

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

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1-6-19-45-46

Megamember: 27
Jackpot: \$10 million

FANTASY 5

13, 18, 26, 31, 34

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 4, 3, 0
Evening picks: 8, 5, 9

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 10, Solid Gold

2nd Place: 2, Lucky Star

3rd Place: 7, Eureka

Race Time: 1:49.78



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

In a December profile, The Washington Post examined the breezy American history curriculum being sold to schools by presidential brother Neil Bush (more in the news lately for his messy divorce). The course's premise is that future "hunter-gatherers" (i.e., rambunctious boys) don't have the patience to read and should be taught by music, graphics and other techniques. For instance, the Constitutional Convention of 1787 is taught in a rap song, "It was 55 delegates from 12 states/Took one hot Philadelphia summer to create/A perfect document for their imperfect times/Franklin, Madison, Washington, a lot of the cats/Who used to be in the Continental Congress way back."



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Too bad all the people who should be running the country are busy driving taxicabs and cutting hair."

— George Burns



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People in the News

Jayson Williams reproduces 16

City Hall considers silencing SM to cut through red tape

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

COUNCIL CHAMBER — The idea of stifling public comment so developers can get their projects approved faster isn't sitting well with local leaders or community activists.

A proposal to skip review by some City Hall advisory commissions for development projects throughout Santa Monica was presented in front of the City Council Tuesday. But the plan was met with hesitancy from politicians and resistance from dozens of residents.

"I am absolutely outraged that you would ever consider abandoning the public process through the

residents," said one citizen, who suggested that whoever proposed the idea should be fired. "I am outraged ... that you are about to approve something that will affect this city for years, if not decades, to come."

But the City Council was only considering the proposal, which came primarily from staffers within the planning department. Council members, most of who said public comment on projects is essential to protecting the quality of life here, didn't make any decision. The issue was put off so it can be discussed further. However, the council did direct staff to come back at a later date with a proposal.

See DEVELOPMENT, page 8

SMPD offer \$25,000 reward in murder case

Jalonnice Carter was
gunned down in
September of 2003

By Daily Press staff

Still searching for clues after more than seven months, police on Tuesday were authorized to offer a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person who killed a Santa Monica teenager last year.

Jalonnice Carter, 19, was shot in the back with a .22-caliber gun in an alley east of 20th Street, less than a block from the apartment he shared with his mother and stepfather. He died a few hours later at a local hospital. A few days after the shooting, police arrested a suspect, but prosecutors decided not to press charges for lack of evidence. The incident was the only homicide in Santa Monica last year.

Without discussion, the City

Council on Tuesday agreed to offer the money. As of last week, an anonymous tip line offering up to \$1,000 for information leading to a conviction in the case hadn't netted any information.

"I would've certainly hoped someone who had information would have come forward because it was the right thing to do," Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown said on Wednesday. "But I hope this brings people forward with information."

Anyone with information is urged to call the Santa Monica Police Department at (310) 458-8491. Callers who wish to remain anonymous, yet still become eligible for a reward, also may call the WeTip national hotline at 1-800-78-CRIME (27463).

"It is our belief that a witness or persons with knowledge to this crime would be of assistance in bringing the killer or killers to justice," reads a press release issued by the SMPD.



Jalonnice Carter

Rallying up the kids



Del Pastrana/Daily Press

Irene D'arcus, who has been a tennis instructor for Santa Monica Parks and Recreation for 25 years, coaches a class of youngsters at Clover Park on Ocean Park Boulevard on Wednesday afternoon.

Uncle Sam wants you to pay up, it's the American way

By Daily Press staff

Today is the dreaded day for every American — it's time to pay for all of those services you use that are provided to you by your federal and state governments.

Most post offices will stay open past normal hours to accommodate the influx of procrastinators who waited until today to file their necessary forms. The post office will have many of those forms, as does the Santa Monica Public Library. At the Fairview and Montana branches, most regular forms are available, but all of the 1040 documents are gone. The Ocean Park branch, on Main Street, has all of the forms, according to library personnel. At the temporary library on Fifth

Street, copies can be made for 10 cents a page.

For the past 91 years, income taxes have been due on April 15 for all employed Americans.

For the past 91 years, income taxes have been due on April 15 for all employed Americans. Income taxes have become such a common part of our lives that it is hard to imagine that, at one time,

See TAXES, page 9

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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)

★★★ Many of you will be handling detail work, be it involving your taxes or some other matter. You will get everything together, though you might need or want to work late. Work through stress by taking a walk or maybe even pacing yourself! Tonight: Get to sleep as soon as you can.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Where your friends are is really where you want to be. You might have to settle for co-workers and associates during the day. Working as a unit rather than many different people points you to success. Tonight: Splurge a little.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ You might want to take charge, and you probably will. You will have a lot of distraction around you, which could make it hard to focus on work. Be smart; screen calls and deal with personal matters later in the day. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Your ability to walk through problems and not get too emotional could be very important to you ultimately. Don't trigger, no matter how good, exciting or wild the news might be. Detach, think and observe. Well, try anyway. Tonight: Relax your mind.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Others want your time. How implicit you want to be in his or her request is getting your attention as well. Deal with others on a one-on-one level. Success heads your way with that personal touch. A friend might be put off because you are running late. Tonight: Quality time.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ You have a unique vantage point. You hear everyone explain the pros and cons of what they have done, what they are thinking and why. Dialogues could be animated, but avoid making a judgment. Tonight: A smile goes a long way.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Investigate a new opportunity that heads your way. Your instincts will guide you for the most part, but it would not hurt to check in with the experts. You might not like what you hear, but ultimately you will do what you want to do. Tonight: Let plans change.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Groups and meetings serve you well. Associates seem to have the same ideas as you. Success happens most naturally, taking you to a new level. Work as a team rather than individually. Could a partner be jealous? Tonight: Get into weekend mode.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Deal with personal matters as directly as possible. You might need to contain a domestic situation first so you can concentrate on your work and be more efficient. Others might be a bit touchy and contentious. Tonight: Happy at home.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Reach out for others at a distance. You might find out some news that will encourage you to reorganize your plans. Sometimes you get locked into black-and-white thinking. Take advantage of this opportunity to open up. Tonight: Join friends at a neighborhood haunt.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Expenses seem to be getting out of control. Carefully review a matter that surrounds a partnership and finances. You could be very happy with what someone offers. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth. Tonight: Just don't get too extreme.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Intuitively you make the right choices. How you deal with a loved one depends on how harried the moment is. Make sure to touch base with this person during a quiet moment and make plans. Ignore a family member who is on the warpath. Tonight: You call the shots.

