

FREE

MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2004

Volume 3, Issue 124

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

SUPER LOTTO PLUS

12-13-14-17-47

Megamember: 20

Jackpot: \$61 million

FANTASY 5

03, 09, 15, 19, 24

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 5, 6, 7

Evening picks: 9, 7, 5

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 06, Whirl Win

2nd Place: 08, Gorgeous George

3rd Place: 03, Hot Shot

Race Time: 1:45.27



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Indian sadhu Lotan (aka Luddan) Baba was reported in News of the Weird in 1995 for his 2,500-mile holy journey through the Indian countryside traveling by lying on the ground and rolling over and over and over, the entire distance (doing from six to 13 miles a day). In September 2003 (reported in video on the CBS News Web site in January 2004), he set out on a 1,500-mile trip, rolling from Rattam, India, to Lahore, Pakistan, where he said he hopes to thank President Pervez Musharraf for his India-Pakistan peace initiatives.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Donkey's lips do not fit onto a horse's mouth."

— Chinese Proverb



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Signs of the times: Tear 'em down or pay

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

Watch out for the sign police — they'll soon be at a business near you.

City Hall is apparently cracking down on local businesses that use signs outside of their storefronts to promote their inventory. In the past two weeks, several businesses along Wilshire Boulevard have been forced to tear down their signs or face thousands of dollars in fines.

The laws governing

signs throughout the city — which are more than 15 years old — are based on a set of complex standards that forbids many kinds. But merchants say the enforcement of those laws is arbitrary.

Several businesses between 10th and 12th Streets on Wilshire Boulevard were ordered in the past two weeks to take down their signs, yet other businesses across the street still have large signs promoting items such as beer

and cigarettes.

"It seems like a double standard," said Chris Farrand who works at Leeds Mattress. Farrand had to remove 10 signs that were protruding four inches from the mattress store's roof that promoted which types of beds they sold.

"It's a big deal, we need that brand recognition," he said. "City Hall has always been tough on local businesses ... they want our tax dollars, but they don't

See SIGNS, page 6



Photos courtesy

(Top) A worker takes down the signs promoting the clothes at Great Labels on Wilshire Boulevard. City Hall told the store's owner that the signs were in violation of a code that seeks to keep Santa Monica aesthetically pleasing. (Inset) The business owner wonders then why homeless people continue to be allowed to sleep in front of her door and defecate in front of her business.

All in the Santa Monica family: Mexico, Germany and Japan

BY LAUREN BONIFACIO
Special to the Daily Press

And you thought you were an only child.

Some Santa Monicans might yet be unaware, but they all have sisters in Mexico, Asia and Europe,

fathered quite legitimately by former President Ike Eisenhower.

Sister Cities International, a "People-to-People" program envisioned by Eisenhower in the 1950s, has thrived here. Over its more than four decades in exis-

tence, the Santa Monica Sister City Association has sparked relationships with four international cities.

"The real goal is for us to make friends, understand each other," said Mel

See CITIES, page 7



Community profiles is a weekly series that appears each Monday and delves into the people who live, work and play in Santa Monica.



Christine Schanes, J.D., Ph.D.



Kristina Andresen, AIA



Manuela Mata



Gloria Curiel Parker, J.D.

The bond that ties: 'Women of the Year' strengthen SM

BY JOHN WOOD
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — From an immigrant housekeeper who makes burritos for the needy to a Ph.D. graduate who founded a national social service agency, four area women were honored last week by the Santa Monica chapter of the Young Women's Christian Association.

About 450 people filled the ballroom at the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel Thursday for the 27th annual "Women of the Year Dinner." Recipients included Kristina Andresen of Santa Monica, Gloria Curiel Parker of Santa Monica, Christine Schanes of Venice and Manuela Mata of Hacienda Heights.

The women were nominated by their peers and chosen by a 10-person board of business and community leaders, said YWCA program administrator Robin Turner. They were honored for making significant contributions to their communities.

Located at 2019 Fourth St., the YWCA Santa Monica/Westside provides community service programs to more than 10 area communities. Worldwide, the YWCA represents more than 25 million women and girls in 115 countries. The group's vision is to end racism and "be a premier organization for women and girls, a source of strength and a voice for women."

See PROFILES, page 8

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You need time, Sagittarius



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)

★★★★ Act and be smart. Defer to others during this Full Moon. Keep smiling when you see changes happening. You get information from someone behind the scenes. Be adaptable in your thinking, as you have an opening that easily could be missed. Tonight: Keep smiling. Avoid getting into the thick of things.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★ Accept the fact that you do have a lot on your plate. You might need some time to think, but others quickly overwhelm you with their needs and requests. Structure your finances in a more beneficial manner. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep. Pull away from frenetic energy.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Play all you want, but realize that there could be a cost to all this romping. Friendships and goals are highlighted, though you might be overwhelmed. You might want to listen to others, especially as a close associate has some powerful feedback. Tonight: Still carrying on like a young pup?



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★ Pressure builds, and you might not be able to remain easygoing and together. Take a walk at lunchtime to diffuse tension. Recognize and understand that you cannot be everywhere at once. Ask a trusted partner for help. Tonight: Cocoon at home.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ You find that pressure builds as the day goes by. You could be overwhelmed by what drops in your lap. You can count on your creativity. Understand that you will find solutions that might even surprise you. Tonight: Brainstorm over munchies.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★ Treat someone to a meal or do something thoughtful, just for this person. A card to say "thank you" might be perfect. Listen to a loved one on the home front. This person has strong feelings about your spending and domestic expenditures. Tonight: Make it your treat.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ The Full Moon in your sign highlights you, for good or bad. Others need you and seek you out; you easily might be overwhelmed. Reorganize your schedule if need be. You find out that you can stall — if you want to. Tonight: The world is your oyster.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★ You would be well-advised to take a more passive role in today's happening. You might have strong opinions, but observe before you come to a conclusion. You could play a bigger role than you think in present decisions. Tonight: Get some extra sleep — you're going to need it.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You might need to adjust your plans, but you'll come out of the stall galloping anyway. You have the ability to see through what is happening and understand exactly what must occur. Focus on the long term rather than immediate issues. Tonight: Kick back. You need time for what you want.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★ You could be affected by others who feel very pressured. Understand what each person needs before responding. You also don't need to charge in before you are ready, despite pressure. Accept responsibilities calmly and wisely. Tonight: In the limelight.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ What you see, others don't see right now. Trying to explain your vision might be close to impossible with the frenetic energy right now. Consider what your best choice is for the long term. Follow that path. Tonight: Relax your mind.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Others make demands that you cannot or might not be prepared to meet. Financially, the smart move is not to commit and to walk a conservative path for several weeks. New information comes forward that will help you. Tonight: Check all your joint holdings.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SM library talks books

By Daily Press staff

If you want to be a better book club leader, the Santa Monica Public Library has just the seminar for you.

Rachel Jacobsohn will lead "How to Be an Effective Book Club Facilitator" on Thursday, April 22, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Montana Avenue Branch Library, located at 1704 Montana Ave.

