

FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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Disability committee again on council agenda

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

For the second year in a row, the Santa Monica City Council is being asked to create a permanent commission for residents with disabilities.

The council-appointed Disability Community Accessibility Committee will deliver the results of their six-month examination of city programs and facilities at tonight's council meeting.

The report recommends ways the municipality can make itself more accessible for persons with disabilities. Also, it asks the council to create a permanent commission representing disabled residents instead of re-appointing one every year.

Senior city staff members agreed with the results of the report and asked the council to create a commission of nine members that would work with the city on how best to implement federal and state laws that require equal access to public spaces and resources for the disabled.

Santa Monica is also waiting for the results from an independent consultant looking at ways developers who use public funds to build facilities, especially affordable housing, can make them accessible for the disabled.

Last year, the city council denied creating a permanent disabilities commission after it was recommended by both senior city staff and a similar appointed committee because the majority of council members thought it

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Santa Monica business climate begins to warm up

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica businesses and city government received a much-needed infusion of dollars during the past two months as a tourism gimmick and a major convention brought thousands of people and their wallets to town.

Officials reported that the American Film Market and a regional tourism campaign — the "LA Card" — generated nearly \$300,000 in tax revenues for the city.

However, the city still is projecting a loss of between \$7 million and \$12 million in sales tax revenues this year.

The LA Card was the latest pot-sweetener from tourism officials aching to lure potential guests to Santa Monica this winter. The program combined the lure of cut-rate deals with the exclusivity of an insider game — you had to show up at a participating hotel to get one.

The multi-million dollar regional advertising campaign was aimed at anyone who could get to Santa Monica by car — from Bakersfield, Fresno, Santa Barbara, San Diego, Las Vegas, San Francisco, Sacramento and Monterey. The campaign ran from November to February and offered 2-for-1 hotel rooms and deep discounts at local restaurants, as

Driving-up prices



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Charissa Saenz pumps \$10 of unleaded into her car at a Wilshire Boulevard gas station Monday afternoon. Saenz, like many Californians, is alarmed at the rising gas prices. "I'm very concerned," Saenz said. (See related story page 8.)

well as deals at the Santa Monica Pier.

The LA Card program apparently paid off in spades. The 10 participating Santa Monica hotels reeled in 2,847 room nights, totaling \$390,987.

In addition, the city's general fund was filled with \$46,918 in transient occupancy taxes from the effort.

The Santa Monica Convention and Visitors Bureau kicked in \$30,000 toward the L.A. Card campaign.

"This was a critical investment for all partners and together we were able to maximize our impact and exposure to the important drive market," said

See AFM, page 3

Man robbed at gunpoint

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

A Santa Monica man was robbed at gunpoint in broad daylight last week while walking downtown.

Santa Monica Police responded to a call at 12:15 p.m. on Thursday by the victim, who said he was jumped from behind and thrown to the ground in the 1300 block of Fifth Street, between Arizona Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard.

While he was on the ground, one of the suspects pointed a gun at the victim, while the other demanded his wallet, which he handed over. Both suspects then

fled on foot.

It was unknown how much money was in the man's wallet.

The first suspect is described as a muscular, black male, 30-35 years old, 6-feet tall, wearing a black, hooded sweatshirt, blue jeans, with a short, full beard.

The second suspect, who brandished the gun, is described as a black male, 30-35 years old, 5 feet, 8 inches tall, 170 pounds, wearing a black jacket with white letters, black pants, and clean shaven. He wore dark sunglasses.

While violent crime can strike any-

See ROBBERY, page 3

Ad campaign to feature NY mayor saying he enjoyed pot

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK— Mayor Michael Bloomberg will be featured in an advertising campaign by the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, the group said Monday.

The \$500,000 campaign will feature bus shelter signs and telephone booth posters carrying a quote from Bloomberg, when asked if he had ever smoked marijuana, declaring: "You bet I did. And I enjoyed it."

Bloomberg made the remark to a New York magazine reporter last year before he was elected mayor.

The Washington-based group is

using Bloomberg as the centerpiece of its campaign to urge the city to stop arresting and jailing people for smoking marijuana.

Bloomberg said Monday that the city would continue making such arrests, no matter what he may have said in the past.

"I'm not thrilled they're using my name," he said. "I suppose there's that First Amendment that gets in the way of me stopping it."

The mayor didn't say when he smoked marijuana.

The campaign also will feature radio spots and a full-page ad in The New York Times, but the group did not say if the Bloomberg quote would appear in those.

