

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

29, 19, 31, 35, 9

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 2, 1, 1

Evening picks: 3, 9, 2

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 5, California Classic

2nd Place: 2, Lucky Star

3rd Place: 10, Solid Gold

Race Time: 1:46.34



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Adding to the list of stories that were formerly weird but which now occur with such frequency that they must be retired from circulation: (Drunk-driving arrests of people who were leading public campaigns against alcohol abuse, such as Dr. James Billow, who resigned as director of a county alcoholism prevention program after being charged with DUI in February in Newark, Ohio. And the jewel thief who ingeniously swallows gems at the scene but who is then caught by police, who must wait patiently for nature to take its course so they can recover the evidence, such as Kevin Lynch's swallowing a 2-carat diamond ring from a Salem, N.H., jewelry store in February (which he passed two days later).



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"There's a lot of promiscuity around these days and I'm all for it."

— Ben Travers



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Smoking ban: What's next?

Local merchants fired up over the idea of smoke-free outdoor dining areas

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

SMOKE-FREE ZONE — With the smoking ban on Santa Monica beaches and the pier expected to take effect next month, many merchants and residents are concerned about where smoking will be outlawed next.

Other California cities like Davis and Berkeley have made it illegal to smoke at all public events, outdoor restaurant areas, in lines for everything from movie theaters to ATM machines — even within 20 feet of any smoke-free area — meaning nearly any sidewalk in a commercial area is off limits. Last year, the Santa Monica City Council banned smoking in all parks in the city.

City Councilman Mike Feinstein, who voted against the ban at the beach and pier, said last month he was interested in banning smoking in outdoor restaurant areas. Finding support from other council members may

See BAN, page 6

Paying the man



Nicky Five Aces/Special to the Daily Press

Carlos Antonio, Jr., a 17-year postal veteran, (right) assists Santa Monica resident Cliff Iwai with mailing his taxes on Thursday during the lunch hour at the U.S. Post Office, on Fifth Street and Arizona Avenue. Antonio, a 'lobby director,' assists patrons upon their arrival and before they get in line, a program initiated this year. April 15 is the single busiest day at the Post Office, according to Supervisor Marina McTaggart. In preparation for the onslaught of customers, McTaggart said the Post Office was open 30 minutes earlier than usual and that they had 'anyone and everyone who could help' show up for work. When asked to compare tax day to the holiday rush, McTaggart said, 'It's worse than Christmas because the people aren't happy to be here.'

Expert predicts big quake by September

By wire reports

LOS ANGELES — A U.S. geophysicist has set the scientific world ablaze by claiming to have cracked a holy grail: accurate earthquake prediction, and warning that a big one will soon hit southern California.

Russian-born University of California at Los Angeles professor Vladimir Keilis-Borok says he can foresee major quakes by tracking minor temblors and historical patterns in seismic hotspots that

"Even two years back it was practically a dirty word to say 'earthquake prediction.'"

— NANCY SAUER

Annual conference organizer of the Seismological Society of America

could indicate more violent shaking is on the way.

And he has made a chilling prediction that a quake measuring at least 6.4 magnitude on the Richter scale will hit a 12,000-

square-mile area of Southern California by Sept. 5.

The team at UCLA's Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics accurately predicted a 6.5-magnitude quake in central California last December, as well as an 8.1-magnitude temblor that struck the Japanese island of Hokkaido in September.

"Earthquake prediction is called the Holy Grail of earthquake science, and has been considered impossible by many scientists," said Keilis-Borok, 82. "It is not impossible.

"We have made a major breakthrough, discovering the possibility of making predictions months ahead of time, instead of years, as in previously known methods."

If accurate, the prediction method would be critical in an area like California, which is crisscrossed by fault lines that have

spawned devastating quakes over the years, including ones which ravaged San Francisco in 1989 and Los Angeles in 1994.

That has given credence to his research, which was endorsed by a state panel, the California Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council, earlier this month.

"Even two years back it was practically a dirty word to say 'earthquake prediction,'" said Nancy Sauer, an organizer of the annual conference of the Seismological Society of America, which began Wednesday in Palm Springs.

The UCLA team — made up of U.S., Japanese, Canadian, European and Russian experts in pattern recognition, geodynamics, seismology, chaos theory, statistical physics and public safety — says it has developed algorithms to detect earthquake patterns.

The experts predicted in June an earthquake measuring 6.4 or higher would strike within nine months in a 310-mile region of central California, including San Simeon, where a 6.5-magnitude temblor struck Dec. 22, killing two people.

See PREDICTIONS, page 10

Hollywood makes its way into California's capitol

BY TOM CHORNEAU

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Photographers popped their flashes as if at a movie premiere and anxious spectators squeezed to get a glimpse of Hollywood elite Thursday as Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger introduced five new appointees to the California Film Commission.

The appointments read like a Hollywood who's who list, led by Schwarzenegger pals Clint Eastwood and Danny DeVito. The others are actor-director Bill Duke, producer Tom Werner and producer-director Lili Zanut.

See COMMISSION, page 10

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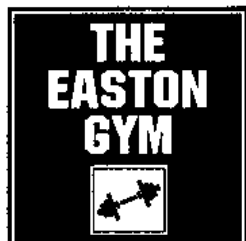


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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

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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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Be prepared for a disaster

By Daily Press staff

You never know when an emergency will arise in which you'll need to splint a fracture, rescue trapped people or put out a fire.

Residents can learn how to perform all of those vital emergency actions and many others at a free training April 24 held by the Santa Monica Fire Department. The one-day event will last from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Disaster Assistance Response Training is designed to provide citizens with the skills to save themselves, their loved ones, neighbors and co-workers in the event of an emergency.

The course includes hands-on training in light search and rescue techniques, shutting off utility connections, rescuer safety, extinguishing fires, and disaster first aid.

The course is open to all adults who live or work in Santa Monica. Call (310) 458-2221 to enroll.

SM gets a better brand

By Daily Press staff

One of the world's experts on branding will share his perspectives on what companies can do to separate themselves from the rest of the pack.

"An Evening with David Aaker," will be held on April 20 at the Fairmont Miramar, located at 101 Wilshire Blvd.

The dinner event is being presented by the University of California Berkeley Haas School of Business Alumni Network and sponsored by Santa Monica-based The Phelps Group.

The event is open to the public at a reserved cost of \$55 before April 16, or \$65 at the door. A \$49 rate is available for University of California alumni, members of the MBA Alumni Alliance of Southern California, the Business Marketing Association and the American Marketing Association.