Jacobsohn, founder of the Association of Book Group Readers and Leaders, is a nationally recognized professional facilitator of book discussion groups and is the author of "The Reading Group Handbook," which explores issues pertinent to the book group phenomenon — including book selection, group dynamics and discussion.

Sponsored by the Santa Monica Public Library, BookBuffet.com and the California Center for the Book, the workshop is free and open to the public. Seating is limited to 50 people and is first come, first served. For more information, call (310) 458-8600.

Musicians descend upon the SM Pier

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Pier will be making music this month during the Sunday Concert Series.

The concert lineup for April includes:

■ April 4: Highway 61 Revisited

A Bob Dylan tribute band

■ April 11: David Reeves Carpenter and the Beer Truck

First-ever country-western band at the Sunday Series

■ April 18: Coastal Soul

Classic "oldies but goodies"

■ April 25: Sal Rodriguez and the Latin All-Stars

Rocking the Pier; Latin-style

The Sunday Concert Series has been a free community event for more than a decade. The shows are produced by the Santa Monica Pier Lessee's Association and sponsored by Pepsi-Cola.

All concerts start on Sundays at 2 p.m. and are held in the Pier's central plaza. Parking is available in most beach lots, and the Tide Shuttle runs from downtown Santa Monica to the pier for 25 cents.

SM teens 'slam' poetry

By Daily Press staff

High schoolers are offered a free ride to get their poetic license.

The Santa Monica Public Library invites high school students on a free Big Blue Bus ride to the finals of the National Youth Poetry Slam to be held in Hollywood on April 17.

The bus will leave from the library at 1324 5th St. at 6:30 p.m. and return at 11:15 p.m.

Slam teams from around the country will be competing for the national championship. From Santa Monica, Downbeat 720, Santa Monica's open mic program for teens, will be fielding a team.

A poetry slam is the competitive art of performance poetry. Poets are judged for the quality of their poetry as well as their performing skills.

Tickets to the event at the Doolittle Theatre at 1615 Vine St. are \$5. Seating is limited.

More information and a trip registration form can be obtained at www.smpsteens.org/slam, at any branch of the Santa Monica Public Library or by calling Catherine Ronan at (310) 458-8976.

See BRIEFS, page 8



Look for the SW swell to slowly start to lose some steam on Monday as the WNW swell fills in further through the day. Both swells will be backing off as we move through Tuesday afternoon and into Wednesday, with some stronger NW swell expected for next Thursday afternoon and Friday.

Today the water is:

62°

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

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	8:40	1.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SUNDAY	10:25	0.8	N/A	N/A	1:02	4.1	N/A	N/A
MONDAY	11:29	0.4	11:01	3.0	3:01	4.0	7:10	3.4
TUESDAY	12:10	0.1	11:52	2.6	4:33	4.2	7:12	3.7
WEDNESDAY	N/A	N/A	12:42	-0.1	5:32	4.6	7:22	3.9
THURSDAY	12:28	2.0	1:09	-0.3	6:18	4.9	7:37	4.2
FRIDAY	1:03	1.5	1:35	-0.4	6:58	5.1	7:55	4.6

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The Q-Line

The Santa Monica City Council recently passed a law forbidding the public from smoking on the beach. Add this to prohibitions against alcohol and dogs on the beach, and some citizens are beginning to feel as though an unreasonable amount of their freedom is being taken.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you think it is OK for smoking to

be prohibited on the beach in the name of public health or do you think this unfairly violates the freedom of Santa Monica's citizens?"

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



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OPINION

LETTERS

Read this, Frances Dean

Editor:

Lori Emerson's response (SMDP, March 29, page 6) to Janet Phelan's poems (SMDP, March 22, page 5) did not deserve the insufferably pompous and patronizing letter from Frances Dean Smith published in your March 30 issue. While I agreed with Ms. Emerson's view that, at the very least, the poems were evidence of an unsound mind, Ms. Smith found them "beautiful and moving." She then went on to point out her superior level of discernment when it comes to judging poetry, even to the point of recommending reading matter to help educate those of us less enlightened than herself (meaning those of us who have a different opinion).

I have some reading matter to recommend to Ms. Smith: "The Emperor's New Clothes," a satirical tale by Hans Andersen, which perfectly reflects the vast amount of pretentious rubbish that passes for art these days, and the people who praise it.

Jill Renton
Santa Monica

A few ideas for City Hall

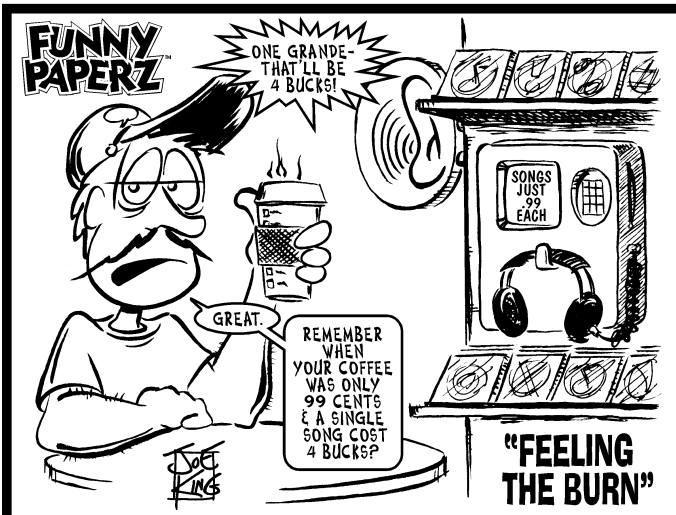
Editor:

Another letter on your Santa Monica Daily Planet April Fool's Issue. It was fine. Very amusing, especially the use of the phrase "residentially challenged."

I think that a lot of the people who were fooled, however briefly, knew on some level that some of the stories had the merit of possibility. And after the laughs, I had to wonder how long before some of these articles become at least partially true? Oh, all except the mom and pop stores forcing out the big chains. That will never ever happen — not in Greedytown, Calif. Whoops, I meant Santa Monica.

On another note, Bill Bauer made some good points in his "My Write" column (SMDP, April 2, page 6) regarding the tourists being turned off by the "large, inhospitable vagrant population" and went on to point out the wall on Main Street that is excessively used as a toilet by this population and is a major health hazard due to the huge amount of human excrement. Some possible solutions: Round up the people in the same area lining up for their free meals and have them become a cleaning crew at their toilet areas; spend some of the money allocated for the vast transient population for port-a-potties on every corner and the maintenance thereof; or have the city council and/or the city directors and board members of the organizations this city gives millions to in order to help (acerbate) the transient population, and have them follow their clients around with doggie pick-up bags available at your nearest pet store or grocery chain.

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica



Member: AAEC, NCS, SCCS

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Leaving Lala land under the cover of darkness



HIP TO BE SQUARE

By Caroline Bodkin

In early January, after I returned from my Christmas-New Year's trip, I logged on to my computer and got an alarming e-mail from Alice, a good friend from college who moved here a year after I did.