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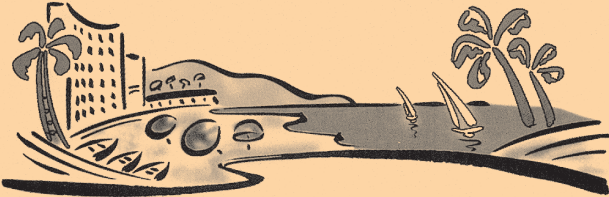
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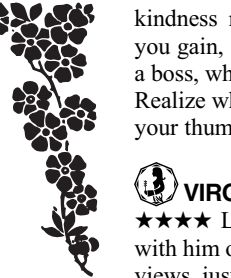
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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★ As resourceful as you can be, you'll get stumped by someone who seems to keep tossing a boomerang in your path! Your more-imaginative side emerges with a friend. Together you're close to unbeatable. Just be careful about what you agree to. Tonight: Take your time.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Someone puts unusual pressure on your finances. Take charge of a touchy situation, using your diplomatic style and ways. Others respond to you with ease. Charge another's imagination. Think in terms of gain together. Tonight: Listen to a pal.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Collect information that might be important. A situation might be more difficult than you anticipate. Loosen up and discuss a personal matter that has been on your mind. You actually might have been overreacting. Tonight: Burn the midnight oil.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Take an overview, especially with a health- or work-related issue. Your ability to accept the ups and downs, and look at them as the cup being half-full can make all the differences in the end. A partner has many suggestions. Schedule an important meeting. Tonight: Flip through some vacation brochures.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Deal with a significant associate with kindness rather than manipulation. As a result, you gain, as does the other person. Excess marks a boss, whether you are the boss or the employee. Realize what is going on. You might need to stick your thumb in the dam. Tonight: Dinner for two.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Listen to another, even if you disagree with him or her. Let this person express his or her views, just as you would like others to respond to you. Work with information, applying it to a key situation. Eliminate confusion by asking as many questions as you need to. Tonight: Where the crowds are.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Stay focused on work, rather than getting distracted by a loved one. Your sense of humor comes out with a close friend or associate. Your imagination allows others to see new points of view. Someone proves to be most thoughtful about finances. Tonight: Pick your words with care.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Be careful with finances. Carelessness could force you to revamp a money matter. You're vulnerable to allowing funds to slip right through your fingers. You might consider bringing more work home. Another supports you in this decision. Tonight: Ever playful.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You could be quite disconcerted by certain events. You might need to adapt to what is happening, even if you might choose not to. Review communication surrounding your work or health. You might have "selective" hearing right now. Tonight: Clean up the household budget.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You might take another's words personally, especially if you're not up to snuff. Only you know what is really going on with yourself. Be honest with yourself. You might need a longer-than-usual lunch break or, better yet, to take some extra time off. Tonight: Talk to your best friend.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Your imagination takes you many places. Tune in to a family member or add some of your creativity in your home life. A friend falters and might not come through for you, causing a problem financially. Be open to possibilities. Tonight: Treat another to dinner.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Review a matter that might be affecting your work abilities. Listen well to another who absolutely cares for you and will not give you bad advice. You might not "hear" what this person says; you might only hear what you want to hear. Tonight: Whatever makes the Fish smile.

QUOTE of the DAY

**"Youth is such a wonderful thing.
What a crime to waste it on children."**
— George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

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LOCAL



Write-in campaign, gay candidate enliven mayor's race

BY PAUL WILBORN

Associated Press Writer

LONG BEACH — An end-run around term-limits and an openly gay candidate have drawn national attention to the mayoral election in this waterfront city known for its port and aerospace business.

Popular two-term Mayor Beverly O'Neill has raised almost \$180,000 and won the endorsement of the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, the local newspaper, Gov. Gray Davis and both of California's U.S. senators, even though her name won't appear on Tuesday's ballot.

Under the city's term-limit law, O'Neill is only allowed to run as a write-in candidate.

Leading her in fund-raising is Dan Baker, an openly gay City Council member and vice mayor. Baker has raised

almost \$200,000, including \$6,313 from the national Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

"(His election) would be very significant," said Jason Young, of the Washington, D.C.-based Victory Fund, "Long Beach would be the largest city in the country to elect an openly gay mayor."

There are 214 openly gay elected officials nationwide and 165 of them are in city or county government, Young said.

Five other candidates for mayor are on the ballot in Long Beach, a city of 461,000. Unless someone wins more than 50 percent of the vote, there will be a June 4 runoff.

The Long Beach election is the most visible of several primary races around the state, including municipal elections in the San Francisco Bay area and throughout Northern California.

While some elected mayors, most notably in New Orleans and Tampa, have supported losing initiatives to allow them to run beyond their term-limited tenure, O'Neill's may be the first write-in candidacy by a term-limited mayor, said Stacie Rumenap, executive director of Washington, D.C. based U.S. Term Limits.

Long Beach voters turned down any change in term limits in elections in 2000 and 2002.

"While technically legal, I think she is totally violative of the spirit of term limits," said Lew Uhler, who organized opposition to an anti-term limit initiative voters defeated last March.

O'Neill is credited with helping the city climb out of an early 1990s recession compounded by Navy base closings that cost the city 50,000 jobs and a downturn in the aerospace industry. But her fund-raising is down from previous campaigns and even some former supporters have opposed her.

Baker, who was originally seen as the favorite, also has stumbled with voters after two negative mailers were traced to his campaign, said Adler.

His sexual orientation has not been an issue.

"I don't think most voters care," said Baker, who has knocked on the doors of 22,000 homes during his yearlong campaign.

O'Neill's candidacy got a boost last year when the city changed from punch cards to an optical scanning voting system that makes it easier to cast a write-in vote. She plans to have volunteers outside 50 top polling places to give instructions on how to vote for a write-in candidate.

Even if she doesn't finish in the top two, O'Neill, 69, said she plans to continue her campaign.

Council asked to create permanent disabled committee

COUNCIL, from page 1

was unnecessary.

Last year's commission wanted a broad role, but members of this year's commission narrowed the focus to the municipal level, said Santa Monica Mayor Mike Feinstein.

"Now they have it focused to what isn't being done by other city agencies and by the county," he said.

In this year's report, senior city staff members said the disadvantage of creating a standing disability commission is that its narrow focus may omit possibilities for collaborating with related groups with similar missions and issues.

For example, both the Social Services Commission and the Commission on Older Americans have addressed disability issues within their communities.

The committee recommended Santa Monica create a database tracking how all municipal-owned buildings comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including tracking all required equipment and features on city property -- like wheelchair ramps and restroom facilities.

The committee also recommended all city employees go through annual sensitivity training to improve their relationships and customer service with persons with disabilities in order to break down the "second class" citizen barrier disabled people face.

Another recommendation by the committee asks the city to reach out to landlords and businesses regarding upgrades of their privately-owned buildings so they are better suited for persons with disabilities.