The evening's activities will start with a cocktail reception at 6 p.m., followed at 7 p.m. by dinner and Aaker's presentation.

Parking is available at the hotel or nearby parking structures. Reservations can be made at www.thephelpsgroup.com/aaker.

The author of 11 books and more than 90 articles, Aaker has been called the world's leading academic on branding.

In Aaker's newest book, "Brand Portfolio Strategy," he discusses how to manage a portfolio of brands for maximum profitability, and shows how roles and responsibilities that support other portfolio brands create relevance, differentiation, energy, leverage and clarity.

Aaker is vice chairman of Prophet, a consulting firm that represents Adidas, Boeing, BP and Sara Lee. He also is a professor at the Haas School of Business, University of California at Berkeley.

Aaker received a bachelor's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his master's and Ph.D. degrees from Stanford University.

Whale watching for women's sake

By Daily Press staff

An Oscar-winning screenwriter has donated one of his works to breast cancer research.

Eriny's Productions — a San Francisco-based, all female theater company — will present the Los Angeles premiere of Anthony Minghella's play "Whale Music" at The Hollywood Film Institute located at 1223 W. Olympic Blvd. from April 23 to May 9.

Shows will be held on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and at 3 p.m. on the last two Sundays.

"Whale Music," written by Oscar-winner Anthony Minghella ("Cold Mountain," "The Talented Mr. Ripley," "The English Patient") focuses on the lives of five women.

The friends journey to the Isle of Wight, England, to support Caroline — their pregnant and single friend — as she prepares to give her child up for adoption.

A special showing will be held on April 25. Following a 5 p.m. matinee, a silent auction will be held at 7 p.m. Among other paraphernalia, the auction will include a guitar autographed by rock group "3 Doors Down."

The event also will include live music, paintings from local female artists and a cocktail reception.

Auction and show proceeds will benefit City of Hope Cancer Center's lifesaving research, treatment and education programs for breast cancer and other diseases.

surf report

The new SSW swell will build through the day today, looking strongest by the afternoon and into Saturday. NW wind and ground swell will start to pulse up at the better exposed breaks late in the afternoon and best Saturday. Expect 3-5 feet, waist- to head-high, occasionally 7 feet and fair-good conditions.

NW wind swell mix also will be in the water today, with waist-high waves at the good winter breaks and chest high-plus sets at stand out spots. Those waves start to pulse up by the late afternoon and best on Saturday with waist-chest high waves at the well exposed NW spots.

Outlook: Fun S swell will continue into the first part of next week. Look for fading NW energy by the end of the weekend and into Monday.

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

Today the water is:

62°

	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

SMC must bring back auto program

Editor:

I am writing to thank Lantz Simpson for writing "Rhetoric, not action, spews from SMC trustee" (SMDP, April 14, page 4).

The cuts and actions by the trustees not only affects students but businesses in the community. I graduated from Santa Monica College's auto tech program. Now I own Morris Automotive in Santa Monica and have employed several students from the SMC auto repair shop program. Some have moved on to very successful positions at local dealers.

I was shocked to hear that the college gave away all the equipment that the auto shop had after complaining that there was insufficient funds to continue the program. That makes me wonder about the real reason why all those programs were eliminated.

The auto repair business is very complex and getting more complicated every day. The college was a source for new talent. We need to get some trustees in there that will listen to what the community has to say.

David L Morris
Santa Monica

Columnist omits facts

Editor:

In his column "Intelligence failure for the ages: It's a Bush Thing," Ed Silverstein (SMDP, April 14, page 4) canonizes Bill Clinton the patron saint of anti-terrorism for achievements during his eight years in office and bashes George Bush for his efforts since.

Ed gives Clinton credit for uncovering the al Qaeda terrorist organization and for identifying its leader Osama bin Laden even though he was "hobbled by unrelenting Republican attacks." Wow! He fails to mention that this sleuthing may have been helped when bin Laden declared his Jihad against the U.S. for all to hear. Or maybe the clue was the first attack on the Trade Towers in the early '90s. Or maybe it was the bombing of our barracks in Saudi Arabia, or the attacks on our embassies in Africa, or the attack on the USS Cole. Ed forgot to mention all of these.

Ed did mention Clinton's decisive military response to terrorism when he ordered a cruise missile attack on the Iraqi intelligence headquarters in 1993, however, he failed to point out that it was done at night so the building was empty. About as effective as the missiles later lobbed at the vacated al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan and the drug factory in Sudan.

The fact is we are all spending too much time and effort looking in the rearview

mirror trying to fix the blame rather than fixing the problem. Unfortunately, the 9-11 Commission has become a politicized sham of posturing and finger pointing. Many positive steps have been taken to improve our security since 9-11 but I am sure we are just beginning and it's going to be a long war. Get ready, Ed.

Glynn Morris
Playa del Rey

Seeing yellow

Editor:

I'm truly happy to see that the city of Santa Monica painted the curbs yellow on those silly medians installed along Wilshire Boulevard. Now the tire marks of all the cars that have hit the medians are much more visible.

Deborah Klein
Santa Monica

SMC not representing students' needs

Editor:

I am writing to you in reference to an article written by Lantz Simpson called "Rhetoric, not action, spews from SMC trustee" (SMDP, April 14, page 4).

I personally graduated from Santa Monica College's automotive technician program in 1991. I currently own three automotive repair shops, Exclusive Jaguar Service, Joy Automotive and More Joy Automotive, located in Santa Monica and West Los Angeles. I employ 15 technicians and know the value of a good education since a number of my current as well as past employees were graduates from SMC.

I find it difficult to understand why a college would shut down programs that are obviously successful, giving students an education they can use immediately upon graduating. I also find it appalling that the college would "give away" over \$1 million worth of equipment rather than trying to put it to good use or sell it when money is an issue. I personally don't see the automotive program being reinstated after removing all the equipment and believe that was a big mistake.

The current Board of Trustees doesn't seem to be representing student needs and I believe that we need to elect others who will.

Emed Sidoros
Los Angeles

Salute to 25 years of 'good government,' SMRR style



**MY
WRITE**
By Bill Bauer

The Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights organization is celebrating its silver anniversary Saturday evening. Congratulations are in order for a job well done.