Her arrival was a blessing at a time when I longed for the kind of girlfriends I'd found in college. Her e-mail read, "It's New Year's Eve. Nicole's in Tahoe with Chris, Ashley's in Vail with her family, Caroline's out of town with her boyfriend, and I'm alone in my apartment. Something's terribly wrong. I've decided to leave. I'm packing things up and will leave at dawn tomorrow to go home to Alabama for a while and stay with my

family. I'm sorry for the short notice. I love you all. Alice."

The e-mail was addressed to we three who were mentioned.

She was fleeing the city. I was stunned. Can you even do that?

By the time I'd read the e-mail, she'd probably already made it most of the way to Alabama, but I tried calling her over and over, hoping to get through to her phone so I could get through to her the message that I needed her to come back.

"Alice, it's Caroline. Where are you? Are you OK? Come back. We miss you. I'll try you again later ..."

She never made her worries known, or at least she didn't talk about them as though they were so awful.

I'd known she was having a hard time finding a job, was feeling financial pressure, was also wondering whether or not she'd ever find love in this city or be capable of honoring it if she did. We all worried about things — a lot.

But we'd all laugh about our anxieties and troubles as though they're just part of it. Which they are, I think.

But her worries, though maybe similar to ours, must have just felt so heavy, I guess, heavy enough they pushed her out of her apartment and into her car and towards Alabama on New Year's morning.

She thought she'd go somewhere else. Maybe for a moment she convinced herself that her trouble could be pinned to the place she was living, not the place she, herself, was in.

It amazes me, sometimes, what we do to survive. Sudden impulses, bursts of energy like gasping for breath. When we're truly unhappy, I think we do things without thinking to move ourselves out of it.

You'll see people who are unhappy in their relationships do things to sabotage it like cheating on their partners or distancing themselves. You'll see people who are unhappy in their jobs begin to work slower, work less, work poorly. Alice was being weighed down, so she squirmed and took flight.

Did it solve things? Doubtful.

Did she get a breath? I think so.

Alice's exit struck me because I thought here's this good friend of mine who was going through something big, big enough to consume her and even so, she didn't explain it — or I just didn't hear it — and it exploded one night. And she just took off. Why didn't I see it coming? Was I not listening?

Last weekend the four of us — me, Alice, Nicole and Ashley — got together. After her New Year's departure, Alice stayed away for one month before she decided to come back here. When she did, I told her I'd never go out of town again without checking in on her daily, and she laughed.

She said, "Yeah, don't."

We were both ... kind of kidding.

She said some problems, and also good friends, stay with you.

Even when you try to leave them.

(Caroline Bodkin lives in Los Angeles and wonders daily if she'll miss her calling. You can e-mail her at hiptobesquare-bodkin@yahoo.com).

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

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1427 Third Street Promenade Suite 202 Santa Monica • 90401 • sack@smdp.com

OPINION



Guest Commentary By Sheila Kuehl

This is the second in a series of articles from Sen. Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica). The first article focused on how the state found itself in its budget crisis. Today's article examines the present budget.

In the first essay, I talked about how we got into what most are calling "the budget mess".

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is required to send his proposed budget to the Legislature in January of each year. Because Gov. Schwarzenegger had just been elected in the fall, much of the budget delivered to us in January had been pulled together by his transition team, which included several people who had worked in the Pete Wilson administration. Not surprisingly, it reflected a number of approaches seen in that administration.

Now, the four budget sub-committees in each house of the legislature are pulling the proposals apart, changing them in some ways.

REVENUE PROJECTIONS

The proposed budget for 2004-05 assumes that California personal income will grow 5.6 percent in 2004 and almost

Senator interprets state budget

6 percent in 2005. Altogether, the revenue projection side of the governor's proposed budget assumes a growth in all taxes of about 6 percent over the previous year, about \$2 billion.

CHANGES IN WHAT WE OWED FROM BEFORE

Holdover expenses from the 2002-03 budget, which we keep dragging into the new budgets, seem to have diminished (better tax collections, lower expenditures and encumbrances) by about \$2.1 billion so that the total debt brought into the current year is reduced from \$10.7 billion to "only" \$8.6 billion.

The administration proposes using \$12.3 billion in proceeds to offset past debts and some of the current gap between revenue and expenditures in the 2004-05 budget.

CUTS, CUTS, CUTS

Because the Schwarzenegger administration is still refusing to consider any tax increases at all, the budget is proposed to be balanced by cutting programs. The gap proposed to be filled by cuts is \$6.5 billion. Remember, this is his proposed budget and does not yet reflect any changes made by the budget sub-committees in the legislature or "change of mind" switches by the governor.

Some of the big items to be cut:

■ \$2 billion less to K-12 schools.

■ \$950 million cut to transportation

■ \$1.4 billion cut to social services,

targeted in grant reductions, cutting cost-of-living adjustments and eliminating all the money the state pays for in-home supportive services.

■ \$1.1 billion cut to Medi-Cal, mostly reflecting a 10 percent cut in what we pay doctors and a \$400 million cut in medical services for prison inmates.

■ Cities, which were jubilant when the governor, having cut the vehicle license fee (VLF) (bad for the cities and counties which get about \$4 billion a year directly, especially law enforcement and firefighters), told them he would (illegally) declare an emergency and appropriate an equal amount from the general fund to make sure they didn't suffer (good for the cities and counties, who were then supposed to get all the money they would have gotten from the VLF if it had stayed at full strength), were then shocked to see that the governor had fooled them all and taken a like amount (\$1.3 billion) away in property taxes. The cities are striking back with an initiative — more on that in a later missive. Endgame? Cities and counties down \$1.3 billion, at least.

■ Local government loses even more when you consider the governor would remove funding for juvenile probation

and reduce transportation spending. Another \$600 million.

■ And, of course, higher education lost a large and disproportionate part of its budget, with UC and CSU hit the hardest, but student fees will rise on all campuses, while student aid is proposed to be cut.

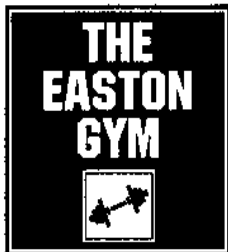
Each of these areas will get an essay of its own, so you can see what the real results are and where, in the name of cuts, the budget might actually add to costs.

And ... even with all these cuts, the budget will still be \$783 million out of balance.

There is still a question about whether the bond the legislature adopted to fund state pensions will hold up in court and whether we can actually reduce Medi-Cal provider rates by 10 percent, since a court already threw out an action we had taken to reduce them by 5 percent in the current budget. And whether the revenue counted from tribal gaming in the budget can ever be collected. And whether the feds will pay us all the money they owe us.

Since several of you have praised the brevity of the first piece, I'll stop here.

Next time: The impact of some of these cuts on education, K-12, community colleges, CSU and UC.

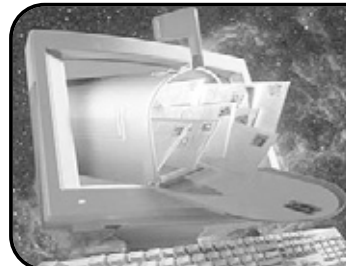


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Photo courtesy

When the owner of Great Labels was first told to take down her signs, she tried to secure a permit for them through City Hall. She was told the signs were not the correct size and eventually had to remove them.

Signs are being torn down throughout Santa Monica

SIGNS, from page 1

want to help us."