However, city staff members said the time and funding needed for such an outreach program currently is not available. They recommended making the priority a long-term goal.

AFM brings in \$2M in hotel revenue

AFM, from page 1

Debbie Lee, director of communications for the bureau.

For at least one hotel, the success of the LA Card program allowed many people to keep their jobs during the tenuous travel season following Sept. 11.

"The program rocked for us," said Jodi Stone, director of sales and marketing for the Georgian Hotel. "Our goal was not to layoff any employees and the program was definitely successful. We sold 356 room nights at an average daily rate of \$100."

The 22nd annual American Film Market, held between Feb. 20-28, brought in 7,534 room nights and generated about \$240,410 in transient occupancy taxes, according to the bureau.

Although attendance figures dropped slightly -- about 4.5 percent from last year -- AFM generated \$2,003,424 in hotel revenue during its eight-day stay.

"AFM bookings were a vital spike in our business, especially during a down market," said Hany Sabongy,

general manager of the Best Western Gateway, which saw about \$10,000 from AFM business.

Inbound international travel has dipped severely in Los Angeles County, but Lee thinks Santa Monica's profile remains strong in key markets.

"Despite a more cautionary business climate and potential travel concerns from our 2,000 international attendees, we are very pleased with attendance at this year's AFM," said Jonathan Wolfe, managing director of AFM.

The AFM, in its 12th year in Santa Monica and the city's largest convention of the year. This year, 408 films were screened at 23 theaters throughout town for about 3,000 participants.

The LA Card program was launched not only by Santa Monica, but also chambers of commerce and visitor bureaus in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Marina del Rey, Pasadena and West Hollywood. More than 100 hotels participated in the LA Card program.

Hollywood generated 792 room nights and Long Beach brought in 702 room nights from the program.

Armed robbers take man's wallet

ROBBERY, from page 1

where at anytime, people can take precautions so incidents such as this one are prevented, said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega.

"Regardless if it's daytime or nighttime, people need to be aware of their surroundings," he said. "People are talking on their cell phones or daydreaming -- they do everything but pay attention."

Police suggest that people be on the lookout for suspicious individuals around them. If they feel they are being

followed, cross the street or go into a local business, Fabrega said. And always look at people's faces as you walk by them, it may help in the long run.

"The more we can narrow it down the better off we will be," Fabrega said, adding that often times victims can only describe their assailants by their clothing. "Clothing can be discarded. We are looking for facial information, physical descriptions."

Anyone who may have information about the April 5 armed robbery, contact the robbery/homicide unit of the Santa Monica Police Department at (310) 458-8451.

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STATE

Unarmed Minuteman missile launched in test

By The Associated Press

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE — An unarmed Minuteman III was launched early Monday in a reliability test of the intercontinental ballistic missile system, the Air Force said.

The missile lifted off from the central California coast at 2:29 a.m. PDT and about 30 minutes later its unarmed re-entry vehicles hit Pacific Ocean targets 4,800 miles away on the Kwajalein Missile Range in the Marshall Islands.

"The purpose of the launch was to test the reliability and accuracy of the weapon system," the Air Force said

in a statement.

The launch was conducted under the Force Development Evaluation Program. The most recent previous FDEP launch from Vandenberg was on Feb. 10, 1999.

Monday's launch involved the 30th Space Wing and 576th Flight Test Squadron at Vandenberg, the 90th Space Wing from F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo., and an airborne launch control team from Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

The U.S. arsenal of land-based long-range nuclear missiles includes 500 Minuteman IIIs, each of which is armed with three warheads.



The Associated Press

An unarmed Minuteman-three intercontinental ballistic missile successfully launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., early Monday morning.

Rats infest L.A. coroner's storage unit

BY LEON DROUIN KEITH

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Rats chewed on a dozen bodies in a makeshift storage unit behind the coroner's office, officials said Monday.

Some of the bodies had been stored since 1995 in the refrigerated, converted garage where 61 corpses were being kept because there was no room in the main lab, coroner's spokesman David Campbell said.

He confirmed the rat infestation after KMEX-TV of Los Angeles reported over the weekend that rats had eaten parts of several bodies.

Coroner's employees discovered the rodent problem in late February, Campbell said.

Damage included disfigurement to the head, face, neck, toes, hands and groin areas of the bodies, KMEX reported. Campbell would not provide details on the extent of the trauma, but said in some cases the rats gnawed only on the material in which the corpses were wrapped.

The garage is used for long-term storage of bodies that have not been identified, or whose relatives have been unable to afford burial or cremation, Campbell said.

Coroner's officials have notified relatives about the damaged corpses, Campbell said. Names were not released.

The rats may have flocked to the building after the demolition of earthquake-damaged buildings in the nearby Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center, Campbell said.

Exterminators were called to eliminate the rats and workers sealed a gap discovered between a wall and the floor, Campbell said. In addition, workers Monday were improving the seal on the garage door.

Since the infestation was discovered, "there has been nothing to indicate any new activity," Campbell said.

The coroner's office, which investigates about 20,000 deaths a year in a county of 9 million residents, is currently storing about 385 bodies.

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STATE



Senate votes to remove ban on cell phones in schools

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — The state Senate voted 38-1 to remove a ban on students carrying cell phones at school Monday, sending the bill on to the Assembly.

The bill would eliminate the 1988 state ban that currently prohibits schools from permitting the possession or use of any electronic transmitting devices, including cell phones and pagers.

The Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District voted in December to ban cell phones during school hours. Students can use their phones before and after classes, but not in between classes.