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1427 Third Street Promenade, Ste. #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • www.smdp.com

PUBLISHER

Ross Furukawa ross@smdp.com

EDITOR

Carolyn Sackariason sack@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER

John Wood wood@smdp.com

CHILD DEVELOPMENT COLUMNIST

Margie Altman margiealtman@yahoo.com

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER

Rob Piubeni rob@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Michelle Oshry michelle@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Georgia Chudoba georgia@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Rob Schwenker schwenker@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Del Pastrana del@smdp.com

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Alejandro C. Cantarero II alex@smdp.com

ADMINISTRATIVE TRAFFIC MANAGER

Heather Rich heather@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE

Mitch Troy mitch@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE

Kitty Seeger kitty@smdp.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Mike Aviles mike@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Keith Wyatt keith@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Glenn Bolan glenn@smdp.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com

MASCOT

Maya Furukawa maya@smdp.com

LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Earth Day goes global on 'Net

By Daily Press staff

U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer is a politician turned planet lover. Boxer announced that she launched a special Web site in honor of Earth Day, which is observed on April 22. The Web site features more than 100 Earth Day events throughout the state.

In addition to California events, and recycling and conservation tips, the Web page includes the history of Earth Day and information about some of America's most well-known environmental stewards: Edward Abbey, Ansel Adams, John James Audubon, Rachel Carson, Lois Gibbs, John Muir, President Theodore Roosevelt, JoAnn Tall and Henry David Thoreau.

Visitors to the Web site also may test their knowledge with an Earth Day trivia quiz and click onto other links about their national heritage.

The page is located at <http://boxer.senate.gov/earthday/index.cfm>.

Inside Isherwood's Berlin

By Daily Press staff

A Santa Monica literary legend is being uncovered.

A diverse and prolific author, the British-born, Santa Monica-weaned Christopher Isherwood is best known as the writer behind the popular musical "Cabaret," based on his tales of Weimar Berlin.

But city officials are interested in Isherwood's two-part book, "The Berlin Stories."

On Saturday, Citywide Reads will kick off its community reading program with an ode to — and an analysis of — Isherwood's work. The presentation will be from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Montana Avenue Branch Library.

Entitled "Isherwood in Context," the presentation will include talks by assorted experts on Isherwood and Weimar.

Sue Hodson, curator of Literary Manuscripts at the Huntington Library, will offer an overview of Isherwood's life and works, emphasizing his youthful Berlin experiences, the real people behind characters like Sally Bowles, and his friendship with authors W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender and E. M. Forster.

Timothy Benson, curator at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, will give an illustrated talk that explores Isherwood's Berlin through the eyes of contemporary artists such as Otto Dix and George Grosz, who gave expression to the bustling metropolis and political tension that marked Berlin between the two World Wars.

Carola Kaplan, professor of English at California State University, Pomona, presents "Isherwood in Hollywood: Where the Wandering Stopped," focusing on the author's life, his literary and other writings, and his search for spiritual fulfillment during his years in America that culminated in his masterful portrait of life in mid-century Southern California in the novel "A Single Man."

Santa Monica Citywide Reads events are free and open to the public. For more information, call the Santa Monica Public Library at (310) 458-8600 or visit www.smpl.org/cwr.

Legal help on live TV

By Daily Press staff

Legal help has now hit local television waves.

The three attorney-hosts of the KRRLA "Legal Help Live" radio program on Saturdays at 10 a.m. will double as hosts on the small screen. Santa Monica cable television viewers will now be able to receive answers to their legal questions on CityTV's new call-in program "Legal Help Live." The program airs live on cable channel 16 on Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m.

Hosted by Stephen Solomon, Ralph Saltsman and Stephen Jamieson, attorneys from the Law Offices of Solomon, Saltsman and Jamieson, P.C., the program will provide practical suggestions to callers as well as provide commentary and updates on current pending litigation of interest to the public.

Viewers in Los Angeles also can see "Legal Help Live" on LA36, cable channel 36 in Los Angeles.

CityTV is the government access cable channel for the city of Santa Monica. The channel airs live public meeting coverage, local news, sport and performing arts.

surf report

On Thursday look for a mix of slowly fading SW Southern Hemi swell and NW swell mix. Look for knee-waist high surf at many breaks, with some bigger sets at standout combo breaks. Southern spots average 1-3' surf, with some chest high+ sets at standout combo spots. Look for light and variable winds in the morning to build through the afternoon.