Andrea Waters, who owns Great Labels between 11th and 12th Streets, was ordered to remove signs that promoted designer clothing that she sells. The signs were hung on a brick wall at the entrance of her shop.

"As I look all around the city, nobody is complying with it, and it irks me that I had to take mine down," Waters said. "I see violations all over the city."

When Waters was notified in November of her apparent violations, she attempted to apply for the proper permits at City Hall. But she was told that the signs weren't the right size and they would have to come down. After procrastinating for months, Waters last month was told by City Hall workers that she would face hefty fines and be summoned to an administrative hearing held by the City Attorney's office if she didn't comply.

"I tried to do the right thing, and I complied grudgingly," she said. "They are worried about signage, but they do nothing about the homeless sleeping in my doorway."

Another business owner along Wilshire, who spoke on the condition of anonymity for fear of retribution, said he hasn't been contacted by City Hall about his signs, which are similar to what Waters had hanging in front of her store.

"It looks like a third-world country here," he said. "There is defecation and urine in front of my door, and they are worried about signs. If they are going to harass people for signs, maybe they should clean up the city first."

Santa Monica City Councilman Ken Genser said the laws are partially to control aesthetics, but also are meant as a safety mechanism because people driving down the street might take their eyes off the road to read the signs. The code also is designed to level the playing field so one business can't promote more than the other.

"We are not unique in having this sign code," he said, adding most cities have

laws regulating signs.

Genser said enforcement has been lacking in the past three years, when all signs in the city were reviewed and either approved or denied.

"Staff hasn't enforced it, which is a disappointment for me," he said.

When asked to respond to merchants' criticisms that the homeless people sleeping on Wilshire Boulevard are much more of an eyesore than their signs, Genser said the two are separate issues. He added that it's up to merchants to notify police when they see people illegally sleeping or camping in a public place.

"People complain about people sleeping in their doorways, and they don't report it," Genser said. "We want our laws enforced, but it takes the whole community to help with it, you can't just be passive."

It's clear many signs adorning the entrances of local businesses are illegal, as are sandwich boards — typically placed in front of a restaurant to detail what's on the menu for the day.

"If you drive around, you can see them in different parts of the city," said Sterling Meredith, who owns Good To Eat at 313 Wilshire Blvd. He was notified by City Hall in November that he had to remove his board from the sidewalk, which he has done. But he still doesn't agree with the code.

"It draws attention, and it draws people in," Meredith said. "It definitely helps promote your business."

Gary Gordon, who manages the Main Street Merchants Association, said signs and sandwich boards are obvious assets for a business owner. He added that he thinks that businesses should be allowed to promote their stores.

"Main Street is a pedestrian-oriented street that has relatively slow traffic, and every merchant wants to do what they can, within reason, to show 'this is my business and this is what I've got,'" he said. "There has been a long period of non-enforcement ... it's going to shock a lot of people when they find out what's legal and what's illegal."

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APRIL 10, 2004

LOCAL



Citizens welcome to suggest new sister cities

CITIES, from page 1

Risher, a five-time former president of the association and current vice president in charge of communication with Mazatlan, Mexico.

The sister city idea was christened in Santa Monica in 1961 as a committee under the City Council. Clo Hoover, a former mayor and city councilwoman, suggested that the first one be Mazatlan, a small-town beach city on the Pacific coast that she had just visited with her husband. The proper contacts were made, delegations were sent out and documents were signed, securing the cities' relationship, Risher said.

Notable communications with Mazatlan have included Santa Monica's donations of several surplus police cars, ambulances and fire engines to the city. In 1999, a Santa Monica police officer traveled to the Mexican city to contribute four patrol cars to the law enforcement agency there.

"There's a lot of meaning to our assisting Mazatlan because there are so many people in Santa Monica who have a Latino background that there is a greater identification with that community," said Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom.

Risher said that, although Mazatlan might need the help financially, the sister city relationship extends beyond material exchanges.

"Where people understand each other, they form bonds that last a lifetime," Risher said.

In an instant, Risher can recall the year of arrival of the first exchange student to come to Santa Monica through the Sister City Association. His name is Manuel Urrutia.

Urrutia lived in Mazatlan until he came to America in 1974 to spend his senior year at Santa Monica High School. Now a research physicist at UCLA, Urrutia also obtained his undergraduate and professional degrees from the university.

"Needless to say, it worked out very well for me," Urrutia said. "The continuous exposition, the continuous exchange of ideas does help out" in building a cultural understanding in the long run, he said.

After decades-long relationships, the association primarily refreshes its bonds with its sister cities through student exchange programs.

A delegation of students from Germany is expected this summer. Recently, a grant from the City Council helped the association send a girls' soccer team from Santa Monica to Fujinomiya, Japan, for an international tournament. The team captured first place.

Santa Monica's long-standing relationships with Mazatlan and Fujinomiya helped connect those cities, which have become sisters themselves, Risher said.

After a decade of existing as a city committee, in the early 1970s, the Sister City Association incorporated into the private nonprofit organization it is today. All association officers are unpaid, and the organization survives off member dues and donations, Risher said.

"We're not a very rich organization except in culture and love for the world," Risher said.

In the years after incorporating, the association also found new sisters.

At the suggestion of a Santa Monica business owner from Germany, in 1969

"The Italians visited Santa Monica and know that it has very progressive energy programs, and they want people exchanges, business exchanges, educational exchanges."

— WOODROW CLARK
Energy adviser

the association started a relationship with the businessman's hometown of Hamm in Hamburg, Germany.

In 1975, the association connected with Fujinomiya.

More than two decades went by before the association approved another sister city, Ville d'Avray, France, in 1997.

Sister cities are chosen very selectively, said Sister City Association President Nat Trives, who was the mayor of Santa Monica when Fujinomiya became family.

Past suggestions for sister cities might not have been viable because "we haven't found a common bond, a set of issues that we can work on together to make the sister city operation work," Trives said. "We're always open and willing to sit down and talk."

Because Ville d'Avray is newer than Santa Monica's other sister cities by more than two decades, Trives said the relationship has not yet developed.

"France is more dormant now because we haven't gotten our pieces together yet with their delegation," Trives said. "It takes time. If you don't have the people involved, it can't work."

Anyone can make a suggestion for a new sister city. The process includes making a presentation to the Sister City Association, which would then make contact with the government and residents in the proposed city and possibly send a delegation to research if the city would be a right fit for Santa Monica. After receiving the approval of association members and the City Council, the bond can be made official.

Recently, the association has received sisterhood suggestions for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and cities in Korea, Israel, Austria and El Salvador.

Sentimo, a city in northern Italy, might be next on the list.

West Los Angeles resident Woodrow Clark, who was energy adviser to former governor Gray Davis, said he is planning to give a presentation on Sentimo to the Sister City Association.

"The Italians visited Santa Monica and know that it has very progressive energy programs, and they want people exchanges, business exchanges, educational exchanges," Clark said.

A relationship between Santa Monica and Sentimo would work because alternative energy sources are piquing interest in northern Italy and all of Europe, Clark said.

"This is very fortuitous," Clark said.