SMRR began as a movement to protect renters displaced by a condo building boom, evictions and dramatic escalation in rents. But, over 25 years, that has given way to political arrogance and a series of missteps which has turned Santa Monica into an increasingly crowded, expensive and unpleasant place to live.

Since SMRR came into power, Santa Monica has been overrun with vagrants and transients. SMRRs on the City Council "rolled out the red carpet," permitting food giveaways in parks and squandering millions of taxpayer dollars on ineffective homeless services annually.

Thanks to SMRR, there are about 1,500 criminals, mentally ill, alcoholics and drug abusers, parolees and other losers from out of town on our streets daily. Cheers to a leadership that intends to keep them here.

One of SMRR's goals is to get us out of

cars, on our feet, on bicycles or on the bus. The systematic reconfiguration of city streets to carry less traffic is deliberate. Traffic calmers such as islands, speed bumps, curb extensions, stop signs, roundabouts, uncoordinated signals and the downtown transit mall are in place to congest traffic — despite a nearly 50 percent increase since the late 1970s.

Kudos to City Hall SMRRs who think impeding and restricting motor vehicles is a good idea. Who cares if gridlock has made the city inhospitable to residents and visitors alike?

But why stop there? SMRR City Council members have approved parking restrictions for nearly 70 percent of our streets — contributing to a citywide parking crisis and making whole areas of town off limits to all but immediate residents.

Forget home ownership. Affordable rental housing is a key SMRR goal, so City Hall has amassed over \$120 million for the acquisition of property for low-cost housing and created the nonprofit, Community Corporation of Santa Monica, to build only SMRR-voter based, rental housing.

SMRR has controlled our schools for most of the last 25 years. Hats are off to the expertise and leadership that's led to a continuing series of financial shortfalls. The SMRR-dominated school board has

little interest in controlling spending or prudently managing the school district. SMRR school boosters would rather "tax and spend." The SMRR-controlled City Council would rather fund homeless service agencies than support our kids and education. Wonderful, huh?

SMRR leaders boast about how they've controlled development. However, the record shows the approval of millions of square feet of commercial, residential and office space over the last two decades by SMRR politicians. They're quick to support any large scale development especially when developers are willing to "pay off" with low-cost apartments.

And, a big salute to SMRR leaders for approving more housing in key commercial and light manufacturing zones. They obviously don't care if there's more pressure on schools and city services while viable job and income generating businesses are removed from tax rolls — further impeding city income. In one of the most densely populated cities in the country, residents' concern about over development is ignored because "agenda matters."

SMRR really dropped the ball in the mid-1990s. They rolled over and played dead while statewide vacancy decontrol became law. With local rent control hobbled and tenants largely abandoned for

greener pastures, power hungry SMRR leaders still use renters as bargaining chips to further their own political and financial interests.

In recent years, SMRR has coziered up to numerous labor unions and bargaining units. SMRR politicians sell out for campaign contributions and campaign workers. Remember the "living wage?" A union pay off. You gotta give 'em credit. Nobody's better at playing the system to keep themselves in power.

Finally, a toast to SMRR leaders who say they're "progressive." Too bad they repeatedly back "regressive," single amount, school parcel taxes, bond proposals and even annual rent increases that favor larger property owners and the wealthy while lowest income residents pay the most. Here, progressive is SMRR-speak for smoke screen.

Sorry, I can't make the party even though I'd enjoy seeing grown adults fool themselves into thinking we're all better off now than we were a quarter century ago.

In reality, a good idea has become corrupted and sidetracked. Personal agendas have displaced common sense. We can't afford another 25 years of this. Now, I'll drink to that.

(Bill Bauer is a longtime Santa Monica resident and a freelance writer).

OPINION



Leaf blowers must be blown out of Santa Monica

PISTACHIO PERPECTIVE

By
Susan Ann Connor



Good Morning, Santa Monica. As you are well aware, leaf blowers have for some time invaded our community.

"Rakeless" is the leader of the group, whose aim is to blast us out of the atmosphere with his air and noise pollution. Your mission, Santa Monica, should you choose to accept it, is to find a way to get rid of Rakeless and his team of leaf blowers once and for all, and to keep this city safe for desirable habitation. This message will self-destruct or I will, if I wake up one more morning to the odious babel of a leaf

blower. Good luck, Santa Monica.

Let's face it. No one likes them. And no one thinks they're a darn bit cute, either. Whoever invented them probably lives in a shack (a lavish shack) in the hills where grass never grows and leaves never fall. He (or she) no doubt spends the day counting profits and giggling at the fools down below, who either use, watch others use or worst of all, have to hear others use this abominable useless contraption.

It works this way. You turn the savage thing on, and the sounds of a bad heavy metal band blast forth, or call it even a good heavy metal band — this all depends on your tolerance quotient for heavy metal. Mine ain't that high. Air blows out one end, nasty fumes, the other. The user, presumably a gardener wearing ear plugs or a Walkman, swishes his arm back and forth, back and forth, moving the excess from one side of the street to the other, or

back to the manicured lawn that it came from. Sometimes a gust of wind comes by and takes over for the user. Lucky him. After several hours of leaf blowing, the user packs up his tools and rides off into the sunset to attack yet another section of Santa Monica, leaving our neighborhood air polluted, noise polluted and minus the top soil from our gardens.

Hmmm ... what is a pro-rake person to do? Hope it will just go away? Seek therapy? Become the first woman president for the sole purpose of banning leaf blowers? I'm not sure. But there must be a solution. It's not an impossible mission. We can go to the moon, clone ourselves, and create stealth missiles, but noooooooo ... we can't silence the feckless leaf blower. C'mon people. Scientists, engineers, mechanics of all ages, let us gather our wits and work together to stifle this insult to Mother Nature. Isn't she bashed

enough as it is? Can we not find a simpler way to gather leaves where they may fall?

We know you are out there. We don't know when. We don't know how. But we will find a way to stop you. You are an outlaw and need to be captured. We will find a way to dispose of you and replace you with a kindler, gentler jigger. Rewards for the creation of your surrogate are high, ranging from a lifetime supply of endorphins to becoming Trump's apprentice. So watch out. Your huffing and puffing days are coming to an end. This is mission possible. Time to come off your noisy pollutant pedestal to your proper place — on the museum wall. Lalalala ...

(Susan Ann Connor is a freelance writer and a longtime resident of Santa Monica. Next to leaf blowers, car alarms are her least favorite sound. Contact her at pastachiocolumn@aol.com).