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	8:45	-0.3	7:04	2.8	12:45	5.4	4:22	3.0
SUNDAY	10:16	-0.3	9:28	3.1	1:57	5.0	6:09	3.4
MONDAY	11:34	-0.4	11:30	2.7	3:36	4.8	6:55	3.8
TUESDAY	NA	NA	12:33	-0.5	5:11	4.8	7:27	4.2
WEDNESDAY	12:41	2.1	1:18	-0.5	6:24	4.9	7:56	4.6
THURSDAY	1:32	1.4	1:55	-0.4	7:21	5.0	8:22	4.9
FRIDAY	2:15	0.9	2:27	-0.2	8:09	4.9	8:47	5.2

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The Q Line

City Hall has recently started enforcing a set of codes regarding what type and size of signs businesses are allowed to have in front of their stores. Many business owners argue that enforcement of these codes is trivial and the city should focus on more important issues, such as vagrancy. The city says enforcement is important not only for aesthetic reasons but for safety reasons as well.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know:

"Are city officials justified in cracking down on businesses with illegal signs or are they diverting valuable resources away from the city's bigger problems?"

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.

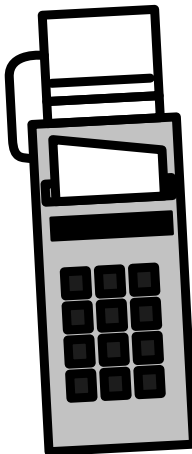
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LETTERS

Advocates muzzled

Editor:

The Federal Election Committee appointed three republicans and three democrats to a committee to consider new rules that would muzzle virtually all nonprofit advocacy groups — right in the middle of this critical election year.

Where are our inalienable rights to free speech? Will they only be permitted from the church pulpit?

Flo Ginsburg
Santa Monica

A scary City Hall

Editor:

Thanks for the thought-provoking article, in which Bill Bauer mentioned that the City Council in Santa Monica voted down the Target store because of traffic concerns (SMDP, April 9, page 4). At that, my amazement knew no bounds. Especially when what they approved for the same site is, “four, massive, five-floor, market rate, mixed use, apartment buildings..”

What amazes me is that the City Council must have made it clear to the prospective renters that they couldn't have the usual one or two cars per apartment. I assume that all the renters and folks making use of the word “mixed-use” part also will take public transportation and will not be allowed to add to the traffic snarl, just the people snarl. No? They weren't told that? You mean that Target's adding to the traffic jam was truly not the reason the City Council voted it down? Then they must have had another agenda. And if not, are you telling us that the City Council is that out of it that it actually didn't realize the massive apartment complex would add more traffic than Target would have? Either way, it's scary ...

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica



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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.

Ban on 'partial birth' abortion violates women's rights

A law banning “partial-birth” abortions — passed by Congress last year — is facing simultaneous legal challenges in San Francisco, New York and Omaha. Such a ban constitutes a grave threat to women's health and a violation of their rights and should be struck down.

When abortion was illegal in America, many women died or suffered serious medical problems from either self-induced or illegal “back-alley” abortions. Women streamed into emergency rooms with punctured wombs, massive bleeding and rampant infections.

Thanks to the Roe vs. Wade (1973) Supreme Court decision, women today have access to safe abortions by medical-trained professionals under sanitary conditions. But anti-abortionists are changing all this.

A law banning “partial-birth” abortions establishes a precedent for criminalizing other types of abortion — as America slides down the dangerous slope to “back-alley” abortions. Those who are truly pro-life must grasp the ominous implications of and underlying motives behind such anti-abortion laws before it's too late.

“Partial-birth” abortion, most commonly known as intact dilation and extraction (D&X), is designed primarily to be used in the case of 5- and 6-month-old fetuses that are dying, malformed, or threatening the woman's health or life. The procedure involves pulling the fetus from the womb,

except for the head, which is too large to pass without injuring the woman. The head is then collapsed to allow removal. This procedure is designed for the maximum protection of the woman. The late-term alternative to D&X, one that doesn't require partial removal, involves dismembering the fetus in the womb before extraction — a much riskier procedure.

Anti-abortionists coined the term “partial birth” to suggest that the partially removed fetus is no longer “unborn,” and, therefore, Roe vs. Wade no longer applies — so they allege. But linguistic manipulation can't create an essential distinction when none exists. A woman has a right to her own body, and if she chooses to abort, then all effort should be made to protect the woman from injury. To rule otherwise is to negate this right.

Banning any type of abortion to “protect the fetus” necessarily grants rights to the fetus — an utter perversion of individual rights. If a woman has no right to her own body, then by what logic does a fetus — which, by definition, is a biological parasite — have a right to the woman's body? Properly, an infant's rights begin after the fetus is removed from the mother's body.

It is a woman's individual rights — to her life, to her liberty, and to the pursuit of her happiness — that sanctions her right to

have an abortion. Once “fetal rights” are granted to one stage of the pregnancy, nothing will prevent their extension to all stages. “Fetal rights” are a gimmick to destroy a woman's individual rights.

Tragically, many “pro-choicers” have conceded the “partial-birth” debate to the anti-abortionists and accept a ban as a compromise (and merely quibble about its scope). Such “pro-choicers” have apparently been hoodwinked by the anti-abortionists' strategy of emotionalism and evasion designed to disguise their deeper purpose.

The anti-abortionists' strategy involves focusing solely on the fetus and describing the abortion in gruesome detail. Their professed compassion for the fetus apparently leaves no room for considering the woman's health and happiness. For them, waving a picture of a bloody, mangled fetus constitutes an argument. If so, then so does waving a picture of a woman whose future was ruined because she was denied an abortion — or of a woman bloody and mangled by a “back-alley” abortion.

A picture is not an argument — and should not be allowed as a cover-up.