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LOCAL



PROFILES, from page 1

Here, the Daily Press caught up with all four awardees.

KRISTINA ANDRESEN

■ Born: March 6, 1951, in Indianapolis, Ind.

■ Education: Bachelors of architecture and science from Ball State University.

Andresen is an architect and entrepreneur who YWCA officials said "empowers women and works toward diversity by example." She was the only woman in 1969 to graduate from Ball University with a degree in architecture.

She serves on the board of Upward Bound House, which provides transitional housing for homeless children and their parents; the executive board of both the Westside Economic Collaborative and the Santa Monica College of Associates; as chair of the Santa Monica Rotary Literacy Committee; trustee at the First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica; volunteer building commissioner at City Hall; and member of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee, which works on issues relating to legislation and City Hall.

What single accomplishment of yours are you most proud of?

"Rather than a single accomplishment, I'd just say ... the thing that I've enjoyed working on the most is really working with Upward Bound. We have 70 units of low-income senior housing that we have built, and we have 22 units of transitional housing for homeless children and their parents.

"The original founder of Upward Bound House was Donald Shelby, who was my longtime minister at the First United Methodist Church and, through his vision, Upward Bound House — it was his vision to provide housing to homeless children, and that has been my longtime church.

What one thing would you most like to change in Santa Monica or the greater westside?

"They asked me what my one wish for Santa Monica was ... and I said that I was hoping that, there are so many diverse groups in the community that it would be wonderful if people could find more common ground and work together.

"I know that the chamber and City

Council and lots of people have many different viewpoints, and rather than people speaking of the ways they don't agree, it would be great if people would find the ways they do agree and work together."

MANUELA MATA

■ Born: May 10, 1955, in Durango, Mexico.

■ Education: Through the third grade.

Mata is a housekeeper and maintenance worker who holds down two jobs, five days a week. But it's not until the weekends that Mata really gets busy. She's known as the "Burrito Lady" for her regular work feeding homeless and poor people on Skid Row in Los Angeles.

"Twenty-eight years ago Manuela made a promise to care for the homeless and the poor, if she made it safely across the Rio Grande to her husband in California," reads a bio sheet on Mata passed out for the awards dinner. "In November 1987, Manuela's promise became her passion."

Today, Mata provides meals every other Sunday, every Thanksgiving and every Christmas to thousands of people on Skid Row. She also makes a trek to a small village south of Tijuana four times each year to take food, clothing and other necessities.

Asked what accomplishment she was most proud of, Mata, who is not fluent in English, replied that she was amazed by her first trip to the small village south of Tijuana.

With the help of an English-speaking co-worker, Mata described how during that first trip, her group arrived as many of the town people were attending mass in a hut-like church atop a hill. While the town prayed, Mata said her group set up tables with food, clothes, toys and other items they had brought from the United States. The look on the people's faces when they came out of the church, Mata said, was like nothing she had ever seen before.

"You have to live these things," she said.

Since then, Mata's group has built a new church in the village.

Asked if she could change one thing about Santa Monica and the greater westside, Mata replied that she would like to see more people get involved as volunteers.

"I would like to bring help to the people," she said. "I don't like to see the people suffer. It breaks my heart, especially the babies ... I like somebody else maybe doing what I'm doing."

GLORIA CURIEL PARKER

■ Born: May 11, "in the 1950s" in Oakland, Calif.

■ Education: Bachelor of Science in business administration from the University of Southern California. Law degree from Loyola Law School.

Parker is an immigration law expert and motivational expert who appears twice weekly on Spanish-language television channel Univision's morning news to answer listener questions about immigration.

She is co-founder of the Latina Youth Conference at SMC; a member of the League of United Latin American Citizens; the Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County; the American Immigration Lawyers Association; and former member of the Santa Monica Women's Commission and the Mexican-American Political Association.

What single accomplishment of yours are you most proud of?

"Setting a good example for my daughter, in showing her that if you set your mind to something you can accomplish it — and that you should be sensitive to the needs of people around you and try to do good for others, as a goal for you to live by for your entire life.

"My daughter is already following in these footsteps. She is a very kind-hearted, good-spirited kid."

What one thing would you most like to change in Santa Monica or the greater westside?

"That's a tough one ... If I could change the emphasis of spending more money on educational needs of the children I would do that. In Santa Monica it seems that it's a great city ... but I still feel that some of the expenditures are going to things that are not as important as the investment in our future of our children's education ...

"Some of those curbs, they're very beautiful, but the maintenance and the expenditures are some of the things I'd rather see spent on computers in the schools for our children ... Also, I live on a very hilly street, and I can't see the purpose of those curbs being lowered, I'm not sure what the terminology is, but I don't see the purpose of lowering those ...

"I appreciate the beautification of our city — but at the expense of losing valuable teachers and more benefits for the students, that really bothers me."

CHRISTINE SCHANES

■ Born: April 9, 1948, in Jersey City, N.J.

■ Education: Undergraduate degree from University of San Diego. Law degree from American University in

Washington, D.C., and a Ph.D. from Notre Dame in international government and relations.

Though Schanes accepted the "Woman of the Year" award on behalf of Children Helping Poor and Homeless People — and not herself — she has been instrumental in the group's success.

"When I was first told I had been selected, I wasn't sure I could accept," she said. "For I feel that what I do is part of a group effort to help end hunger, poverty and homelessness."

Schanes is co-director and co-founder of CHPHP, which "involves thousands of young people and adults serving tens of thousands of children, women and men in need each year in California, Oregon, Colorado and Arizona."

What single accomplishment of yours are you most proud of?

"I would use the word that I'm most grateful to the volunteers and donors of people helping CHPHP for everything they do to help end poverty and homelessness ...

"For example, there was a booklet put together, it was several inches thick, from many of the students that have worked with us — we work with over 15,000 volunteers, we're in four states, and we don't have a building, and we're not properly funded. It's just an amazing thing.

"One of the volunteers, her name is Sydney, said, 'Even a small dent in the problem can make a difference. If everyone tried to make a dent, it would make a huge difference.' Just magnificent."

What one thing would you most like to change in Santa Monica or the greater westside?

"I would change the laws that prohibit the charitable giving of food, and I would have the city encourage the charitable giving of food, rather than make it illegal ...

"There is a huge amount of hunger in the city of Santa Monica, as well as in the County of Los Angeles and the U.S., and everybody needs to help address that problem. We have 3 million children in the state of California that go to bed hungry every night, and there's no excuse for that ... Some of those children are in Santa Monica, and we must do something to help them. And everybody can help."

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

'Springtime in Paris' on the auction block

By Daily Press staff

An upcoming auction has a certain "je ne sais quois."

The nonprofit Waldorf School will hold its annual silent auction on April 23 from 7:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at the carousel on the Santa Monica Pier.

"Springtime in Paris," the theme of auction, will feature \$10,000-value vacation getaways in Europe, Asia and the Islands.

Other items on the auction block include jewels, robotic technology, critically acclaimed and collectible artwork by renowned artists, home-delivered gourmet meals, children's furniture, astrology readings, tattooing, private yoga and pilates classes and concert tickets.