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LOCAL

Beach, pier expected to be smoke-free next month

BAN, from page 1

not be difficult, as most of them are outspoken against cigarettes. Only one other council member — Pam O'Connor — voted against the beach ban.

The ban — which also outlaws smoking at public waiting areas, like bus stops — can carry a \$750 fine. It must still be voted on by the City Council at what's called a "second reading" before it becomes law.

Several business owners on the pier, who didn't realize the ban includes outdoor eating areas, plan to fight it.

In the meantime, merchants elsewhere in Santa Monica are worried about where smoking bans will be enacted in the

"Cigarettes don't fit in a perfect world."

— **ROBERT BERGER**
Director, COAST

future. When asked by business leaders last month about the Third Street Promenade, Mayor Richard Bloom, a leading proponent of the beach and pier ban, assured them it was not "on the radar."

Deputy City Attorney Adam Radinsky, who researched smoking bans in other cities before drafting the ordinance for Santa Monica, said there's been no discussion about banning smoking specifi-

cally on the Promenade, but added the concept isn't as far fetched as it may seem. He pointed to a ban in some cities that prohibits smoking within 20 feet of all smoke-free areas — including retail stores and restaurants — that could effectively make it illegal to smoke anywhere on the pedestrian thoroughfare.

California is at the forefront of anti-smoking legislation. Perhaps the fiercest bans exist in Davis, Berkeley, Palo Alto and San Ramon, where smoking is illegal within 20 feet of any smoke-free area. For Santa Monica that would mean stores, restaurants, offices and some streets.

By law, outdoor dining areas are smoke-free in Davis, Berkeley, Santa Barbara, San Ramon, Laguna Hills, Los Gatos and Dublin. Smoking also is prohibited in non-public waiting areas — like ATM and movie theater lines — in Davis, Palo Alto, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Goleta, Carpinteria, Buellton and Dublin.

Davis and Berkeley also have upped to 75 percent the number of rooms that must be set aside as smoke-free in every hotel. State law requires 35 percent, Radinsky said.

Kathy Dodson, president and CEO of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, said business owners have been contacting her with their concerns that the ban could spread. If it does, tourism could take a slide and if that happens, local merchants would feel the brunt of it.

"Everyone is concerned about it," she said. "They're worried about it being expanded everywhere."

For the moment, anti-smoking activists said they are only focused on the beach and pier. But, they added, it's unfair and unhealthy to subject people to unwanted second-hand smoke anywhere.

"Cigarettes don't fit in a perfect world," said Robert Berger, director of "Communities Organized Against Smoking and its Trash," one of the key groups behind the beach and pier ban. "But it's a matter of personal choice and if people choose to continue to smoke, they have that prerogative — but do it in places where it's not going to be an imposition on the rest of us."

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STATE



CALIFORNIA BRIEFS

LAX plan falls short

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The draft of a new modernization plan for Los Angeles International Airport lacks sufficient expansion protections, bypasses environmental reviews and fails to adequately address security demands, community leaders said.

Mayor James K. Hahn's \$9.1 billion airport proposal would be sharply scaled back and a massive offsite check-in facility for most passengers would be eliminated under Councilwoman Cindy Miscikowski's draft consensus plan for the airport, which was obtained by the Daily News.

Hahn's plan has stalled because of stiff opposition from airlines, nearby communities and others. Miscikowski began promoting her alternate plan after Airport Commission President Ted Stein resigned and probes of possible pay-to-play contracting practices were expanded.

Miscikowski's plan will be released April 22.

"What I've done, I've listened in the last number of months. I've talked to everyone, unlike the current commission that said it has to be this way. This does nothing but open it up; to change the direction of this big, huge ship," she said.

Phil Depoian, Hahn's new senior adviser on the airport, said the mayor's office is "very engaged" with the LAX issue but hasn't seen the draft of Miscikowski's plan and wouldn't comment on specifics.

A key element of the councilwoman's proposal would be elimination of the centerpiece of Hahn's security plan, the offsite Ground Transportation Center, a remote check-in facility more than a mile away from the airport.

Community leaders and others briefed this week on Miscikowski's plan said they could back some of the proposals but they were opposed to a process that would require approval of the environmental reviews necessary for Hahn's unpopular plan to move ahead.

"We have a problem with a 'trust us' policy," said Mike Gordon, the outgoing mayor of El Segundo and an opponent of LAX expansion.

Hawthorne bails out of restaurant health ratings

By The Associated Press

HAWTHORNE — The City Council reversed itself and abandoned plans to pull out of Los Angeles County's restaurant rating system.

Mayor Larry Guidi said Wednesday the council never intended to bail out of the letter-grade program, saying the threat was designed to draw attention to merchant complaints on how the rating system is managed by the county health department.

Last month, four of five council members indicated they would vote to repeal the grade posting requirement.

"I figured by making it a little controversial, the (county) health department would be forced to listen to complaints," Guidi said.

Pizza Show restaurant owner Gary Evans complained last month that he got a C and two Bs on inspections during the past year and he thought the inspections were unfair. Although his business now has an A rating, he had to pay for county officials

to come back and conduct a second inspection.

"It is so subjective," Evans said. "It is a snapshot of one moment, by one inspector, on one particular day. It's not a true representation of performance."

Evans said that he favored a ratings system but that grades should reflect performance over time. A letter grade is too vague, he added, because it doesn't tell the public what violations occurred.

Kid plans to rob fellow classmate of shoes

By The Associated Press

RIALTO — A 10-year-old boy brought a handgun to school and tried to rob another youngster of his shoes during recess, police said.

No shots were fired and the fourth-grader was arrested and booked for investigation of attempted robbery and possession of a firearm, Sgt. Randy DeAnda said.

The youngster got the .22-caliber handgun out of his uncle's room and took the loaded weapon to Merle S. Casey Elementary School on Tuesday, the sergeant said.

"He displayed it to students before school started," DeAnda said. "Later, during recess, he attempted to rob a juvenile of his tennis shoes."

The boy also attempted to fire the gun, but did not aim it at anyone.

"We don't know if he was trying to fire it in the air or into the ground," DeAnda said.

Classes were not disrupted, said Marilyn Cardosi, spokeswoman with the Rialto Unified School District. The boy could be expelled.

"The district has a zero-tolerance for weapons," Cardosi said.

Privacy laws prohibited Cardosi from discussing whether the boy has a history of being suspended or other disciplinary action. Because of the boy's age, the San Bernardino County district attorney's office wouldn't discuss the case.

