- 13 Wards off
- 14 Oboe feature
- 15 Beginning
- 17 Friend
- 20 Overture
- 23 Fall back
- 24 Like early sci-fi monsters
- 26 Gusher's gush
- 27 Fire proof?
- 28 Vase item
- 29 Homer hero
- 31 Low digit
- 32 Kind of card
- 33 Fabric worker
- 34 New Hampshire town
- 37 Swimmer Biondi
- 39 De-creased?
- 43 Solemn word
- 44 Tiny
- 45 Settles the bill
- 46 Play makeup

DOWN

- 2 Gun
- 3 Pub product
- 4 Billiards shot
- 5 Question from Caesar
- 6 Take five
- 7 Calm
- 8 Nickname of Charles Arthur Floyd
- 9 Candle count
- 10 Reactor part
- 16 Weary sounds
- 17 Sun blocker
- 18 Emperor Selassie

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

Yesterday's answer

- 19 Hit TV series
- 21 Get together, informally
- 22 More peculiar
- 24 Tend the turkey
- 25 Apply
- 30 Halves of thirds
- 33 Engine sound
- 35 McGraw and Allen
- 36 Rocker Clapton
- 37 Unruly do
- 38 Battery size
- 40 Sister of a sort
- 41 French season
- 42 — Moines

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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					44					
45					46					

4-4

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 16 26 33 34 46
Meganumber: 38
Jackpot: \$88M

Super LOTTO 3 7 18 33 40
Meganumber: 2
Jackpot: \$15M

Fantasy 5 7 15 21 25 38

DAILY 3 MIDDAY: 0 4 9
EVENING: 7 6 4

DAILY DERRY 1st: 10 Solid Gold
2nd: 12 Lucky Charms
3rd: 01 Gold Rush
RACE TIME: 1:40.77

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Undignified Deaths: (1) In Pittsburgh in February, Antwon Williams, 45, who police said was in the act of consummating a drug sale, reached into a customer's car to prevent him from driving away without paying but got stuck in the window, and as the customer sped down the street, Williams' body was severed cleanly in two by a utility pole. (2) The South Carolina Public Safety Department reported in January that 122 pedestrians were killed on the state's roads in 2006, but "almost one-third," according to an Associated Press analysis, weren't actually "pedestrians," but people "lying illegally in (the) road."

■ News That Sounds Like a Joke (1) Biologists at Germany's University of Jena announced in January that they were terminating a research project on animal movements after three years because they were tired of waiting for a sloth named Mats to leave his perch. (2) In March, the Pascha brothel in Cologne, Germany, introduced an early-bird special for seniors age 66 and above, offering services for half-price between noon and 5 p.m.

■ CORRECTION: Two weeks ago, I reported that Gary Galleberg, a former vice mayor of Naples, Fla., pleaded guilty to battery for spitting on a diner's table at a restaurant. In fact, he pleaded no-contest. I apologize for the error.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1818 The United States Congress adopts the flag of the United States WITH 13 red and white stripes and one star for each state (then 20).

1841 William Henry Harrison dies of pneumonia becoming the first President of the United States to die in office and the shortest term served.

1850 Los Angeles, California is incorporated as a city.

1968 Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated at a motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

1968 AEK Athens BC becomes the first Greek team to win the European Basketball Cup.

1969 Dr. Denton Cooley implants the first temporary artificial heart.

1973 The World Trade Center in New York is officially dedicated.

WORD UP!

errant \AIR-uhnt\, *adjective*: 1. Wandering; roving, especially in search of adventure. 2. Deviating from an appointed course; straying. 3. Straying from the proper standards (as of truth or propriety). 4. Moving aimlessly or irregularly; as, an errant breeze.

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Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF BRIDGETTE HANSEL-ANDREWS aka BRIDGETTE ESTER HANSEL
Case No. SP007103

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of BRIDGETTE HANSEL-ANDREWS aka BRIDGETTE ESTER HANSEL

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by John Andrews in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that John Andrews be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give

Notices

notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on May 18, 2007 at 9:15 AM in Dept. No. F located at 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

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

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

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

Attorney for petitioner:
STEPHEN M LOWE ESQ
SBN 45534
FREEMAN FREEMAN AND SMILEY LLP
3415 S SEPULVEDA BLVD
STE 1200
LOS ANGELES CA 90034
Santa Monica Daily Press
CN773459 HANSEL-ANDRE Apr 4,5,11, 2007

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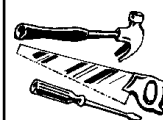
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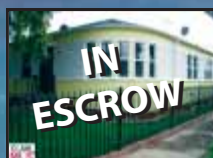
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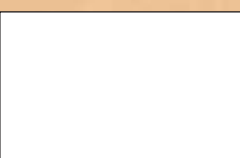
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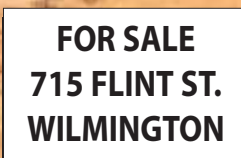
4221 Pickford St.
Los Angeles
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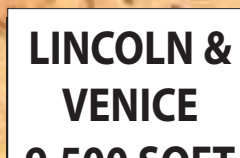
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