If it passes the Assembly next week and is signed by Gov. Gray Davis, the bill would allow each school district to regulate the use of transmitting devices to the extent necessary to prevent the disruption of school instruction or activities.

Hilary McLean, a spokeswoman for Davis, said he has not taken a position on the bill yet.

Cell phones have become a family necessity and the first device used in an emergency, said Sen. Liz Figueroa, D-Fremont. She recalled the 1999 shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., and how cell phones might have helped students call for help, as well as to let parents know they were safe.

“Having a cell phone handy gives students and parents peace of mind,” she said. “Schools ask us constantly for local control. We should give it to them without qualification.”

The bill was conceived and sponsored by students from James Logan High School in Union city and Woodbridge High School in Irvine.

“Technology is changing and cell phones are a necessity, they are something that keeps us safe,” said Christine Start, a senior at James Logan High School. “We felt we should change the law and make it work to benefit us.”

Senate passes bill for \$2.1 billion housing bond vote

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — The state Senate voted 27-11 Monday to send a \$2.1 billion housing bond to voters this Nov. 5. The vote follows similar approval by the state Assembly last Thursday.

The bond allocates \$900 million to build apartments, many along transit corridors, as well as \$200 million for farm worker housing and \$195 million for emergency homeless shelters.

It also provides \$290 million to help first-time home buyers make down payments.

The Senate’s Democratic majority prevailed in a two-thirds vote over dissenting Republicans to send the bill, SB1227, to Gov. Gray Davis. Davis representatives say he is likely to sign it.

“California has a tremendous shortage of housing, not just for low-income people but for people of moderate incomes,” said Senate Leader John Burton, D-San Francisco. Burton, the bill’s sponsor, added, “We are in some kind of recession and clearly there are no funds spent that

can generate more jobs throughout the economy than money spent in housing.”

As in the Assembly last week, most Republicans voted against borrowing money during an economic slowdown. With interest, the bill will cost the state approximately \$3.5 billion over 25 years.

“This is one of the most irresponsible things we can do in this Legislature, which is pile more and more debt to solve problems we’ve created,” said Sen. Ray Haynes, R-Riverside.

Republican speakers charged Democrats with years of over regulating home builders and siding with antigrowth forces.

State housing officials say the state falls about 80,000 housing units short of demand every year.

The housing bond requires a majority vote. On the same ballot this November, voters will also be asked to pass a \$13 billion bond to fix up deteriorating schools. In March, voters approved a \$2.6 billion bond to build and improve parks, preserve historic buildings and buy development rights to farmland.

Store credits ‘good karma’ for winning lotto tickets

By The Associated Press

SANTA CRUZ — The self-proclaimed luckiest place in Santa Cruz has sold a winning Lottery ticket — again.

A lucky somebody bought a “SuperLotto Plus” ticket worth an estimated \$31 million at U Save Liquors, but hadn’t stepped forward by late Sunday. Lottery spokeswoman Catherine Johnston said specific prize numbers wouldn’t be known until Monday.

U Save Liquors has a history of selling winning tickets, including an \$11 million lotto jackpot winner from 1992, a \$70,000 Fantasy Five winner in 1996 and \$100,000 and \$75,000 for Scratchers winners.

In 1996, U Save co-owner Lido Marietta told the Santa Cruz Sentinel the store just has “good karma.” The owners couldn’t be reached Sunday.

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STATE □ NATIONAL

Newspaper: Ski resorts pay cheap rent for federal lands

By The Associated Press

SAN JOSE — Ski resorts nationwide rake in millions of dollars annually off those who come to play in the snow, but many of those popular areas pay little for using the slopes on federal land, a newspaper reported Sunday.

More than 100 ski resorts rely on national forests, but they pay only about 2 percent of revenue for access, according to a San Jose Mercury News investigation.

Government reports have called for increased fees for the past 20 years, but in places like Sugar Bowl Ski Resort at Lake Tahoe, it cost the business less than a cent for every dollar earned in revenue last year. That's \$97,363, or 0.97 percent, of its approximate \$9.9 million in gross revenue, the Mercury News reported.

"This is the public's land," said Keith Ashdown, spokesman for Washington, D.C.-based Taxpayers for Common Sense. "One or 2 cents on the dollar to rent it is just ridiculous."

Nationally, the 136 ski resorts that operate on federal lands paid \$19.9 million, or 2.28 percent, to the government in 1998 despite having gross revenues of \$874 million, the newspaper found.

The ski industry says many elements, including unpredictable weather and environmental laws, factor into making profit margins less than 10 percent most years.

"There aren't a lot of people getting rich," said Mike Hinrichs, president of Boreal Ski Area at Lake Tahoe.

Others argue that the national forest land would be virtually worthless without the business the resorts draw.

"Vail is Vail because of the industry," said Geraldine Link, spokeswoman for the National Ski Areas Association in Lakewood, Colo. "It started out with bare land. It has value because of the industry, not because of the Forest Service."

"Look at the profit margins of the industry," Link said. "They are not that high. The question should be: 'Is it fair market value?' We think it is."

Nine resorts paid less than 1 percent for each dollar in revenue, including Utah's Snowbasin, which was used for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Sixty-seven resorts paid less than 2 percent.

Ski resorts rent areas from the Forest Service on 40-year leases, and they operate on 178,000 acres of federal land in 15 states. In 1996, Congress revamped the fee system, but collected less from the ski resorts than before, the newspaper found.

The payment scheme was based on lift tickets sales, lessons and other money collected from use of the land. Resorts with sales less than \$3 million paid 1.5 percent; from \$3 million to \$15 million, between 2.5 percent to 4 percent.