"Anything regarding a minor is confidential," spokeswoman Susan Mickey said.

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Workers' compensation victory boosts Schwarzenegger's standing

BY TOM CHORNEAU

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO— Mixing Hollywood charm with political muscle, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has engineered a compromise bill for California's worker's compensation system, the most expensive in the nation.

It is the latest in a string of victories for the Republican governor, and observers say the wins could allow him to dictate terms to the Democrat-controlled Legislature on virtually any issue.

"Everyone is giving a wide berth to this guy. He's now viewed as the man who can make miracles happen," said Larry Gerston, a political science professor at San Jose State University. "He carries tremendous sway with the public, and the Legislature is almost in awe of him."

Schwarzenegger and lawmakers reached the tentative deal on workers compensation reform Wednesday. A legislative committee overcame lingering differences and adopted the bill Thursday morning, setting the stage for a Friday vote in the full Legislature.

"There's no question this is not a perfect bill," said Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, a Los Angeles Democrat. "What it is is an attempt to reach a compromise on a workers compensation system that's broken, a system that doesn't serve injured workers very well and a system that is costing a great deal of money with premiums increasingly on the rise."

Officials widely credit the governor with pushing through key elements of the bill.

Schwarzenegger threatened Democrats into negotiating. Backed by an unprecedented fund-raising machine that has brought in nearly \$11 million since the recall election, Schwarzenegger vowed he would take the issue to the ballot if Democrats did not come to terms.

The chairman of the California Democratic Party, Art Torres, questioned the effect of Schwarzenegger's growing influence.

"No governor has had at his command the rapt attention of the business community and the enormous donations to do as he wants," Torres said. "To use the initiative process and the strong-arm tactics that characterize this administration, I don't think it is right."

In the six months since he took office, Schwarzenegger has forced the Legislature to repeal a law giving driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants, approve more than \$1 billion in midyear spending

cuts and place a \$15 billion bond measure and a spending cap on the ballot. He then convinced reluctant voters to approve the bonds.

"He's now viewed as the man who can make miracles happen."

LARRY GERSTON
Political science professor

Schwarzenegger still has a number of issues he plans to tackle, including curtailing what he considers abusive lawsuits and a campaign finance initiative. First he will have to pass a budget, which most observers said will be his greatest challenge.

"The budget is next," said GOP consultant Dan Schnur. "But he's entering the budget fight in precisely the same way he's taken on each of his earlier battles. He's indicated his preferences, drawn a broad perimeter for debate and will end up getting most rather than all he asks for."

"Then he will declare victory and move on that much stronger," Schnur said.

Schwarzenegger will need the momentum, most analysts said, as debate over the budget picks up next month when he releases his revised spending plan.

Although voters approved the \$15 billion in borrowing to wipe out the states existing \$9 billion deficit and help with next year's programs, spending remains badly out of balance with tax income. The Legislative Analysts Office estimates the state faces a \$17 billion shortfall in 2004-2005.

Schwarzenegger has proposed a variety of cuts to virtually all state programs as well as borrowing and one-time solutions to cover the gap. He remains opposed to raising taxes as part of the solution.

Democrats say they would like a mix of cuts and tax increases but have yet to challenge the governor's spending plan in any formal way.

"The budget will be his true test," said Gerston, who expects that Schwarzenegger will eventually soften on the tax issue and force Democrats to accept a number of painful spending cuts.

If so, the governor will have once again achieved a compromise victory and enhanced his political mystique.

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STATE



Authorities begin drilling for cross-border drug tunnels

BY ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press Writer

CALEXICO — The U.S. government this week began drilling 20-foot holes behind a low-income apartment building in search of a tunnel that it believes may be used to smuggle drugs — and possibly people — from Mexico.

The offensive marks a shift in the government's efforts to locate the clandestine tunnels, many of which are ventilated and equipped with lights. Previously, agents have relied on human intelligence and sheer luck, such as when a Border Patrol agent patrolling the border fence in Calexico struck a sink hole in November.

Using technology developed by University of Oklahoma geophysicists, the Department of Homeland Security identified the possible tunnel, about 15 feet deep and two feet wide. Authorities suspect it snakes about 750 feet north of the Mexican border into Calexico, which is about 120 miles east of San Diego.

By mid-afternoon, a giant drill had plugged three holes, each one about nine inches wide, in a dirt road used by the Border Patrol. The crew reported a change in soil at about 14 feet and struck water at about 18 feet. They brought along a camera on a six-foot pole to scope underground.

"There is clearly something in the ground down there," said Michael Turner, a special agent in charge of investigations at Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bureau in San Diego. "We're trying to figure out what that something is. ... It could be water. It could be rock."

Homeland Security officials were mum on what kind of technology they used, saying they want to avoid tipping off smugglers.

"It is a non-invasive means of identify-

"There is clearly something in the ground down there. We're trying to figure out what that something is. ... It could be water. It could be rock."

— MICHAEL TURNER

Special agent for Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bureau

ing changes in density and structures of what's beneath the surface," Turner said. "I don't want to say if it's sonar, radar."

Calexico Police Chief Mario Sanchez, who showed up to watch the drilling, said federal officials told him they used a sonic recording device. The government surveyed about seven miles along the border, stretching from the backs of homes through downtown and out to the Calexico International Airport, he said.

U.S. and Mexican officials have discovered at least 10 cross-border tunnels since the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks prompted heightened security along the border. In the 12 years previous, there had been a total of 15 such discoveries, said Lauren Mack, a spokeswoman for Homeland Security.

U.S. officials stopped short of linking the tunnels to terrorists, but said increased border enforcement in the past two years may be forcing drug smugglers to be more creative. Each tunnel is estimated to cost between \$800,000 and \$1 million to build, said Misha Piastro, a spokesman for the Drug Enforcement Administration.

In Calexico, an arid town of about 30,000 people that abuts the large industrial Mexican city of Mexicali, city workers discovered an incomplete tunnel that zigzagged about 250 yards into a residential area in September. Mexican authori-

ties arrested four people where the tunnel allegedly originated, inside a rented auto repair shop in Mexicali.

The suspected ringleader, 27-year-old Raul Solano Zepeda, told authorities that he planned to rent the ventilated tunnel to a large drug smuggling ring, though he declined to say which one, according to Mexican investigators.