The event is the school's largest community fundraising event, and involvement is invited in a number of ways, including matching grants, sponsorships, publicity and participation in the auction itself.

The auction is still accepting donations of goods and services to be added to the lineup, and all donations are tax-deductible, officials said.

"What makes our auction special and different," said Beth Rubenstein, silent auction chair, "are our Waldorf-inspired handmade toys, dolls, gnomes, puppet-theater and other artful handiworks. We also offer our famous class baskets filled with handmade and unique gifts. This year, one class has made a quilt, bound to become an heirloom for some lucky family."

Guests are invited to sip wine and champagne during the bidding, as well as feast on hors d'oeuvres and take part in a dessert tasting, featuring treats from many of the Westside's top restaurateurs and patisseries.

Musical entertainment rounds out the evening's festivities — je ne sais quois.

STATE



Leaders say deal close on workers' comp reform

BY TOM CHORNEAU
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders are close to an agreement on major legislation that would curb the cost of treating work-related injuries, but officials said Saturday final details remain elusive.

Legislative attorneys are expected to work through the weekend to complete a draft measure that lawmakers could consider Monday, but the governor's staff and key Republicans said final language has not been distributed for review.

"We are close. We are making progress but there is not an agreement," Schwarzenegger's spokesman Rob Stutzman said Saturday.

Any bill would still face votes in both the state senate and assembly.

The governor and legislative leaders have tried for weeks to craft legislation reforming the state's 91-year-old workers' compensation system. Everyone seems to agree that costs to businesses are too high, climbing from an average of 2.68 percent of payroll in 2000 to 6.3 percent in 2003.

That makes California's workers' com-

"We are close. We are making progress but there is not an agreement."

— ROB STUTZMAN
Schwarzenegger's spokesman

pensation system the costliest in the nation.

Even as work continues, Gov. Schwarzenegger and his family left Friday night for an Easter holiday in Hawaii. Although he isn't expected to return to the state until next Sunday, Stutzman said the governor will be in close contact with his staff during the week.

Incoming Senate Republican leader Dick Ackerman, R-Fullerton, said members of his caucus have strong opinions about the proposed legislation — and until there's final language to analyze, they are not ready to endorse anything.

"The governor thinks we have agreement on enough issues that he wants to get something out for review by Monday,"

said Ackerman. "But we have not seen the final package and, of course, this is a complicated issue and a lot will be determined on what those words actually say."

Ackerman said he met with Schwarzenegger and his staff several times last week about Republican concerns over the bill and was told Friday that those concerns have been taken into consideration.

Democratic leaders appear more optimistic. Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, D-San Francisco, told the Los Angeles Times in its Saturday editions that he believes the proposed bill is "pretty well cooked."

Gabriel Sanchez, spokesman for Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, said the two sides are very close.

"There's still details being worked out," Sanchez said. "We're optimistic that we can have a deal in place soon."

Schwarzenegger has made cutting workers' comp business expenses one of his highest priorities. He is supporting a business-backed reform initiative aimed at the November ballot in case a compromise deal cannot be worked out with the Legislature this month.

Republicans, including the governor and business groups, have said they want legislation that will make it more difficult to qualify an injury as work-related.

Democrats and their allies say they are focused on preventing insurers from charging employers inflated rates for coverage.

One area that insiders say remains at issue is rate regulation. Some Democrats have said they want guarantees that rates will go down after making changes to the system.

According to the Times, the proposed bill would establish new guidelines to determine the seriousness of an injury, encourage employers to bring disabled workers back to perform alternative duties and require a worker to make three visits to a company doctor before seeing a doctor of his choice.

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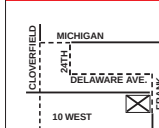
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STATE

Study: Mountain lions adept at moving unseen through our world

BY SETH HETTENA
Associated Press Writer

CUYAMACA RANCHO STATE PARK — In the mountains outside San Diego, deer flit across a grassy meadow near a lake swathed in early-morning mist. Almost no one, however, sees the less bucolic scene that develops after the sun goes down and the park's mountain lions begin stalking deer to fill their bellies.

New technology is giving researchers a window into the life of California's No. 1 predator, a creature so stealthy that the American Indians called it "the ghost of the Rockies." For the past three years, 20 lions in and around San Diego County's Cuyamaca Rancho State Park were outfitted with \$5,000 Global Positioning System collars that allowed researchers to trace their nocturnal travels.

The results surprised researchers. Mountain lions — also known as cougars or pumas — were crossing interstate highways and skirting clusters of homes without being seen. People were sometimes unaware that their goats and other livestock were silently dragged off and devoured by lions in the middle of the night. A separate Southern California study captured a puma moving through a graffiti-lined underpass.

"What surprised me the most is the degree of adaptability to what I consider to be high human activity in puma habitat," said Ken Logan, one of the researchers on the study and the author of "Desert Puma" based on a decade of research in New Mexico. "Depending on the size as well as the home location of the GPS-collared lions we studied, there were literally hundreds to a thousand people living in the area."

The ongoing \$200,000-a-year study by the University of California, Davis may also hold the hope of a better understanding of why the puma, which normally avoids people, sometimes comes dangerously close. In January, a lion mauled cyclist Mark Reynolds to death in an Orange County park and then seriously injured a second cyclist a short time later. There were also troubling reports of lions approaching hikers in Sabino Canyon outside Tucson, Ariz., in recent months.

The UC Davis team is studying how the lions behave around people. Researchers eventually want to understand whether lion behavior changes as they get used to us. It's a question that's key to the cougar's continued existence in the fast-growing West since lions often pay the ultimate price when they come too close. In California, where a voter initiative outlawed trophy hunting of mountain lions, more than 700 pumas have been killed over the past decade for threatening or harming people.

"There might be ways with better understanding to know how to behave around lions to reduce the public safety incidents or lion attacks," said Walter Boyce, director of the UC Davis Wildlife Health Center and lead researcher on the project.

Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, 35 miles east of San Diego, was chosen for the study because of the potential for future attacks. The park was the site of one of the three fatal mountain lion attacks in California over the past decade when 56-year-old Iris

Kenna was killed in 1994 during a morning hike. Twelve pumas were killed around the park in the 1990s for safety.

"Yet when we went in there and started looking at this very intensively, nothing happened," Boyce said. "Lions were doing a very good job of avoiding people."

During the day, the GPS-collared lions typically slept at least a football field's length away from the nearest trail and even further from buildings. After the sun went down, cougars used the park's extensive trail system and crept closer to buildings than in the day.

One 3-year-old male, dubbed M-2, showed an uncanny ability to sneak across roads. In a six-month period in 2002, he crossed Interstate 8 and two state highways a total of 48 times. He ultimately was killed when he was hit by a vehicle.

When researchers plotted the travels of a 2-year-old female called F-8, her meanderings showed a clear orbit around — but never through — private properties in the rural eastern San Diego County community of Harrison Park.

A separate GPS study of three pumas in the Santa Monica National Recreation Area outside Los Angeles found one lion was using a graffiti-covered underpass to cross a highway. A sensor-triggered camera captured the rear half of a rain-soaked lion and graffiti in the background.