Tax time: The burden falls on wealthier Americans

BY CURT ANDERSON

AP Tax Writer

WASHINGTON — Another way the rich are different: They pay the lion's share of the nation's income tax bill. The wealthiest 5 percent pay more than half the taxes, while people in the bottom half pay just 4 percent.

The annual federal tax deadline for most of America is next Monday.

Two-income households are increasing, putting more families in the top slice of taxpayers. Millions of small businesses and partnerships are up there, too, paying personal instead of corporate income taxes. Many other people were boosted by the 1990s stock market boom.

President Bush's big tax cut will prevent the wealthy from paying an even greater share in coming years. But key provisions, such as the gradual doubling of the child tax credit, will reduce or eliminate income taxes for many middle-income people while the rich won't qualify.

"This trend is not going to reverse," said Scott Hodge, executive director of the Tax Foundation, a nonpartisan tax education and research group. "This will be the demographic for the 21st century taxpayer."

For 1999, the most recent year for which complete Internal Revenue Service statistics are available, 6.3 million taxpayers whose incomes were in the top 5 percent paid more than 55 percent of all income taxes. They had incomes above \$120,846 a year — meaning two spouses could each earn a bit over \$60,000 and be considered among the nation's richest.

"It's very easy to move into the top

echelon of taxpayers," Hodge said.

The wealthiest 1 percent — those earning \$293,415 and up — paid over a third of the taxes, while their share of the nation's taxable income was 19 percent. They pay income taxes at the top rate, now 38.6 percent, compared with a maximum rate of 15 percent for the majority of lower-earning taxpayers.

Taxpayers in the bottom half paid only 4 percent of the income taxes in 1999, according to the IRS. These 63 million taxpayers earned, on average, less than \$26,415 a year.

Going back to 1989, the top 5 percent income group paid about 44 percent of income taxes, the bottom almost 6 percent. At that time, the top tax rate paid by high earners was 31 percent.

Looking ahead, the 10-year, \$1.35 trillion tax cut enacted last year reduces income taxes in three steps, with the final step coming in 2006. In that year, according to the congressional Joint Committee on Taxation, taxpayers earning over \$100,000 a year will pay almost 59 percent of all income taxes.

Those with annual incomes of less than \$30,000 a year will pay about 4.4 percent in 2006, roughly the same as they do today.

In Congress, this disparity in the tax burden causes perennial political trouble for Republican tax-cutters because any across-the-board reduction meets with Democratic criticism that it would mainly benefit the wealthy while siphoning away money for government programs.

For that reason, many tax breaks contain income cutoff points that leave out the top income earners.



NATIONAL

9-11 dominates Pulitzers as NY Times sets record

BY DIEGO IBARGUEN

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Coverage of the Sept. 11 attacks, their aftermath and the war on terrorism won eight of the 14 Pulitzer Prizes on Monday to become the most dominant single news story in the awards' history. The New York Times won seven of the prizes — six of them related to the tragedy — to set a record for a single year.

Newsroom celebrations, particularly in New York and Washington, were tempered by the memory of one of the worst tragedies in the nation's history. At The Wall Street Journal, staffers remembered reporter Daniel Pearl, who was slain in Pakistan after the war began, and New York Times Publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr. called for a moment of silence.

"In receiving these awards, we are ever mindful of the shattering events it was our task to record in our city, nation and world community," Executive Editor Howell Raines told the staff.

The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times each won two of American journalism's most prestigious awards, with the Post taking the national reporting prize for its coverage of the war on terrorism.

The New York Times was awarded the public service award for "A Nation Challenged," a daily stand-alone section on the aftermath of the attacks and the war in Afghanistan.

Prize administrator Seymour Topping described it as "an extraordinarily powerful entry."

The section "coherently and comprehensively covered the tragic events, profiled the victims and tracked the developing story, locally and globally," the Pulitzer board said.

Among The Times' other prizes were awards in international news for its coverage of the war in Afghanistan, in explanatory reporting for its profile of the global terrorism network and in commentary, to Thomas Friedman for his columns on the worldwide impact of the terrorist threat.

Before 2002, the most Pulitzers won by one publication in any previous year was three, a feat accomplished by several newspapers.

The Journal, which had to evacuate its headquarters across the street from the stricken World Trade Center, won in the breaking news category for its coverage of the attack on New York City.

Jim Pensiero, vice president of the Journal, was subdued about the award, recalling the Jan. 23 abduction and subsequent slaying of Pearl.

"We were across the street from the trade center, we're still not back in our offices and in covering the story one of our reporters was murdered," Pensiero said. "We at the Journal suffered a lot less than people in the trade center itself, but it's been a disruption and a difficult year for us. It's very nice to be recognized in the industry."

In investigative reporting, three writers for The Washington Post won for a series that exposed the District of Columbia's role in the neglect and deaths of 229 children placed in protective care.

"This is the kind of accountability reporting that's so important," Executive Editor Leonard Downie Jr. said. "That's why we're here."

Downie said about three dozen members of the Post staff contributed to the 10 stories, which were originally nominated in the public service category but were moved to investigative reporting.

Barry Siegel of the Los Angeles Times won for feature writing for what the board called his "humane and haunting" portrait of a man tried for negligence in the death of his son, and the unusual connection of the judge to the case.

Siegel told the story of Paul Wayment, who committed suicide after being sentenced to jail for negligence in the death of his 2-year-old son. The boy was found dead in the Utah wilderness after apparently wandering away from a pickup where his father left him to go hunting. Siegel wove in the story of Robert Hilder, the judge who sentenced Wayment and wondered whether he had driven the man to suicide, just as he believed he may have caused the suicide of his alcoholic father, whom he left behind when he immigrated from Australia.

"The story is about making moral choices and consequences," Siegel said. "Most people can respond to it. As a parent you can find yourself in this place. You read it and you want to reach into it and change it. It didn't have to happen."