About two months after the tunnel was discovered, a Border Patrol vehicle stum-

bled on a sink hole about 200 yards away that turned out to be another tunnel. It was wide enough to fit a car and reinforced by steel mesh and tubes, but it got washed out by water, according to the Mexican official. No arrests have been made in that case.

The city of Calexico paid about \$12,000 to excavate the two tunnels but balked at paying more when Homeland Security told the city two weeks ago that they may have identified a third. Homeland Security agreed to pick up the \$2,000 tab for Tuesday's drill.

Homeland Security officials said they didn't notify Mexican authorities or the DEA of their plans to drill, but officials on both sides of the border welcomed the move.

"We are unaware of any technology that's proven effective," said Piastro, the DEA spokesman. "We happen upon these tunnels most often by chance."

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DID YOU KNOW?: Staging an event on one block of the Promenade costs \$1,700.

STATE

San Andreas may be on cusp of larger earthquakes

BY ANDREW BRIDGES

AP Science Writer

PALM SPRINGS — The notorious San Andreas fault may be on the cusp of producing a flurry of earthquakes that could rattle Southern California with a strong tremor every few decades or less, a geologist said Wednesday.

A detailed analysis of two periods of past quake activity on a section of the fault suggests a drawn-out period of little seismic activity may be coming to an end, said University of Oregon geologist Ray Weldon.

"Possibly we are at the point of switching from a period of time with a relative paucity of large and frequent earthquakes," Weldon said.

Weldon cautioned the switch could be decades away and that "flurry" is a relative term, since a cluster of quakes can strike over periods lasting 200 to 300 years. However, intervals as brief as 10 years have separated individual quakes in past clusters, he added.

Details were presented Wednesday at the annual meeting of the Seismological Society of America.

Digging into the San Andreas at a location called Wrightwood about 60 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles, Weldon and his colleagues found evidence of 30 quakes of magnitudes between 7.5 and 8.0 that had struck between 3000 and 1200 B.C. and A.D. 500 and the present.

An earthquake on the southern San Andreas of magnitude-7.5 or larger could kill thousands of people in the greater Los Angeles area and cause damage estimated in the tens of billions of dollars, experts have said.

On average, quakes of that size have struck Wrightwood at roughly 100-year intervals, although the lulls between temblors lasted as little as 10 years and as long as 224 years.

When viewed in series, the quakes appear to have struck in flurries, followed by periods of relative quiet.

The southern portion of the fault last ruptured in 1857. Current levels of strain measured on the San Andreas are at their highest in 1,500 years and suggest the fault is due to begin releasing that pent-up energy as a large earthquake or quakes, Weldon said.

Other seismologists said that the apparent clustering of quakes could be random and warned against inferring they consistently strike in recognizable clusters.

"It's human to look at these things and see patterns," said Geological Survey of Canada seismologist John Adams, who was not connected with the research.

Further excavations and dating of past

quakes should expand the chronology of past activity on the 800-mile San Andreas.

Scientists plan a wider campaign of excavations up and down the fault that should broaden their understanding of its past history, said Lucy Jones, of the U.S. Geological Survey.

Seismologists date past quakes by first trenching across a fault and then pinpointing locations in the exposed layers of earth where major earthquakes had ruptured the surface in the past. At the swampy Wrightwood site, the age of each of those ruptures can be determined by carbon dating the peat layers that rapidly built up after each quake, covering the fractures.

Predictions could change how quakes are prepared for

PREDICTIONS, from page 1

In July, they said they predicted a magnitude 7.0 or higher quake in a region that included Hokkaido by Dec. 28. The Sept. 25 quake fell within that period.

Now they predict a major quake will hit an area that stretches across desert regions to the east of Los Angeles, home to around 9 million people, including the Mojave desert and the resort town of Palm Springs, which lies near the notorious San Andreas fault.

That is where experts began gathering for the Seismological Society of America conference that looks sure to be dominated by passionate discussion of Keilis-Borok's prediction method.

"There is something going on," Sauer told the Desert Sun newspaper in Palm Springs. "People are at least willing to entertain the idea. It is not seen so much as junk science now."

Another seismic expert, University of Oregon professor Ray Weldon, was scheduled to present findings to the conference that appear to support Keilis-Borok's research by saying the San Andreas fault is about to enter a new and violent period of shaking.

The data, according to the Desert Sun, was gathered over 18 years around the famed fault, showing it is under high levels of stress.

"You could consider that support (for Keilis-Borok's research)," Weldon was quoted as saying. "But I don't lend any insight or support to a window of time."

But researchers still point to the fact that the science of earthquake prediction has been notoriously inaccurate and the geographic area targeted by the UCLA team for an imminent quake is very large.

"It is not specific," said Susan Hough, a seismologist for the U.S. Geological Survey based in Pasadena. "They've made three predictions and two of them have been borne out."

Keilis-Borok himself acknowledged the caution expressed by some of his colleagues.

"Application of non-linear dynamics and chaos theory is often counter-intuitive, so acceptance by some research teams will take time."

But if his latest prediction that the earth will move in the area around Los Angeles within the next five months proves accurate, his research could end up saving lives and transforming seismology.

Commission will focus on keeping production in state

COMMISSION, from page 1

Schwarzenegger announced the choices at a news conference that again showed how things in the Capitol are no longer the same now that the former action hero is in charge.

The news conference drew more than 50 photographers, reporters and TV crews who had to compete to gain seats in the tight quarters of the Capitol's main briefing room.

A lighthearted Schwarzenegger opened the session by admiring his appointees' stature and talent, and noted that between himself, Eastwood and Zanuck "we have three Oscars" — three for Eastwood and Zanuck and none for Schwarzenegger. He also joked that the diminutive DeVito should serve as his stunt double in another "Terminator" sequel.

The selection of marquee names to the commission is aimed at bringing more national attention to California's problem of runaway film production.

High costs have forced film producers to take their projects elsewhere, often to Canada, and the lost income hurts the state and the nation, said the governor, who made many of his films outside California.

"Until now, no one paid any attention in Washington to the entertainment industry even though it is such a huge, successful export business," Schwarzenegger said. "But people kind of brushed it aside and never took it seriously. Now I will make sure that it is taken seriously."

The 21-member Film Commission

works with the entertainment industry to keep productions in California. The agency also issues permits for commercial filming on state property. The positions are unpaid.

The selection of marquee names to the commission is aimed at bringing more national attention to California's problem of runaway film production.