In October, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park was ravaged by the Cedar fire, the state's largest wildfire. One lion in the study died from injuries suffered in the blaze, but the toll of dead or injured cougars is not known. The fire, however, will stimulate new plant growth, which will benefit deer — the lion's main food source.

The UC Davis study is challenging some of the assumptions of state game wardens, who are responsible for protecting people from the lions. Lt. Bob Turner, who has killed dozens of lions over more than two decades with the California Department of Fish and Game, said he no longer believes that once a lion eats domestic animals it must be killed.

F-8 was collared after she ate an alpaca, a domesticated llama, in a pen belonging to a breeder who lived near the park. Since the breeder modified the fencing around her remaining alpacas after the attack, the lion returned to hunting deer.

For the cougars in the study, the No. 1 cause of death was people. Four lions were killed under special permits issued by the Department of Fish and Game for pumas that threaten people or kill livestock. Disease, a fight between pumas, and the Cedar fire also took a toll.

For thousands of years, people hunted and killed pumas. From 1909 to 1963, more than 12,000 were hunted and killed in California. That has led some like Logan and his wife, Linda Sweanor, to believe that humans are aiding evolution by eliminating lions that don't fear people. The lions that survive and reproduce are genetically programmed to keep their distance from us.

"We are not on the menu," said Doug Updike, a biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game. "If a lion had any desire to catch and eat people, we would see literally hundreds of people dying every day."

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NATIONAL



Dotcom millionaires want to revitalize Vegas casino

BY ADAM GOLDMAN

Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Dotcom millionaires Tim Poster and Tom Breitling knew how to get people to Las Vegas, and how to get them a deal on a hotel when they arrived — but they were far less expert when it came to the gambling business.

Yet after reaping a fortune selling their travel Web site, the savvy entrepreneurs' lack of casino experience didn't stop them from buying one of the most storied names in the gambling industry.

Poster and Breitling bought the Golden Nugget properties in downtown Las Vegas and Laughlin for \$215 million from MGM Mirage in June and hope to restore the luster to the brand with high-end gamblers, a Fox Television reality show and headlines harkening back to the days of Frank Sinatra.

It's a risky proposition for a pair of young mavericks who have limited experience in the casino industry, and questions remain on Wall Street about whether they can succeed in the struggling downtown district.

Sitting behind a sprawling desk on the 18th floor of the Golden Nugget's executive offices — with only a distant view of the glittering Las Vegas Strip — Poster waves off the doubters.

Like famed casino developer Steve Wynn, who once owned the Golden Nugget hotels that he parlayed into an empire, Poster takes chances.

"I always fancied myself as a gambler," the Las Vegas native said. "I come from a family of gamblers. In my previous business ... we took risks all the time."

So far they've paid off.

The former business, Travelscape, specialized in discount prices in hotel reservations and air-hotel packages. It also made Poster, 35, and Breitling, 34, very rich. They sold it to Expedia for about \$105 million in 2000.

In 2003, the pair found themselves on the road, visiting cities to raise money to buy the two Golden Nuggets. They eventually secured \$175 million through a debt offering and loan, plus \$50 million in equity.

As part of the equity, the two staked \$37.5 million of their own money and persuaded tennis star Andre Agassi and former International Game Technology Chairman Chuck Mathewson to each invest \$5 million. Former Expedia executive Rich Barton also sank \$2.5 million into the venture.

But the two needed to assure Wall Street that a pair of gambling novices could handle running big-time casinos. In a move that raised eyebrows on Wall Street, Poster and Breitling persuaded senior management at the casinos to stay with the new company under lucrative contracts.

Then there were skeptical state gambling regulators.

Breitling and Poster were criticized in January when they faced the Nevada Gaming Control Board. During a tense public hearing, it was revealed that both Breitling and Poster had associated with Rick Rizzolo, whose strip club was raided by the FBI last year and who is under investigation for possible ties to organized crime.

In the end, the pair got a limited gambling license from the Nevada Gaming Commission and became the youngest major casino owners in the state.

"It was an intense process," Breitling said.

Poster would only say: "I'm not embarrassed about anything I've done."

The commission also told them to beef up their board of directors with people other than friends — people who know how to run a casino. Breitling said they tapped Burton Cohen, a longtime gambling executive and former president of the old Desert Inn and Flamingo hotel-casinos.

With the licensing gantlet behind them, the two grabbed the reins about two months ago and began executing their business strategy.

They are almost always at the Las Vegas Golden Nugget, roaming the floors, ensuring every aspect of the operation runs smoothly.

"Where is there time to sleep?" Breitling asked. "Would someone please tell me?"

Poster, who once served on the board of directors for Station Casinos, handles

the gambling side. Breitling manages the rest of the operations.

"These guys are fired up," said Marc Falcone, a Deutsche Bank gambling analyst in New York. "They have an energy level that hasn't been seen in this business in a long time."

Since taking over, attendance hasn't waned at the Golden Nugget Las Vegas, which is considered the jewel of a faded downtown with 1,907 hotel rooms and 2,800 employees. Built in 1946, it's the largest of the 14 hotel-casinos in the downtown area.

Unlike some of its neighbors, the casino hasn't fallen into a state of disrepair.

"The Golden Nugget has been a successful operation for years," Breitling said. "That's one of the things that attracted us. It wasn't a turnaround."

MGM Mirage spent about \$35 million renovating its rooms, restaurant and convention area before selling it, allowing Poster and Breitling some breathing room as they guide the properties in a new direction.

For its grand opening weekend, the Golden Nugget featured performances by Vegas standard Tony Bennett and Grammy Award winner Jewel.

The new owners also fell into a bit of luck when its struggling neighbor, Binion's Horseshoe hotel-casino, was bought by MTR Gaming, which has promised to revitalize the landmark.

Another company, Barrick Gaming, recently purchased four aging casinos and pledged to pump money into them. The reinvestment should help downtown Las Vegas property owners have access to new capital.

To cement their gambling strategy, Poster said he has reached a deal to replace coin-operated slot machines with cashless ones, an important initiative because slots dominate the casinos' revenues.

Table limits have been increased, and Poster said he's hired two well-known casino hosts away from Las Vegas Strip properties to reel in high rollers. He hired a third who used to work for Wynn.

"Customers are loyal to the host more than the property," Poster said. "We operate under the old Vegas formula: This is a casino first and a hotel second."

Therein lies the risk for investors. If the big-time gamblers win, like the million dollar players Poster is courting, the casino can take a noticeable hit on its bottom line.

"Without a more diversified portfolio like MGM Mirage had, Poster's strategy to attract higher-end gamblers with higher table limits and higher credit lines could be risky given their financial profile," said John Mulkey, a Bear Stearns gambling analyst in New York.

"If you have a few tough quarters of hold percentage, your liquidity and credit profile could be challenged."

The "strategy so far seems to be working," Mulkey said.

Poster, flanked by Bloomberg financial and surveillance computer terminals, says he's focused on the Golden Nugget and not Wall Street. He said he never wanted to take the company, with only two properties and limited growth opportunities, public.

"If you're not growing, you're not an attractive stock," he said.

That might change, Breitling said, who suggested the company could take the Golden Nugget name to new markets.