Although anti-abortionists' attacks are primarily focused on rarely performed late-term abortions, they zealously want all abortions banned. Helen Alvare, a

spokeswoman for the Catholic Bishops and a staunch enemy of D&X, has declared, “In a moral sense all abortions are equally awful.”

According to anti-abortionists' dogma, God places the soul in the womb at conception. Hence, via a leap of faith, the fertilized egg — a tiny cell — is granted the status of human being. At that moment, the woman's status is demoted to that of slave and breeding mare — and her womb becomes God's property — which, in practice, means the government's property. The rights of the woman have therefore been sacrificed to the alleged rights of the fetus. According to this dogma, abortion is murder at any stage of the pregnancy, which explains why some “pro-lifers” feel morally sanctioned to kill doctors and bomb abortion clinics.

The anti-abortionists' war against “partial-birth” abortions is a smokescreen to ban all abortions. Abortion is a woman's moral right. “Pro-choicers” must reject compromise and fight any law prohibiting abortion on principle — the principle of individual rights — the principle upon which this pro-rights country was founded.

(Glenn Woiceshyn is a writer for the Ayn Rand Institute (www.aynrand.org) in Irvine. The Institute promotes the philosophy of Ayn Rand, author of “Atlas Shrugged” and “The Fountainhead.” Send reactions to reaction@aynrand.org.)

Guest Commentary

By Glenn Woiceshyn

CREATE SOME DIALOGUE. YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

Please send letters to: Santa Monica Daily Press
Att. Editor: 1427 Third Street Promenade Suite 202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • sack@smdp.com

Santa Monica road safety 101: \$181 should cover it



By Amy Perritt

For a time after she moved here, my neighbor automatically built \$50 into her budget for the parking tickets she started

Three years ago a colleague of mine received a \$300 ticket in the mail for running a red light, and she still speaks of the incident to this day. How she came home to find a mysterious envelope. Inside was a sheet of paper with three photos exhibiting her in her car from different angles. "Evidence." She had driven through a light that had been red for .4 seconds.

No. They respectfully empower you to call the phone number or visit the Web site written on your ticket. There you will most probably discover your citation could take up to 21 days to be processed.

It's not their fault we continue to roll stop signs, sneak through yellows and speed. Come to think of it, the whole road safety lesson probably hurts them just as much as it hurts us.

(Amy Perritt had a relatively spotless driving record for 16 years until last week. She can be e-mailed at aperritt@hotmail.com).

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BUSINESS

Are you suddenly single? Steps to financial fitness



IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

By John Kim

No matter how well you and your spouse plan for the future, becoming suddenly single is not only emotionally challenging, but often financially challenging as well. The vast majority of women will be on their own at some point in their lives as a result of divorce or widowhood. What's more, the average woman's standard of living drops nearly 45 percent in the year following a divorce. If you are a senior citizen, the effects can be particularly devastating — 75 percent of the elderly poor in America are women. Fortunately, there are steps you can take, regardless of your marital status, that can help you toward the road to financial fitness.

The first step is to be proactively involved with the financial side of your marriage from the very beginning. Find out your partner's money philosophy — and share yours. Will you have joint or

separate checking and savings accounts? Who will handle day-to-day money matters and who will be responsible for paying the bills? Even if it's decided that your spouse or partner will handle the bill paying, know the account numbers and balances and know where the funds are going. Develop credit in each of your own names and discuss details such as a set amount that each of you can spend without consulting the other. Set aside time to discuss money matters on a regular basis. Don't wait until a financial crisis arises.

Develop a "life plan" that integrates your short-term and long-term dreams and goals. Think about the "essentials" such as retirement or funding your children's higher education, "luxuries" such as a new home or a dream vacation, or even starting a family business. Review your plan periodically and make adjustments accordingly. Should your marriage end for any reason, you should be in a better position to pull together all the financial details you can about your marital assets.

WHEN FACING A DIVORCE

Review your budget and determine whether you can cover monthly expenses,

or find ways to cut costs. If you have children, consult your attorney to be sure that your divorce agreement spells out who will pay what portion of childcare and education costs, including higher education expenses.

If you haven't already done so, open a checking account (check with your attorney first) and credit card solely in your name. Remember to protect yourself by having your name removed from any joint loan or credit card. By the same token, consult with your attorney before alerting any bank or brokerage account that holds joint assets to freeze those assets until a settlement or some mutual interim agreement is reached.

Understand your mortgage options and determine whether the mortgage should be in your name only or whether you should refinance.

Understand your retirement plan(s) as well as those of your partner. If you have not worked outside the home, consult with your attorney to ensure that your divorce agreement spells out your share of your partner's retirement and how you will collect it. Also, under certain circumstances, you might be entitled to receive your spouse's Social Security insurance benefits so check with the Social Security Administration to learn if you qualify.

If you and your spouse own a business, or your spouse is a partner in a closely held business, be certain that fair value is considered in determining the "true" value of the business.

FACING WIDOWHOOD

First and foremost, take time to grieve, to reflect, and to adjust emotionally. Contact your attorney to verify that the steps being taken are consistent with your spouse's will, particularly about funeral issues. Work with your attorney to probate the will and make sure all assets are transferred accordingly. Don't make decisions

in haste.

Evaluate your current financial situation. This should include a review of your household budget in the context of your household's changing circumstances. (If you don't have a budget, prepare one.)

As with a divorce, pull together all records relating to money, including investment information, bank statements, mortgage and insurance documents. Obtain copies of your credit report and make sure any errors are corrected. Change the ownership of any joint accounts to your name.

Sit down with a financial professional to review your insurance coverage and investments, and re-visit your long-range plans. If you don't have a long-term strategy, work with your financial professional to develop one. After all, you will need your assets to last as long as you do.