Eastwood, a former mayor of Carmel, is an award-winning actor and director who also serves as a Schwarzenegger appointee to the state's Park and Recreation Commission. He won an Academy Award for best picture and best director in 1992's "Unforgiven."

DeVito, who starred with Schwarzenegger in the movie "Twins," is also the co-founder of Jersey Films, which has produced more than 20 pictures, including the Academy Award-nominated "Erin Brockovich."

Zanuck won an Academy Award in 1989 as producer of "Driving Miss Daisy." Duke co-starred with Schwarzenegger in "Predator," and his directing credits include "Sister Act 2" and "Hoodlum." Werner was executive producer of TV's "The Cosby Show" and "Roseanne."



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Plenty of pre-9/11 failures, but what's the remedy?

BY HOPE YEN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The reasons behind the pre-Sept. 11 intelligence failures just kept growing: not enough staff, poor technology, inadequate information-sharing, a piecemeal approach to intelligence analysis.

Yet after two days of hearings examining flaws and searching for solutions, members of the Sept. 11 commission said they have yet to reach firm conclusions on what change is necessary. The bipartisan panel is scheduled to issue its final report in July.

"Everybody speaks of reform," said the panel's Democratic vice chairman, Lee Hamilton, a former congressman from Indiana. "It's very easy to come out for reform. The task of the commission is going to be to put specificity to that, and that's going to be a major job."

The 10-member commission is reviewing proposals on how to prevent future domestic terror attacks, including expanding the powers of the director of central intelligence, establishing a domestic intelligence agency or endorsing more limited measures embraced by the heads of the CIA and FBI.

On Wednesday, CIA Director George Tenet testified that intelligence-gathering flaws exposed by the Sept. 11, 2001,

"The task of the commission is going to be to put specificity to that, and that's going to be a major job."

— LEE HAMILTON

Democratic vice chairman of the bipartisan panel

attacks will take five years to correct. He said that in the 1990s the CIA had lost 25 percent of its staff and was haphazard in training undercover officers who worked overseas to penetrate terror cells and recruit secret informants.

In a preliminary report, the commission also found that Tenet, like his predecessors, had limited authority over the direction and priorities of intelligence agencies, hampering his ability to devise a more comprehensive defense strategy.

"By no stretch of the imagination am I going to tell you that I've solved all the problems of the community in terms of integrating and in lashing it up," said Tenet. "But we've made an enormous amount of progress."

He noted that the National Security Agency, which handles electronic surveillance, and U.S. mapping and analytic intelligence agencies need time and continued funding to improve.

But the commission's chairman, for-

mer New Jersey Gov. Thomas Kean, said he was concerned by how long it would take to rebuild. "It scares me a bit that we dismantled the CIA to the point that it now takes five years to rebuild it," he said.

FBI Director Robert Mueller recounted a range of steps the FBI has taken since the Sept. 11 attacks to improve its intelligence capabilities, sharpen its focus on terrorism and replace outmoded technology. He urged the panel to let those improvements continue and not to risk derailing them by recommending creation of a new domestic intelligence agency outside the FBI.

"We don't want to have historians look back and say, 'OK, you won the war on terrorism but you lost your civil liberties,'" Mueller said. "We have become, since Sept. 11, a member of the intelligence community in ways we were not in the past."

The commission report on the CIA credited the agency with collecting a vast array of intelligence on Osama bin Laden

and al-Qaida, which resulted in thousands of individual reports circulated at the highest levels of government. These carried titles such as "Bin Laden Threatening to Attack U.S. Aircraft" in June 1998 and "Bin Laden's Interest in Biological and Radiological Weapons" in February 2001.

Despite this intelligence, the CIA never produced an authoritative summary of al-Qaida's involvement in past terrorist attacks, nor did it fully appreciate bin Laden's role as the leader of a growing extremist movement. Even though al-Qaida had been formed in 1988 after the Soviet Union abandoned Afghanistan, the CIA didn't recognize it as an organization until 1999, the report said.

"Before the attack we found uncertainty among senior officials about whether this was just a new and especially venomous version of the ordinary terrorist threat America had lived with for decades, or was radically new, posing a threat beyond any yet experienced," the commission statement said.

Tenet strenuously took issue with that conclusion — "That's flat wrong," he said, adding that the CIA put in place a plan to combat al-Qaida in 1999 that included clandestine intelligence inside Afghanistan using 25 people and movement of a spy satellite to increase coverage of the terror training camps.



WORLD BRIEFLY

bin Laden's 'truce' turned down

By The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — In a recording broadcast on Arab satellite networks Thursday, a man who identified himself as Osama bin Laden offered a "truce" to European countries that do not attack Muslims, saying it would begin when their soldiers leave Islamic nations.

There was no way to verify the speaker's identity. Ayman Gaballah, editor of Al-Arabiya, said only that the pan-Arab television network received the tape from "our sources."

"From the voice, it seems it is bin Laden, but we are not experts to confirm it," Gaballah said.

The latest message said "the door to a truce is open for three months." This time frame, the voice said, could be extended. "The truce will begin when the last soldier leaves our countries," the speaker said without elaborating.

In London, a British opposition spokesman said the purported truce offered is a sign that his al-Qaida network is rattled.

"It is obviously an attempt by al-Qaida or the associates of al-Qaida, to try and drive a wedge between the coalition," said Michael Ancram, foreign affairs spokesman for the opposition Conservative Party.

Cheney warns of N. Korea's nukes

By The Associated Press

SHANGHAI, China — Vice President Dick Cheney warned Thursday that failure to contain North Korea's nuclear weapons program could trigger a new nuclear arms race that could sweep across Asia.

"We have no alternative but to act with diligence," Cheney told students at Shanghai's Fudan University before leaving China for Seoul, South Korea, his last stop on a weeklong Asia tour.

Cheney in his speech praised China's leading role in seeking to persuade North Korea to dismantle its nuclear programs.

"We must see this undertaking through to conclusion," he said. "Time is not on our side."

"The people of Asia are particularly vulnerable to the threats of (weapons) proliferation," Cheney said. "Many countries that have the means to develop the deadliest weapons have refrained from doing so."

But he said a continued North Korean nuclear threat could persuade other powers in the region to develop their own nuclear weapons, triggering a new arms race across the region "and the likelihood that one day those weapons would be used."

Iraq war 'tough' on Kerry

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — John Kerry faults President Bush for his handling of the Iraq war, but the Democrat is drawing criticism for his positions on the conflict he voted to authorize.