In editorial writing, Alex Raksin and Bob Sipchen of the Los Angeles Times won for their "comprehensive and powerfully written" pieces exploring the issues and dilemmas facing the mentally ill homeless.

"We addressed honestly a problem that affects everyone in the United States," Sipchen said. "My guess is that it resonated with the board because it resonated with everyone."

The staff of The New York Times won the explanatory reporting award for its coverage before and after the Sept. 11 attacks that profiled the global terrorism network and the threats it posed.

In international reporting, Barry Bearak of The New York Times won for what the Pulitzer board called his "deeply affecting and illuminating coverage" of daily life in war-torn Afghanistan.

"As an institution, there's a tremendous commitment to covering the news. The newspaper is uncompromising in its pursuit of journalism at its finest," Bearak said.

The New York Times staff also won both photography awards. The breaking news award was for coverage of the Sept. 11 attacks and their impact on New York. The feature award was for photographs chronicling the "pain and perseverance" of the peoples of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

For beat reporting, Gretchen Morgenson of The New York Times won for her coverage of Wall Street that the judges called "trenchant and incisive."

The editorial cartooning prize went to Clay Bennett of The Christian Science Monitor.

The criticism prize was awarded to Justin Davidson of Newsday for his coverage of classical music.

Each award is worth \$7,500, except for public service, in which a gold medal is given to the paper. The prizes are awarded by Columbia University on the recommendation of the 18-member Pulitzer board, which considers nominations from jurors in each category.

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INTERNATIONAL

Saddam to cut oil exports in support of Palestinians

BY SAMEER YACOB

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Saddam Hussein said Monday he was cutting Iraq oil exports for 30 days or until Israel withdraws from Palestinian territories, an announcement that triggered an immediate increase in world oil prices.

Oil Minister Amer Mohammed Rashid said the cutoff took place as Saddam spoke to the nation at about 2 p.m. local time, or 7 a.m. EDT. Gulsum Korkmaz, spokeswoman for the Turkish state-run pipeline company BOTAS, confirmed that Iraq had stopped exporting.

Analysts have said such a boycott would not affect world oil supplies because other major members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries have not agreed to join Iraq's call and other producers likely would make up the difference.

The United States and Europe are the major buyers of Iraqi oil. Iraq produces more than 2.7 million barrels of crude oil daily, according to the OPEC Web site.

In London, May contracts of North Sea Brent crude shot up on news of Iraq's embargo by \$1.44 to \$27.43 a barrel on the International Petroleum Exchange. They settled back somewhat to \$26.98, up 99 cents from Friday's close.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange, contracts of light, sweet crude for May delivery jumped to \$27.20 before easing back to \$26.88 a barrel, up 67 cents from Friday.

Saddam said Iraq's top leaders met earlier Monday and decided "in the name of the people of Iraq ... to stop exporting oil totally as of this afternoon through the pipelines flowing to the Turkish ports and the south for 30 days" unless Israel withdraws earlier.

He said that if Israel had not withdrawn within that 30 days, Iraq would consider what action to take.

Iraq first called on Arabs to cut oil supplies last week as a way of pressuring the United States to force Israel to end its military incursions into Palestinian territory.

"The oppressive Zionist and American enemy has belittled the capabilities of the (Arab) nation," Saddam said Monday.

He said the Israeli move into Palestinian territory, which included placing Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat under virtual house arrest, was intended "to break the Arab and Palestinians will and force them to surrender with humiliation to the Zionist-American alliance."

Saddam has portrayed himself as a champion of the Palestinian cause, a tactic that has helped him break the isolation imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and the ensuing Gulf War.

President Bush has failed to win Arab support for another attack on Iraq, which he accuses of supporting terrorists and stockpiling weapons of mass destruction.

Saddam's unilateral oil cutoff could pressure other Arab leaders to take similar measures.

Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Friday that Islamic countries should stop supplying oil for one month to countries with close relations with Israel.

Libya announced Monday that it supported the call, in a report on its state news agency, JANA.

The first hints from Iraq last week of a

possible boycott caused a brief increase in world crude prices.

"The Iraqi decision will certainly have an immediate impact on the prices given the volatile situation in the Middle East and recent oil disruption in Venezuela," said Walid Khadouri, editor in chief of the Middle East Economic Survey.

"But it is not expected to impact the supplies in the world market."

Iraq, Iran and Libya all belong to OPEC, which pumps about a third of the world's crude.

**"The Iraqi decision
will certainly have an
immediate impact on
the prices given the
volatile situation in
the Middle East and
recent oil disruption
in Venezuela."**

— WALID KHADOURI
Middle East Economic Survey

Hans Redeker, a strategist with BNP Paribas, told Dow Jones Newswires that OPEC and other oil producers, such as Russia, likely would increase output to compensate for Iraq's cutoff.

Ali Rodriguez, OPEC secretary general, told Dow Jones on Monday he would consult all OPEC oil ministers concerning Iraq's announcement.

Last week, he told Dow Jones an oil embargo would run counter to the organization's goal of promoting secure oil supply and stable prices.

A boycott would be ineffective without Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who have rejected Iraq's call to use oil as a weapon. Many Gulf states depend on oil revenues for more than two-thirds of government income and cannot afford to stop sales.

The last time oil-producing Arab nations used oil as a political weapon was in 1973, when reduced exports caused a global energy crisis. Since then, the world's wealthiest nations have created the International Energy Agency to provide a cushion against any similar disruption.

Based in Paris, the IEA can tap into 4 billion barrels of strategic oil reserves maintained by its member countries. That's equal to more than five years of Iraqi production, based on the IEA's estimate of Iraq's output in January.