You don't have to undertake this journey on your own. A financial professional can help you explore options, assess your tolerance for risk, develop an asset allocation strategy, and help diversify your investments. The best way to find a financial professional who you are comfortable with is to attend seminars or to ask trusted friends. Don't be afraid to ask questions, check references, and examine that financial professional's approach and philosophy. These steps are by no means exhaustive, but they are a good start.

(John S. Kim is a financial consultant with Smith Barney in Beverly Hills. Call (310) 205-4939 or visit www.fc.smithbarney.com/jkim. Smith Barney does not provide tax or legal advice. Please consult your personal advisors for such guidance. Smith Barney is a division of Citigroup Global Markets Inc. Member SIPC. This article is based, in whole or in part, on information provided by the Women & Co. division of Citigroup Inc.).



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Bush's jobs, growth tax cuts benefit small businesses

By Hector Barreto

That does not mean our work is over. As the president has pointed out, there are still taxes that stand in the way

These tax cuts are all due to automatically expire unless Congress acts to make them permanent. Tax Day might not be a real holiday, but this year it will be far a less painful day for Americans and for America's small

(Hector Barreto is the administrator at the U.S. Small Business Administration).

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LOCAL

SM City Hall paying nearly \$200,000 to consultant

DEVELOPMENT, from page 1

al that includes a public review process and a shorter time frame for approvals.

The planning department, which has been understaffed in the past year, has recently been under attack by the business community and developers for being too bureaucratic and slow in processing applications, permits and approvals.

"But given the breadth and intensity of that criticism, your staff would be remiss not to have had highlighted the instant opportunity in achieving a greater predictability and timelier processing that are presented by adopting design standards," City Manager Susan McCarthy told the council.

As a way to shorten the time it takes to get a project approved, staff suggested that applications be administratively approved if the project meets agreed-upon standards. If the project meets those standards, no public review would be required by the Architectural Review Board. If the developer chooses not to comply with the standards — which are yet to be approved by the City Council — then a public review process would ensue.

Skipping part of the public review could shave weeks, if not months, off of the approval process for developers, and free up time for planners to focus on "bigger picture" issues facing the city. As it is currently, it can take up to 94 weeks for a developer to get approval. But City Hall staff members estimate that the process could be dwindled down to nine weeks if the developer meets required standards and there are no appeals.

"This is important to us ... we are going to be undergoing some very significant policy issues, and the majority of our time is spent on permit review," said Suzanne Frick, director of the planning department. "We are spending 90 percent of our time processing permits and not planning for the future of Santa Monica, which is of great concern."

Larger issues such as the land use plan need to be updated, and Frick's staff doesn't have the time to focus on them because they are dealing with minute details in development applications, brought forward either by neighbors' concerns or advisory board feedback.

And although most officials believe projects become better as a result of an extensive review process, some feel City Hall is overzealous in picking apart development applications.

Councilwoman Pam O'Connor said many times projects are held hostage in City Hall because the process is so long. As a result, staff and board members spend an inordinate amount of time reviewing plans on ad hoc projects.

"We have nurtured a culture of micro-managing," she said, adding significant time needs to be spent on larger policy issues that will attract more public input.

Others suggest that City Hall's own inefficiencies, particularly in the planning department, are to blame for the lengthy time it takes to get approval.

Darrell Clarke, chair of the planning commission, said his board recently approved a project at Second Street and California Avenue in one meeting. That same project was approved in one meeting by the Architectural Review Board. But the process took five months.

"What took five months? Something took five months," he said.

"We are spending 90 percent of our time processing permits and not planning for the future of Santa Monica..."

— **SUZANNE FRICK**
Director of the planning department

Clarke added that if the project is good and is compatible with the neighborhood, it shouldn't take long to get approval.

"The ARB doesn't delay good projects," he said. "Are we talking about suppressing public input from bad projects?"

Planning commissioner Jay Johnson said although his board agreed with much of the proposed design standards for residential areas, it didn't agree with eliminating public review.

"The effort was to front-end the process," he said, adding that the public should be able to comment on the project before the developer files an application. That way, the developer can address residents' issues before the project even goes for City Hall review. Under that scenario, there would be a 30-day period that the developer would use to tweak the project and then file for the necessary permits.

"Most developers will bend over backwards to accommodate the neighbors," Johnson said. "It would eliminate 90 percent of the contentiousness."

Design standards for both residential and downtown areas, which were created with the help of consultant Roma Design Group, went through an extensive public review that included more than a dozen meetings with residents, advisory boards and elected officials. Roma Design Group, which City Hall is paying \$193,400 for its services, also designed the Third Street Promenade.

The standards include issues such as the height of new buildings, how far from the street they are and how much open space is in front of them, among many other things.

Part of why it takes so long to approve a project has to do with the current standards, which many feel are too complicated.

"The regulations we have today are very, very difficult to administer," Frick said. "We believe the standards should establish a good project, not the process."

The City Council unanimously voted to discuss the standards for residential areas at its May 11 meeting, and the downtown standards will be put off until an undetermined date.

But whatever happens, the council appears to be fighting to keep the public process intact.

"I think it was quite a victory for community activists," said Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown, who acted as mayor at Tuesday's meeting while Mayor Richard Bloom is vacationing in Argentina. "I want to increase efficiencies within City Hall and not limit public comment."

So residents worried about a massive building possibly going up next to them most likely will still have a venue to lodge their complaints.

"We consider this our birthright in Santa Monica," said longtime Santa Monica resident Ellen Brennan.