The Iraq war is a tough issue for the Massachusetts senator, who voted for the 2002 congressional resolution that authorized Bush to use force in Iraq. But since the U.S. invasion a year ago he has become increasingly critical of Bush's war management while at the same time trying to maintain his support for the operation and appeal to the Democratic base.

The tense situation in Iraq was likely to remain front and center for Kerry, who had events Thursday scheduled in New York and New Jersey.

"We shouldn't only be tough, we have to be smart. And there's a smarter way to accomplish this mission than this president is pursuing," the four-term Massachusetts senator said.

Republicans rejected the criticism, with Bush's reelection campaign chairman Marc Racicot calling Kerry's comments "a political attack that is very, very seriously undermining our efforts in Iraq and in the war on terror."

Seiler charged for staged kidnapping

By The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — A criminal complaint against a woman accused of staging her own disappearance sug-

gests she was motivated by a desperate desire to get back her boyfriend's attention.

Audrey Seiler, a 20-year-old sophomore at the University of Wisconsin, was charged Wednesday with two misdemeanor counts of obstructing officers. Each charge carries up to nine months in jail and a \$10,000 fine.

Seiler disappeared from her off-campus apartment March 27 without her coat or purse. She was discovered curled in a fetal position in a marsh four days later, and told police that a man had abducted her at knife point.

But police concluded Seiler made up the story after obtaining a store videotape that showed her buying the knife, duct tape, rope and cold medicine she claimed her abductor used to restrain her.

The criminal complaint depicts Seiler as a young woman upset by a fading relationship with her boyfriend. Her first court appearance was scheduled for Thursday, but her attorney was expected to appear in her place. Lawyer Randy Hopper would not say Wednesday whether she would contest the charges.

U.S. backs Sharon's hold on West Bank

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon now can count on unprecedented U.S. backing for his plan to hold on to parts of the West Bank, a policy shift by President Bush that strengthens Sharon politically just weeks ahead of a vote in his Likud Party on a proposed Gaza Strip pullout.

An exchange of letters between Bush and Sharon at a White House meeting Wednesday put in writing U.S. support for Israel's plan to withdraw from all Gaza Strip settlements and some West Bank enclaves.

Bush said it was "unrealistic" to expect Israel to pull back to the borders that existed before the 1967 Mideast war due to large Jewish population centers that have been built on the territory since then.

Bush's change to long-standing U.S. policy enraged the Palestinians, who are demanding that all West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements be dismantled so a Palestinian state can be established on the land.

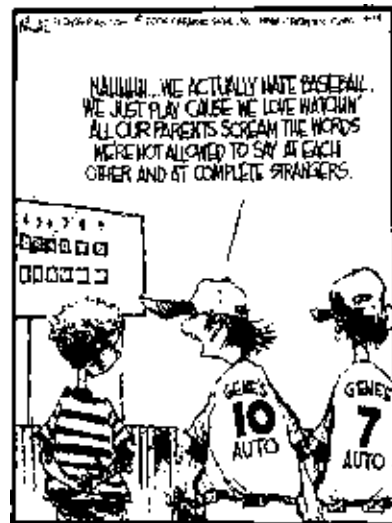
Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia said, "We as Palestinians reject that. We cannot accept that. We reject it and we refuse it."

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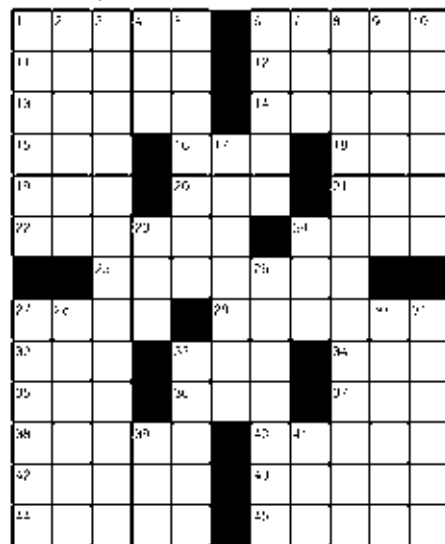
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SANTA MONICA \$2400/mo 833 5th St.#201, 2BD 2BA Stove, d/w, blinds, carpet, laundry, pool, intercom entry, gated tandem parking. No pets. 310-393-2547

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SANTA MONICA, r/s, new crpt, laundry, 1/2 block to beach, ocean view, \$795 www.westsiderentals.com

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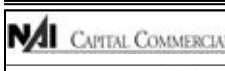
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Announcements

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP meeting. Last Wednesday of the month; at Sunrise Assisted Living, Pacific Palisades call (310)573-9545/Linda.

COME SHOP AT DAYBREAK DESIGNS! A grass-roots business for women in transition. Quality hand-made arts & crafts in time for Mother's Day. Daybreak Shelter Friday, April 30, 11am-7pm & Saturday May 1, 11am-7pm 1610 7th St. & Colorado 310-450-0650

Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates®

In 2004, a clinical skills examination will become part of the United States Medical Licensing Examination™ (USMLE™), the examination program for medical licensure in the United States. The new exam will require medical students and graduates to interact with "standardized patients," people trained to portray real patients, perform a physical examination, and communicate findings to patients and colleagues. The clinical skills exam will be administered at centers in several cities in the United States.

The Los Angeles Clinical Skills Evaluation Center is currently recruiting for the following positions:

Standardized Patients

Standardized Patients are trained to portray real medical patients to evaluate the clinical skills of doctors. This is a part-time as needed position, pays \$18/hr, and requires excellent English skills.

Senior Proctors

Senior Proctors are responsible for training proctors, preparing test materials and serving as Administrators on Duty. This position requires attention to detail, excellent organization and public speaking skills, and the ability to work with a diverse population. This is a part-time position that pays \$15/hr with pro-rated health ins. benefits.

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Obituaries

Leon Hyatt



WE HAVE learned that Leon Hyatt, a long time business-man of the Santa Monica West Side Area passed away, Monday April 5th from an un-named, un-known lung disease. Leon Hyatt opened the Arsenal Restaurant & Lounge in 1960. He added a successful Sports Bar in January 2000, just months before retiring to the San Fernando Valley. Mr. Hyatt was a veteran of WW II in the Asiatic-Pacific Theatre, where he served in the Army Occupation of Japan. Leon is survived by his wife Ginny, and daughters, Katrina Roberts, Cynthia Roberts, and Mona Bradley, as well as eight grand-children.

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