"We think we acquired a brand that can be leveraged in any gaming market," Poster added.

And then there is the reality television show, "The Casino." Breitling and Poster are both hoping the show, created by Mark Burnett, will instantly turn the downtown casino into a hot spot when it begins airing June 8.

Poster said they didn't have creative control over the series, but nothing will be shown that could jeopardize their gambling license.

"I don't know what to expect," Poster said.

A yet-to-be-aired promotion for the show promises "fortunes made and lives shattered." It will tease viewers with this line: "Watch and see if Tim and Tom can beat the odds."

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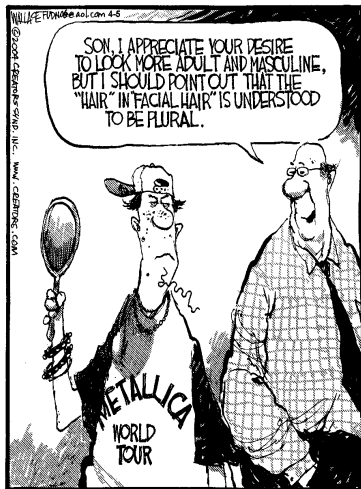
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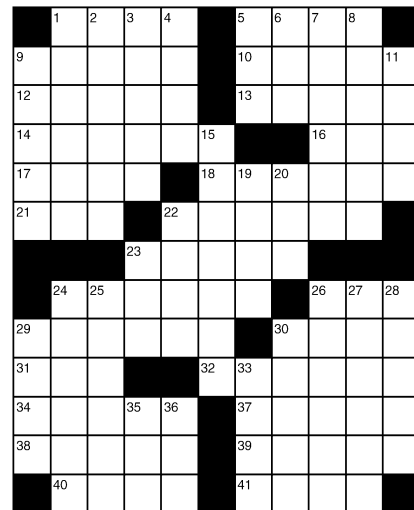
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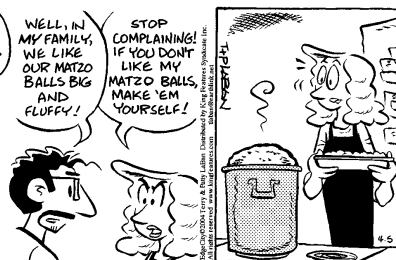
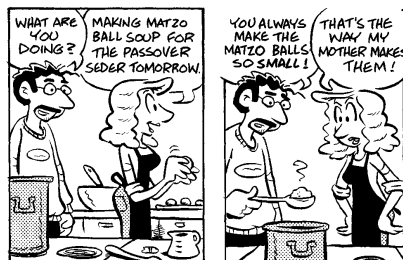
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Obituaries

NASHNER-LOIS ODLE, age
84, died on January 14 in Port-
land, Oregon. She was born in
Pittsburgh on March 4, 1919.
She received a B.A. in Music
from Carnegie Mellon University
when she was 19. Her husband
Sydney Nashner died in 1955,
and she raised her three chil-
dren Marjorie, Lewis, and Robert.
At the age of 50 she earned a
Master's degree in Public
Administration at UCLA and
worked as a Human Relations
Management Consultant. She
was an accomplished concert
pianist and performed at
chamber music and other
recitals in Los Angeles and
Santa Monica, where she lived
for 30 years with her partner
Karl Kreuter. She leaves her
three children, her sisters Sylvia
Lilley and Jeanne Perlman, two
grandchildren and two great-
grandchildren.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Ozzy Osbourne blames his doc for pill problems



OZZY OSBOURNE

By The Associated Press

■ **LOS ANGELES** — Rocker Ozzy Osbourne filed a complaint with the state medical board, accusing a Beverly Hills doctor of overprescribing addictive drugs to him.

Osbourne says the drugs led to his disoriented behavior on the reality TV series "The Osbournes," the Los

Angeles Times reported.

Authorities asked Dr. David Kipper to turn over copies of Osbourne's medical records and scheduled a meeting with the British singer and his wife, Sharon.

Osbourne filed the complaint in early March, claiming Kipper had him take excessive quantities of Dexedrine, Valium, Zyprexa and other powerful medications.

Kipper's attorney, John D. Harwell, said the doctor is "always pleased to cooperate with the medical board." He declined to comment further.

Osbourne hired Kipper in June 2002 to kick a prescription drug habit. Kipper charged the Osbourne family \$650,000 for his services, records show.

■ **NEW YORK** — Drea de Matteo, who plays Adriana la Cerva on "The Sopranos," says she's a down-to-earth New Yorker who just happened to get a lucky break as an actress.

When de Matteo encounters friends still trying to make it as actors, she feels guilty, she told The New York Times for a story Sunday.

"I feel guilty toward friends who are still struggling and are probably way better actresses than me, too," said de Matteo, who lives in Manhattan's East Village. "Maybe it's because I grew up so insecure. I never felt entitled to anything."

Even so, de Matteo was raised on the Upper East Side and attended an elite Catholic girls' school. But she said she rebelled by spending time in Queens where her grandmother lived.

De Matteo's role as Christopher's fiancée on the HBO hit show has become a central part of the plot this season. The FBI is forcing Adriana to inform on Christopher and his mob cohorts.

Last week, de Matteo landed the part of Matt LeBlanc's sister on "Joey," a "Friends" spinoff planned for fall.

■ **DALLAS** — More than 500 people eager to win \$1 million from Mark Cuban attended an open casting call for the Dallas Mavericks owner's upcoming reality

television show.

Sixteen people will be chosen from auditions in five cities and from submitted video applications. But there's still no word on what it will take to win the money on the ABC show "The Benefactor."

"It's like 'Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory,'" Cuban told the Dallas Morning News for its Sunday editions. "When you walked into Willy's factory, you had no idea what the game was."

Contestants will live in a Dallas house for three weeks and participate in activities Cuban devises.

"The game is: What's Mark looking for?" executive producer Clay Newbill said. "Mark Cuban is our show."

Taping is expected to begin this month with the show's eight episodes expected to air in August or September. Newbill said the show is in negotiations for the house that contestants will live in, but he wouldn't reveal its location.

■ **BEVERLY HILLS** — He was a cowboy, a Green Beret, a jet pilot and a detective during his long acting career. Now, John Wayne will grace a postage stamp.

The United States Postal Service unveiled its annual "Legends of Hollywood" commemorative postage stamp Saturday night at a private fund-raiser.

The fund-raiser was for the John Wayne Cancer Institute and was held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

This is not the first time Wayne's likeness has appeared on a stamp. In 1990, he was pictured on one of four 25-cent U.S. commemorative postage stamps honoring classic films released in 1939. The stamp featured Wayne as the Ringo Kid in "Stagecoach."

Previous honorees in the "Legends of Hollywood" series including Marilyn Monroe (1995), James Dean (1996), Humphrey Bogart (1997), Alfred Hitchcock (1998), James Cagney (1999), Edward G. Robinson (2000), Lucille Ball (2001), Cary Grant (2002) and Audrey Hepburn (2003).

"He would be glad to know he will be visiting the homes and businesses of millions of his fans every day," said Ethan Wayne, one of the Duke's seven children.

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