LOCAL □ STATE



Lawmakers see possible vote on workers' comp plan

BY JIM WASSERMAN
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Although he said he and legislative leaders are "very close to agreement" on a workers' compensation insurance reform bill Tuesday, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger continued gathering signatures to meet a Friday deadline to put an alternate plan on the November ballot.

As lawmakers and the governor continued to negotiate, Schwarzenegger blamed attorneys for the "two or three sticking points" that loom over negotiations.

"Every time we get language, the trial lawyers, the applicant attorneys, come up and change it around and we have to go back," said the governor, campaigning for his ballot measure for a second day at a Costco store in California.

Schwarzenegger's appearance again showcased a massive signature-gathering drive financed with \$1.6 million from his personal political fund and millions of dollars more from insurance companies, banks, farms and other California businesses.

Yet as Schwarzenegger threatened to turn in at least 1 million signatures Friday, lawmakers also signaled hopes for a deal that the Assembly and Senate could pass by Friday and prevent a ballot measure.

As negotiators are expected to meet overnight Tuesday and into early Wednesday before taking a final plan to an Assembly-Senate committee Wednesday, Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, D-San Francisco, told senators to plan for a floor session Friday.

So far all sides are working toward a plan that would lower premiums paid by employers, cut costs of medical

treatment and bring more competition among insurers. But they're disagreeing over whether injured workers should see their own doctors or those recommended by insurance companies, and whether the state should regulate rates set by insurance companies.

"I, for one, believe we will not see the maximum reductions in premiums without rate regulations," said Sen. Richard Alarcon, D-Van Nuys. But the governor remains opposed, Alarcon said.

Schwarzenegger and lawmakers are racing along parallel tracks to see if the Legislature delivers a reform plan the governor likes or if Schwarzenegger will take the issue that affects about 14 million workers to voters this fall. The debate has sparked demonstrations, protests and news conferences while staffers of the governor's office and leading lawmakers continue wrangling over disputes between doctors, lawyers and insurance companies.

While Schwarzenegger said attorneys who represent injured workers, the California Applicant Attorneys Association, were causing delays, the group planned a new Capitol protest for Wednesday.

"Some of the stuff we understand to be in this bill is pretty horrible," said David Schwartz, incoming president of the association, responding to Schwarzenegger's criticism.

Schwarzenegger told mostly cheering crowds Tuesday at a Sacramento Costco that his signature drive is designed to "pressure" lawmakers to do something or "the people will straighten out this mess."

"This mess" is a 93-year-old system that treats more than 800,000 injured workers yearly, while mixing the nation's highest costs to employers with some of the lowest benefits to workers. Schwarzenegger and business

groups want to substantially trim costs of treating the 2 percent of workers hurt badly enough to miss work every year. But Democrats and backers, including attorneys, also want to rein in prices charged by insurance companies for the workers' compensation policies required of California employers. Their costs have more than doubled since 2000.

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Metro Briefs

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL

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Meet Metro Westside/Central

Get to know your neighbors. Metro Westside/Central is holding a community fair on Saturday, April 24, from 11 am to 3 pm in the Target parking lot at La Cienega Boulevard and Rodeo Road. Enjoy music, give-aways, a bike safety rodeo for kids and learn about Metro contracting and job opportunities.



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TAXES, from page 1

there was no income tax in the United States.

From its beginning, this country has been very expensive to run, and the government has been responsible for raising the money to pay those expenses. Before the Revolutionary War, whiskey and

tobacco taxes provided most of the revenue. After the war, however, the government needed more money.

When the country was young, it struggled to raise funds from the 13 original states — \$15 million from each state in 1779 and more in following years. The government collected the first income tax during the Civil War, but only temporarily.

President Grover Cleveland tried to start up regular yearly income taxes in 1894, but the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional. That meant supporters of the income tax had to amend the Constitution, which the government finally did in 1913 with the 16th Amendment. From that point on, Congress has legally been able to collect taxes on incomes.

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NATIONAL

U.S.-South Korea alliance grows touchier than before

BY GEORGE GEDDA

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — It was South Korea's biggest fear not long ago: Faced with a cross-border attack from North Korea, the United States would lack the will to come to the South's defense.

Nowadays, growing numbers of South Koreans worry that any crisis on the peninsula will result from an American provocation rather than aggression by their nuclear-armed neighbor.

The trend in sentiment is clear, and analysts see little chance for a reversal in South Korea's National Assembly elections Thursday.

Indeed, the major party most wary about Bush administration policies toward North Korea is expected to increase its strength in the assembly.

The changing South Korean mind-set was underscored last month in a report by the Rand Corp., a Santa Monica, Calif., think tank.

South Korean uncertainty about the future, the report said, "is heightened by a growing belief that tough U.S. policies toward Pyongyang constitute a threat that rivals the one from the North."

South Koreans, it said, are deeply ambivalent about the 37,000 U.S. forces stationed in South Korea.

"On the one hand, most South Koreans have said that U.S. forces are important to their security," the report said. "But on the other, they believe that the presence of U.S. forces may impede the pace of reunification or adversely affect other goals."

The study was based on South Korean public opinion data and on Rand's participation in two September 2003 opinion polls with the JoongAng Ilbo newspaper of Seoul and the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The study showed that older South Koreans are more pro-U.S. than the younger set, which has no memories of the American sacrifices of the Korean War.

Says Don Oberdorfer, an international studies specialist at Johns Hopkins University who wrote "The Two Koreas," about the peninsula's late 20th century

history: "The younger generation has little, if any, fear of North Korea. The main fear is that a dangerous situation will develop not because of North Korea but because of the U.S."

"The younger (S. Korean) generation has little, if any, fear of North Korea."