In November 2000, Saudi Arabia led the adoption of a pledge by OPEC and other major exporters that oil would not be used as a political weapon.

Iraq's trade with the outside world is restricted by U.N. sanctions imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. However, Iraq is allowed by the United Nations to sell unlimited amounts of oil to buy food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies, and to pay war reparations.

Analyst Khadouri said Iraq had earned enough under the oil-for-food program to ride out a month without sales.

INTERNATIONAL



Secretary of State Powell comes under Arab pressure

BY BARRY SCHWEID

AP Diplomatic Writer

CASABLANCA, Morocco — Arab leaders pressured Secretary of State Colin Powell on Monday to do more to halt Israel's military sweep in the West Bank in defiance of President Bush's fresh call for a swift pull-back. "I meant what I said," the president declared in the United States.

King Mohammed VI bluntly told Powell on the first stop of his peacemaking mission that U.S. officials should focus on a withdrawal, saying, "Don't you think it was more important to go to Jerusalem first?"

In response, Powell demanded "a clear statement from Israel that they are beginning to withdraw" from Palestinian-held territories and "to do it now."

Hours later, the Israeli defense ministry announced troops were preparing to pull back from two West Bank cities, Qalqiliya and Tulkarem, early Tuesday.

"It's a start," White House press secretary Ari Fleischer said.

"I hope this is not a little bit of this and a little bit of that, but a pullback," Powell said, referring to Israel's mixed signals. Still, he called it an encouraging sign. "I hope it's the beginning of further withdrawals," he added.

If Israel should pull back, Powell said, "the operation has entered a new phase" that could help him move ahead in peacemaking.

Powell rejected any suggestion that the Bush administration was giving Sharon more time. "He's not been getting a free ride," he said.

The secretary of state's comments came after he held a critical 2 1/2-hour meeting with Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, whose land-for-peace proposal to Israel has been overshadowed by Israel's thrust into the West Bank and by the heated Arab response. Abdullah is scheduled to see Bush at the end of the month at the president's Texas ranch.

Earlier, after meeting the king of Morocco, Powell said he had spoken to Bush and "He is expecting efforts on the part of the Israeli authorities to start bringing this operation to some conclusion."

He said he also had asked the king to counsel Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to halt violence against Israelis. The secretary said he hopes to see Arafat later in the week.

Mohammed, the first leader to meet with Powell as the secretary began a trip aimed at halting the violence between Israelis and Palestinians, assured Powell that Morocco will be ready to act on Abdullah's proposal "without any prior conditions" as soon as Israeli troops withdraw from the West Bank and free Arafat from confinement in Ramallah.

In Knoxville, Tenn., Bush said Mideast peace will require leadership by both sides, as Powell was urging Arabs to help him get a cease-fire and start Israel and the Palestinians toward peacemaking.

"The United States is firmly committed to achieving peace," Bush said. "I meant what I said about withdrawal without delay, and I mean what I say when I call upon the Arab world to strongly condemn against terrorist activities."

Also on Monday, special envoy Anthony Zinni met with Sharon and restated demands for an immediate withdrawal from the Palestinian territories.

Powell acknowledged Israel's right to self-defense, adding, "But Israel also has to take into account the implication of its actions."

Mohammed, long viewed as a moderating force in Israeli-Palestinian relations, urged Powell to spare no effort in seeking withdrawal.

When the king asked Powell why he didn't go to Jerusalem first, the secretary responded that "we considered all options" but he wanted to go to Spain Wednesday to meet with European ministers before going to Jerusalem to hold talks with both Israelis and Palestinians.

The Moroccan king, speaking in English during a photo session, told Powell, "I wish you luck, because it is going to be difficult."

Powell nodded his head slightly and acknowledged, "It is going to be difficult."

Jordan's King Abdullah II, in an interview with CBS, said Powell must meet with Arafat or "it will show the



The Associated Press

Secretary of State Colin Powell, left, and Moroccan Foreign Minister Mohammed Benaisa leave Agadir's Royal Palace, Morocco on Monday after Powell met with King Mohammed VI of Morocco. The king told Powell on Monday that Morocco will be ready to act on a land-for-peace proposal "without any prior conditions" as soon as Israeli troops withdraw from the West Bank. Powell is expected in Spain Wednesday to meet with European Ministers before going to Jerusalem to hold talks with both sides.

Palestinian people and the Arab people that there is an unbalanced approach to dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian issue."

King Abdullah said of the Israeli incursions: "If this military action continues I don't think that the Middle East can handle this strain."

Mohammed reminded Powell, who is seeking to swing moderate leaders behind U.S. peacemaking efforts, that Morocco is a member of a committee in charge of activating the peace initiative adopted recently by the Arab League, the royal palace said in a statement.

The palace statement said Mohammed reiterated Morocco's "total condemnation of the deliberate Israeli military invasion" of Palestinian territories and "adamantly denounced the siege imposed on President Arafat and his collaborators."

Local sentiment was typified by an editorial in Liberation, a French-language Moroccan newspaper, that said that until Powell gets to Jerusalem "Sharon's killing machine pursues its awful job."

The king, who maintains one of his many palaces in

this southern coastal city, wrote Sharon on March 31, urging him to withdraw his troops from the West Bank. As many as 1 million Moroccans demonstrated against Israel over the weekend in Rabat, the capital.

"We need more responsible statements coming out of Arab capitals," Powell said Sunday before embarking on his mission.

Powell is on a trip to the Middle East and Europe that will include a meeting with Sharon in Jerusalem. Before his statement Monday that he hoped to meet with Arafat, Powell had said there would be such a meeting only "if circumstances permit" — depending on security, access and the agenda.