— **DON OBERDORFER**

International studies specialist,
Johns Hopkins University

The 1950-53 Korean War, in which more than 36,500 Americans died, began when North Korean troops poured across the 38th parallel dividing the two states. The truce stopped the fighting, but meetings at the truce line to reach a permanent peace continue.

South Koreans demonstrated their leanness about the United States with the election of the dovish Kim Dae-jung as president in 1998. This drift was accelerated in December of 2002 when voters chose as president Roh Moo Hyun, who vowed not to kowtow to the United States.

The opposition-led National Assembly impeached and suspended Roh in March, which proved to be widely unpopular among voters. The impeachment is now in the courts, and Roh has said he will step down if his Uri Party fares poorly Thursday. Polls indicate that outcome is unlikely.

The United States and South Korea agree that North Korea should eliminate its nuclear weapons, but tactical differences exist on how to deal with the North. Vice President Dick Cheney will raise these issues during a visit Friday to Seoul.

Henry Sokolski, of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, said North Korean propaganda has been influencing South Korean public opinion.

"The North Koreans have been talking about Americans being a source of war and instability on the peninsula," Sokolski said. "A lot of young people read this and believe it."

Vegas Strip resort plans reopening after power outage

BY KEN RITTER

Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Electricity was restored early Wednesday to the Bellagio hotel-casino, but officials planned a day of testing and preparation before reopening the luxury resort following a crippling power outage.

Computerized sensor, security and control systems were being brought back in phases, and the famous "Dancing Waters" fountains were due for testing before resuming regular operations on the Las Vegas Strip, said Alan Feldman, spokesman for MGM Mirage, parent company of the at the 3,000-room hotel.

The casino, rooms, conservatory and casual restaurants would be ready for the 5 p.m. reopening, Feldman said, although the hotel's gourmet eateries won't reopen until Thursday because of required preparation time. Officials were still deciding

Wednesday when the hotel art gallery would reopen and performances of the Cirque du Soleil would resume.

Authorities have not said what caused the 2 a.m. Easter Sunday power outage at the \$1.6 billion resort, although hotel and Nevada Power Co. officials called it an internal problem at the resort.

Feldman said authorities found no evidence of sabotage or a criminal act. No injuries or thefts were reported.

To replace the cables, the hotel had to shut off all power, including backup electricity, because the two line run in the same conduit.

Feldman said the financial effect of the outage had not been calculated, but said losses were likely to be more than \$1 million a day. He said the property has insurance for business interruptions.

State gambling officials were expected to supervise the casino's reopening.

WORLD BRIEFLY

April deadliest month in Iraq

By The Associated Press

FALLUJAH, Iraq — U.S. warplanes and helicopter gunships firing heavy machine-guns, rockets and cannons hammered gunmen as a truce in besieged Fallujah was strained by increasingly intense battles. With more troops killed, April became the deadliest month for American forces since they set foot in Iraq.

Elsewhere, a 2,500-strong U.S. force massed on the outskirts of the Shiite holy Najaf for a showdown with a radical cleric, raising fears of a U.S. attack on the city that would outrage the nation's relatively pro-U.S. Shiite majority.

U.S. troops were holding back their full firepower on both fronts to allow Iraqis to try to negotiate a resolution, but President Bush said he was prepared to send more troops and had told his commanders to be ready to use "decisive force."

With the announcement of the deaths of four more Marines, April became the deadliest month for the U.S. military in Iraq — deadlier even than the invasion launched in March 2003. At least 87 troops have been reported killed in action in less than two weeks. Previously, November had seen the most deaths, 82.

Cheney urges nuclear discussion

By The Associated Press

BEIJING — Vice President Dick Cheney presented new evidence to Chinese leaders Wednesday on North Korea's nuclear program, suggesting it increased the urgency to restart six-nation talks on Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, a senior administration official said.

Cheney also told the Chinese he understands their opposition to U.S. armed sales to Taiwan, said the U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity.

But, the official added, Cheney informed Chinese leaders that the increase of sales of defensive weapons to the self-governing island was directly related to a Chinese missile buildup on the mainland side of the Taiwan strait.

Cheney met in separate sessions Wednesday with Chinese President Hu Jintao, his predecessor Jiang Zemin, and Premier Wen Jiabao. The vice president was then headed to Shanghai on an Asia trip that will also take him to South Korea.

The senior administration official said Cheney passed on to Chinese leaders new information obtained from a top Pakistani nuclear scientist suggesting that North Korea had at least three nuclear devices.

New Jackson abuse allegations

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Detectives are investigating a new allegation involving a person who claims to have been abused by pop star Michael Jackson in the late 1980s, a police spokeswoman said.

Jackson pleaded innocent to child molestation charges involving another alleged victim in Santa Barbara County. A pretrial hearing in that case is scheduled for April 30.

On Tuesday, Jackson attorney Benjamin Brafman said he was unaware of the Los Angeles Police Department investigation of the new allegation.

"We have never been informed by the LAPD of any investigation that they are conducting of Michael Jackson," he said. "I would point out that since I have been involved in this case I have addressed literally dozens of completely baseless rumors on a daily basis, and this appears to be just another one of them."

The Los Angeles County district attorney's office asked the LAPD to investigate the allegations a month ago, said Mary Grady, commander of the department's public information office.

"The victim alleges the acts took place in the city of Los Angeles in the late 1980s," Grady said.

The allegations are being investigated by the Child Protective Section of the department's Juvenile Division. Grady declined to elaborate on such details as the age or sex of the alleged victim.

Officials hurling 9/11 blame

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Under tough questioning, top intelligence officials blamed their failed efforts to locate key al-Qaida operatives before the Sept. 11 attacks on poor communication and limited staffing.

"We are profoundly sorry. We did all we could," J. Cofer Black, former director of the CIA's counterterrorism center, told the independent commission reviewing the 2001 hijackings.

"The shortage of money and people seriously hurt our operations and analysis," Black said at a hearing Tuesday.

In a day of finger-pointing, the panel's chairman, former New Jersey Gov. Thomas Kean, said two scathing reports compiled by the commission's investigators amounted to "an indictment of the FBI."

The officials' testimony came in a week when President Bush said it might be time to overhaul the CIA and FBI and as commissioners considered ways to fix the terror defense system.

The bipartisan panel's hearing on Wednesday was to examine ways to prevent future domestic terrorist attacks, including possibly expanding the powers of the director of central intelligence and establishing a domestic intelligence agency, such as MI5 in Britain.

Asked about such an overhaul, Bush said Tuesday night that he was open to suggestions.

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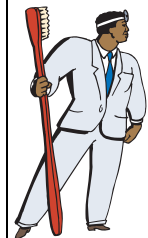
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Jayson Williams' daughter born amidst court proceedings

By The Associated Press

■ **NEWARK, N.J.** — Jayson Williams, in the midst of his trial on manslaughter, has become a father again.

Tanya Williams, wife of the retired NBA star, gave birth to the couple's second child Tuesday afternoon.

The baby girl, named Whizdom J. Williams, weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and was delivered at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, said Judy Smith, a spokeswoman for the couple.

Williams was present for the delivery, and mother and child are doing well, Smith said Wednesday when the birth was announced. The couple has another daughter, Triumph, born in December 2002.

Despite her pregnancy, Tanya Williams has been in court since the trial began Feb. 10, enduring the hard benches behind her husband. She usually sat with her father and other supporters.

Tanya Williams and the baby will be in the hospital for several days, and Jayson Williams won't be in court when a hearing resumes Thursday, Smith said. Criminal defendants are allowed to waive their appearance during a trial if they choose.

Court wasn't in session Tuesday in her husband's manslaughter trial because of a death in the lead prosecutor's family.

The judge is expected to rule on a defense motion to dismiss all charges against Williams. The trial has been suspended since April 1, with defense lawyers claiming that evidence prosecutors produced after they closed their case has deprived Williams of his right to a fair trial.

The prosecution claims the error was inadvertent, and that the case should be allowed to continue. Closing arguments were being prepared when the dispute arose.

■ **NEWARK, N.J.** — A judge has dismissed a \$100 million breach of contract lawsuit filed against Whitney Houston by an entertainment company that her late father had founded.

Superior Court Judge Francine Schott found that Kevin Skinner, who claims to be the current owner of John Houston Entertainment, had refused to provide information to the pop diva's attorney. Schott dismissed the lawsuit April 5, but her ruling wasn't made public until Tuesday.

John Houston, who died in February 2003, filed the lawsuit in September 2002 in Essex County, claiming his daughter failed to pay his company for representing her interests beginning in fall 2000. The lawsuit said the singer was in financial straits and facing marijuana possession charges in Hawaii until her father's company stepped in.

Skinner continued the lawsuit after John Houston's death, but Bryan Blaney, Whitney Houston's attorney, said Skinner refused to sit for a deposition. Blaney also questioned whether Skinner was John Houston's business partner and said he wouldn't turn over documents that proved his claims or showed that he had legal standing to continue the lawsuit.

Blaney also said John Houston Entertainment is no longer a viable business and that Houston's estate had no interest in pursuing the lawsuit.

Skinner told The Star-Ledger of Newark that he withdrew the lawsuit to avoid harming Whitney Houston, who recently entered a drug rehabilitation center. He declined further comment after being told that court records made it clear the lawsuit had been dismissed.

■ **LANCASTER** — A woman accused of posing as a manager for country singer Reba McEntire was charged with persuading two people to lend her more than \$3,000 under false pretenses.

Michelle Greene-Egberts, 38, allegedly posed as McEntire's tour manager and convinced an elderly man she could get him a job with McEntire's entourage, said Los Angeles County Deputy District Attorney David Fleck. The man paid Greene-Egberts at least \$2,000, Fleck said.

In another case, Greene-Egberts, also known as Mikki

Nelson, allegedly persuaded a woman to send her \$1,100 by saying she was stranded in Nevada, Fleck said.

Greene-Egberts was charged with two counts of grand theft and one count of elder theft.

She was arrested Saturday after the 77-year-old Lancaster man called police when Greene-Egberts never showed up with McEntire's tour bus as promised, according to sheriff's deputies.

The man had quit his job as a community services assistant in the Lancaster sheriff's station after telling staffers he was going to work for McEntire, said sheriff's Detective Brad Feehan.

Deputies tracked down Greene-Egberts several hours later.

■ **SANTA MONICA** — Singer-songwriter Sophie B. Hawkins won \$324 in small claims court for the early release of three advance copies of her latest CD.

One promotional copy of "Wilderness" appeared on eBay for \$300 in December, five months before it was to be released. Hawkins, best known for her 1992 hit "Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover," told the Internet auction site to stop featuring the item, and it did.

But the seller contacted buyers independently and sold two more copies, for \$12 each.

When the defendants did not appear in court Tuesday, Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner Roberta H. Kyman found in favor of Hawkins.

The 36-year-old singer, who lives in Santa Monica, said in a statement she understands why major music labels are alarmed by file-swapping and piracy.

"I'm not stressed about the one or two CDs here — I had to make a statement," she said. "I think more artists should take a stand."

Hawkins had said that if she won the case she would return the money to the buyers.

"Wilderness," which comes out Tuesday, is the first album Hawkins has produced under her own label.

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