Israel has confined Arafat to his compound in Ramallah.

Sharon said in a speech Monday to Israel's Parliament that while his military campaign was limited in time, it would not end until the Palestinian militias had been crushed. He also said he would be willing to meet with Arab leaders to discuss a Mideast peace agreement.

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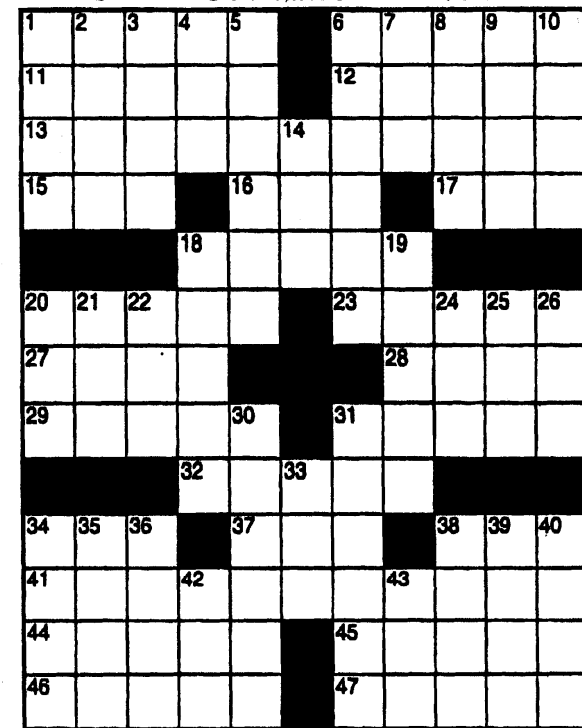
CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Cooking amount
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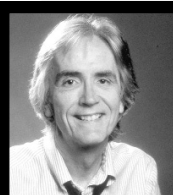
DOWN

- 2 Trebek of "Jeopardy!"
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- 5 Carpentry need
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- 9 Paquin of "The Piano"
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- 25 Ram's mate
- 26 Polite address
- 30 Some tickets
- 31 Saffron-flavored dish
- 33 Ring of flowers
- 34 Whirled
- 35 Cry of despair
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- 39 Buffalo's lake
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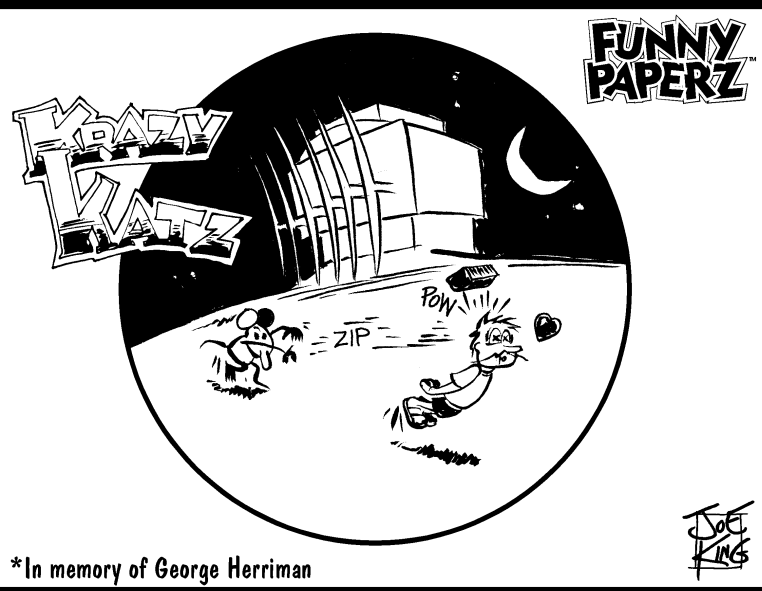


NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Could you repeat the question, please?

Arson defendant Steven McDonald, 47, was acting as his own lawyer at his trial in Mount Vernon, Wash., in February, and when he took the witness stand, he used the simplistic tactic of posing his questions, as the lawyer, to "Mr. McDonald," the accused perpetrator. However, since a key police witness had testified earlier that he saw the arsonist "arguing with himself" at the crime scene, McDonald the "lawyer" sought to get his "client" to say the perpetrator could not have been him and must have been someone else: "Mr. McDonald," he asked, "have you ever talked to yourself?"



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Guest Houses

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Roommates

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WESTWOOD \$450.00 Private bedroom, r/s, balcony, carpets, A/C, fireplace, laundry, parking. Westside Rentals 395-RENT.

WESTWOOD \$450.00 Private bedroom, r/s, patio, hardwood floors, fireplace, laundry, parking. Westside Rentals 395-RENT.

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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001 Announcements	200 For Sale	500 Vehicles for Sale
010 Meetings	250 Wanted	600 Services
020 Legal Notices	300 For Rent	650 Health/Beauty
100 Employment	400 Real Estate	

A few weeks ago, the majority of the Team Members of the Doubletree Guest Suites Santa Monica, presented Management with the following petition:

“I am an Employee of the Doubletree Guest Suites Santa Monica, located at 1707 Fourth Street in Santa Monica, California. I am asking for help in stopping the local Hotel Union from visiting my house and harassing me.

I would also like for my co-workers that are pro-union to respect my opinion and leave me alone to do my work.

I DO NOT WANT THE UNION TO REPRESENT ME

I would also like to request that the local Hotel union remove my name from any petition or listings, which I may have knowingly or unknowingly signed. Also if at anytime in the past 18 months, I may have filled out a union representation card, I do want it back.

This note/petition is being signed by my own free will with no pressure from anyone.”

PLEASE RESPECT THEIR CHOICE.



Published by the Doubletree on behalf of the Team Members

